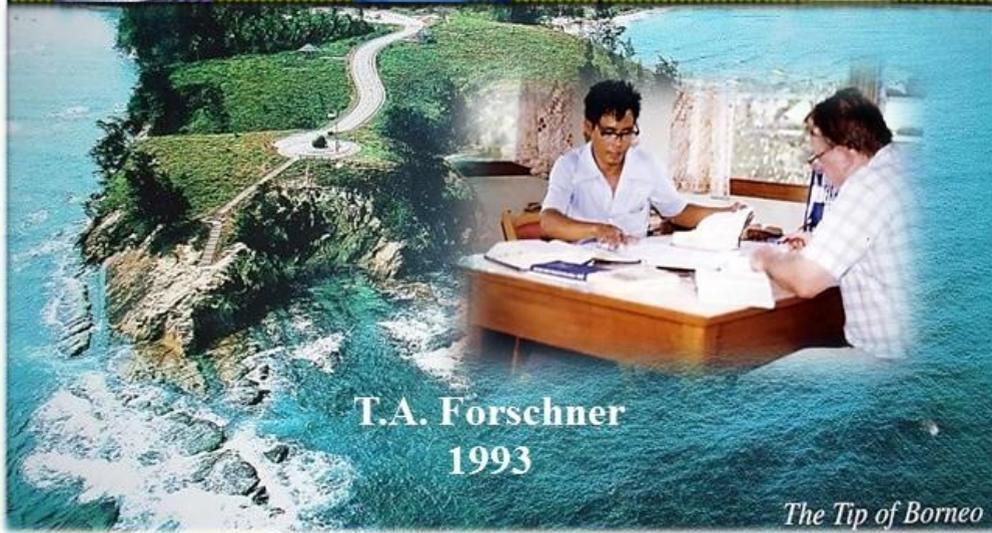


# History of the Protestant Church in Sabah, Malaysia



T.A. Forschner  
1993

*The Tip of Borneo*

# **History of the Protestant Church in Sabah, Malaysia**

A translation from the Usuran di Goriija Protestant sid Sabah, from an original text written in the Momogun language.

## **Preface by the President of the Protestant Church in Sabah,**

referring also to the first part of a general church history and the History of the Protestant Church in Sabah This history of the Church of Christ worldwide and the history of the Protestant Church in Sabah (PCS) follows the growth and the life of the Momogun around Kudat as developed according to the habits of the Rungus tribe. The first part documents the history of the Church of Christ worldwide, giving an account of the origins of the church. The second part is concerned with the history of the church in Sabah.

The history of Sabah prior to the arrival of the missionaries working amongst the Momogun has been included to explain the circumstances surrounding the beginning of their work in preaching the gospel. Looking at the time before 1952, it is clear that there had been missionaries before in Sabah, but they evangelised among the Chinese, while the RC missionaries reached the Momogun in the vicinity of Kota Kinabalu and Sandakan with their proclamation of the gospel.

The historical dates follow from what has been documented since the missionaries began proclaiming the gospel, from 1952 to up until 1993. Rev. Traugott Forschner who, together with other people, has written this book, admits that probably not everything has been recorded, and other matters may no longer be remembered properly. There will be also be omissions in the documentation of all the experiences due to the fact that they were not recorded at the time of happening.

But now everyone can read and study this history and can form a picture of how the PCS came into being, how this church grew from the time the missionaries from Europe arrived and brought the gospel and how we Momogun received the power and love of God, leading us to believe in God.

I am very pleased with this book, first and foremost because the work of Rev. Forschner and his co-workers have been successfully completed. This book can help young people to learn about the history of the PCS.

I, as president of the Protestant Church in Sabah, would like to thank Rev. Forschner on behalf of the PCS for all his work, endeavours and assistance towards the growth of the PCS through his work and his personal commitment.

Finally, my heart is full of thanks to God, as i know that God's blessing made the work and preparation of this history book possible. This book will be part of the treasures of the PCS and i hope that it will be a book, which teaches us about the history of the PCS.

1st August 1993 Hendry Ogodong Dangki, President of the Protestant Church in Sabah. (Note: This Usuran do Gorija Sompomogunan om Usuran do Gorija Protestan sid Sabah comprises a general church history which is not included in this translation. In its form and contents it tried to cover the ground leading to an understanding of how the PCS is part of the global Church of Christ. The preface of the president has been translated in its full length.)

**The History of the Protestant Church in Sabah. Introduction:**  
Today, with the church now forty years old-if one counts the beginning as being the arrival of the first missionary in Kudat-it has become clear that it would be a good idea to document the whole history of the PCS, its beginnings and its development, also all the experiences and

confrontations the church had to face and overcome. If one considers how Momogun people in earlier times used to tell the tale of their people, it showed that their recollections never went back very far. Even after a short time, what and how things really had happened was forgotten. For this reason, past events very soon became sagas and legends and could no longer be accepted as historical facts. No person can report about events, which he has not witnessed, experienced or even suffered himself. Even the story of one's father or grandfather, having been told and retold again and again, would have been altered in some way, either additions or shifts in meaning, while other facts would be by-passed. This means the recollection of past events was not very accurate. To give an example:

In 1964 a headman of some 70 years of age told this story of the Rungus, the tribe living in the vicinity of Kudat. This is his tale: *When i tell you the history of former times of how Kudat came into being, i shall not be able to tell you all my grandfather told me. I also cannot tell you what i myself do not know. Only what i still remember shall i tell you. For this is in my mind. At that time a Mr Ligis came to Kudat. As soon as he arrived and before he had any assistant, he demanded that he rule over the Momogun people in Kudat. He took Tumanggung as his middleman and said to him: Tumanggung, you and your people, start to plant coconut palm trees, plant rubber trees, plant wet rice in irrigated fields, as many Chinese will be arriving and occupying this land. Then you will no longer own any land. Now you, Tumanggung, will be able to organize your people. It is clear, do not continue to live in longhouses, do not keep moving from one place to the next. Consider opening up plantations together, said Mr Ligis.*

*But Tumanggung answered, Mr. Ligis, he said, No, under no circumstances, said Tumanggung. If we make holes in the ground, we shall die. If we make dams in the river, the water will turn into slime. We shall not make any plantations, said Tumanggung. After this, Mr*

*Ligis stopped after Tumanggung said: This country has no chance. There was no way to convince the stubborn Tumanggung.*

*When Mr Ligis left and was replaced by Mr Soromin- (the Momogun name for this district officer who wore glasses =soromin) - he said the same and gave orders to Tumanggung, as he was the one who could organize the people in the Kudat district. Like Mr Ligis, he demanded that the Momogun make plantations and create irrigated rice fields. Although Mr Ligis and Mr Soromin and whoever took over from them demanded the people to develop and open up the land, nothing was planted. For the Adat forbade Tumanggung to obey. His understanding and his considerations were different regarding the various adats. So throughout the time of all the officers coming and going in Kudat, nothing happened for the well being of the Momogun. Tumanggung had taken the adat as reasons for opposing the rulers. It was the adat that made him oppose. It was also not just Tumanggung the headman who did not understand, but also his people, and they were even more opposed than he. They reasoned about one thing and the other, but Tumanggung kept on saying, it is only maize and rice that we plant. There would be no way to plant coconut trees, rubber trees or rice sown in ploughed fields, providing irrigation by making dams across the rivers. No, never. We must practice shifting cultivation. This is our life. But Mr Ligis and Mr Soromin's demands for irrigation meant that they would plant in the same field year after year in order to use the ground again and again, once opened up through hard labour, so this work on the land would not be in vain. This is what Mr Ligis suggested for Kudat. He had seen that the Momogun were very, very poor. But it was their adat that led them to say no. They did not yet understand the orders of Mr Ligis and Mr Soromin.*

*Now, this is my story about the past, said this person. He was the then headman of the village Barambangun. His name was Lagan.*

Now if we look into this story it is obvious that much of what is part of the history of Kudat was not mentioned. For example, at the time the British entered Sabah and made Kudat the capital of Sabah-at that time known as British North Borneo-, Momoguns still lived on the peninsula of Kudat. There was a tidal river called Tomborongus, and it is most probably this river from which this particular tribe of the Momogun's name, RUNGUS, has been taken. As a large part of this stretch of land near the harbour was overgrown with Lalang, a kind of savanna grass called *gutad* by the Rungus, the place was given the name Kudat. Nothing is mentioned about the government building, the harbour for big ships, how the first Chinese arrived and how they settled at Lausanba, the place still called the Old Settlement. After only eighty years all this has disappeared from memory. It is for this reason that we should right away begin to make a written record of the history of the church in the form of a book so that nothing is forgotten and every step towards the establishment of the church is explained, also how the church has further developed and how the constitution of the church was made and has become what it is now. From this story it will be easy to understand the aims of the organisation, the form and role of the church within the Sabah population, and what the church plans are regarding its future in the time to come. The experiences of the past might even help to understand the challenges of the present and the future and thus help us to decide on the way and work needed by the church to secure its growth and life.

### **The past in Sabah**

From the time prior to the British rule, almost nothing has been recorded in writing. Some of the legends are somewhat like stories. But it is not possible to sort out when, what and which people they involved and where these stories and experiences happened. It is not even clear where the Momogun came from or the other people that entered Sabah, or what is told about the quarrels between these people which even led to head hunting, killing and magic sorcery. The history of the countries of Asia indicates this: from around the eighth century AD until the tenth

century, there was a kingdom of Buddhist background which had spread all over the islands between the Asian and Australian continents, Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan and Sulawesi and the thousands of smaller islands there. In quite a few places one can still see ruins of buildings and Buddhist temples like Borobodur in Java. After that a Hindu kingdom took over the islands and occupied this former kingdom and spread the Hindu religion. This rule lasted until 1378 when its king Majapahit was defeated.

Yet Sabah was under a different influence, if the documents of the Chinese emperor are correct. These documents state that a Tumpu of Brunei with the Chinese name Hiangta visited China. His palace in Brunei had still a roof made from the palm branches of the Rumbizo palm tree; and the Tumpu wanted to trade with China, selling iron wood trunks, turtle shells, elephants' tusks and trading in Chinese porcelain of great value, gongs and special tasty and expensive food stuffs. It is said that the Tumpu fell into dependence on the Chinese emperor, paying an annual tax to be sent to China every year.

There is another report from 1082 AD stating that the Tumpu Sri Maya from Brunei went to China to deliver the tax. This is all written in the history of the Chinese emperor. If other history books and reports were (to be) studied, there would probably be other matters and events coming to light, which are still hidden in those old books.

As for the Islam religion, starting in 622 AD at Mecca in Arabia, Islam grew towards the East till it arrived on the Malayan peninsula, building a castle at Malacca in 1403. Not long after the inhabitants of Malacca had converted to Islam, the Sultan of Malacca began to rule over the whole of the Malayan peninsula. He also made agreements with the emperor of China and the Tumpu of Brunei. Brunei sent tax to China on ten occasions between 1410 and 1425. After that the Tumpu of Brunei Marajakali submitted himself to the Sultan of Malacca Manshursha.

With the submission of the Tumpu of Brunei under the rule of Manshursha, the Tumpu assumed the title of a sultan and embraced the Islamic religion, and also ordered that the whole of Brunei should embrace Islam. The former name of this Tumpu was Alak Bertaka, but his Moslem name was Sultan Muhammad. He belonged to the Bisaya tribe, people who were still illiterate. One of his sons married into a Chinese family who lived near the Kinabatangan river. His name was Sultan Ahmad. The second son became son-in law of the Sultan Sulaiman of Malacca.

After a hundred years of Moslem rule in Malacca, people from Portugal arrived. Malacca came under the rule of the Portugese king in 1511. At that time there were quite a few Chinese who had settled in the Malayan peninsula, being married to Moslems without being forced to convert to Islam. But the Sultan of Malacca, having been defeated, fled and moved (together) with many people who were traders to Brunei and to places near tidal rivers all over the islands. They wanted to carry on their trade amongst the people of South Asia, but the king of Portugal also tried to take over the trading business in this region.

At the time when the Europeans reached Malacca 1509 and Brunei 1521, Sabah was divided into two spheres of influence. The Western part was under the power of the Sultan of Brunei, while the Eastern part was under the rule of the Suluk Sultan. As soon as the Portugese had arrived at Malacca and the islands of the Philippines, another nation in Europe tried to compete with Portugal sailing all over the world. This was Spain. Spain sent their boats towards the West instead of the East as the Portugese had done, sailed around South America and reached the Philippines and the island of Palawan from the Pacific Ocean, passed by Banggi and came to Brunei in 1521. Captain Pigfetta, who had taken over Captain Magellan's ship, (Magellan had been killed in the Philippines while entering their land), asked in Brunei what the island was called and in reply heard the name Brunei. As he thought this would be the name not only of this particular place but of the whole

island, the whole island of Kalimantan from North to South, East and West became known in Europe from that time on as the island of Borneo. Pigfetta reports that at that time Brunei had a population of more than 25 000 people. In fact, Magellan and Pigfetta were the first explorers to sail around the whole globe by travelling West. It took them three years, thus confirming with this journey the fact that the earth is a sphere which can be circumnavigated. (Before this, people had believed the earth had the form of a round plate.)

From that time on the European nations sent boats in order to occupy the countries and islands and make them their colonies. The Dutch occupied Java in 1619 and opened up the station Batavia, the present Jakarta. They founded a trading company, the East India Company, as they considered everything east of India to be East India. This company also conquered the castle of Malacca in 1625 and closed the boats' passage between Sumatra and Malacca. No vessel was allowed to pass through the Strait of Malacca without paying revenue and tax for all the goods and products on board. The Netherlands wanted to make a profit from everything that was transported from the East to the West.

At the same time as the Spanish and the Portugese were occupying the islands in this region and contracts were being made with the rulers of China and Japan, there were Catholic missionaries who came on these boats intending to establish the Roman Catholic Church in China, Japan and the Philippines. In the Philippines, the RC church was established and all the islands of the Philippines came under the rule of the King of Spain for hundreds of years. In China, the emperor first accepted the missionaries as they taught the sciences in the imperial palace. These missionaries tried to adapt themselves to the Chinese customs. But other missionaries of the Jesuit order indicted these teachers at the imperial palace before the pope in Rome, complaining that they would betray the Christian faith by assimilating Chinese rites. As soon as this became known to the emperor, he forbade any Christian activity in

China and expelled all of them from China.

In Japan, there had also been the beginnings of establishing a Christian church. Already more than two hundred thousand Japanese had converted to Christianity. But when the Japanese emperor got the impression that the Western kings intended conquering Japan, he immediately forbade any further Christian activity in spreading the gospel and commanded that the Christian religion should be altogether extinguished. This was in the 18th century. At that time the Western nations had taken over all the larger countries of the East. Then in 1878, the British and the Sultans of Brunei and Suluk agreed that the Chartered Company should enter and buy Sabah, making Sabah its property. As soon as British rule started, there was an invitation to the Chinese people to come and help develop the land of Sabah. This actually is the beginning of the history of the church in Sabah, the first Basel Fui Church, which today is known under the name of The Basel Christian Church of Malaysia.

### **The Chinese Churches in Sabah and other Churches. The story of the Basel Fui Church.**

Among the Chinese arriving in Sabah in 1882 and all the following groups of Chinese, there were from the beginning quite a few people who had embraced Christianity while still in China. They belonged to congregations in the Quandong province and were Hakka who had become Christians through the work of the Basel Mission there. The Basel Mission had started its work there in 1847. The first ones came to Kudat in 1884 and settled in Lausanba, the place which today is still called Old Settlement, some eight kilometers from Kudat along the Sikuati Road. At that time the area around Kudat was still partly primary jungle or covered with Lalang grass where hill rice had been planted earlier after clearing parts of the jungle. Other Christian Hakkas settled at Sandakan, Api-Api-Jesselton, the present Kota Kinabalu on the so-called Signal Hill, at Manggatal, Tuaran, Tamparuli and Tenom.

Shortly after their arrival they considered how they could gather as Christian congregations along the rules they had had in China. They thought about getting a building for a school, a teacher for their children. This teacher could also, as in China, function as an evangelist and preacher for the adults on Sundays. On Sundays, the school could be used as a church.

Eventually the number of Hakka Christians grew. They asked the Basel Mission to send a pastor who would lead and organize them in Sabah. The Basel Mission agreed and sent Pastor Schuele in 1905. He had been a carpenter before becoming a pastor. Stationed in Kudat. He began his service amongst the Hakka congregations. As always, the missionaries of the Basel Mission started by building a station on a piece of land acquired by the the Basel Mission. He applied for a piece of land four kilometres along the route to Sikuati. He cut down the Ipil trees on this piece of land, a hard, so-called iron wood, had them sawn into beams and planks and built this house. It was by no means easy to build such a house. He had no sawmill nor planing machine. Everything was handmade in a highly professional manner: the doors, windows, shutters. For the roof he acquired earthen tiles from a tile factory in India, a factory which had been built in India to provide jobs for Indian Christians. This building remains the headquarter of the PCS even today.

When the Basel Mission heard that this building had been completed, and also that the capital of Sabah had been moved to Sandakan, they asked Mr Schuele to move to Sandakan to get another station ready. They wanted him to be near the government. By the time this station was built, the First World War had started, which meant that Mr Schuele, being a German, was interned and afterwards expelled from the British colony of North Borneo. This is how the Basel Mission helped and assisted the Hakka Christians to get organized as congregations in Sabah. After the war it took a long time before

missionaries of the Basel Mission were able to return to Sabah. In fact it was not until after the Second world war.

Yet the Chinese Christians, being farmers and traders, kept their faith that they inherited from the time in China. Each congregation organized itself, their buildings, their upkeep and their teachers and schools. They came together in their houses for worship and prayer. Those who had some knowledge would lead the gathering. Quite a few teachers became pastors, who could baptize the children, consecrate the marriages and lead the burial services according to the Christian tradition.

After the First World War they again tried to call missionaries from Basel. But the governor was against their coming as he feared that they would interfere in politics against the British. At that time, the Basel Mission was also very short of funds. Due to this, the Christian Hakkas considered their situation and decided to proceed with the establishment of their church with a proper church order and a constitution, which was also acknowledged and registered by the government. This would allow them to apply for land for building churches in the name of the church. In 1924, the church was founded under the name of **Borneo Basel Self established Church**, meaning that the church originated from the work of the Basel Mission, but had been established in Borneo. From then on, each congregation had its own pastor called a Muksu, while chief pastor called Zungmuk represented the whole church. Each congregation organized all their own tasks, work, church building, school building, teachers, pastors, their remuneration and the growth of the congregation. The congregation elected a layman as chairman for the administration of the congregation. This person was responsible for the necessary funding of all the work. All the congregations together had only occasional meetings of their church elders to discuss and plan the progress of the church. It must be said that at that time, it was rather difficult to meet and go to other places other than by boat journey apart

from places in the vicinity of Api-Api. To visit Kudat, Sandakan or Tawau was a matter of weeks.

It is a pity that in the case of the Chinese church, even after having organized itself properly and grown in numbers among the Hakka people, there were no considerations about a duty towards the Momogun, Muruts or Samas. Only the upkeep and progress of the Chinese church seemed to be on their minds.

### **The Roman Catholic Church in Sabah.**

Together with the Basel Christians, Christians of Roman Catholic background from mainland China moved to and settled in Sabah in the 1880 ties and in the early 20th century. They had been invited by the British rulers. The British did not distinguish between the confessions and religions. Their aim was to get industrious people for the development of the land with the aim of gaining a quick return from the Sabah-Colony. The Chartered Company wanted to export coconut oil in order to provide cheap nutrition for the poor population of the industrial areas in Britain. Working people, with their very small daily earnings, could not afford lard and other high protein food produced in England. As coconut palm trees did not grow in England with its cold winter season, the British had sought territory in this region and therefore occupied Sabah and Sarawak. They never considered this occupation to be wrong. They just intruded on our country and stole other people's land, even by paying the sultans a sum of some 35,000 Dollars.

The majority of the RC Christians belonged to the Hokien tribe, a section of the Chinese population that spoke a different dialect. Even though the languages of Hakka and Hokien are written using the same characters, also common to Mandarin, the main language of the Chinese, these two dialects are so far apart that no communication is possible between these two dialects. When they arrived in Sabah, they did not settle in different places to start up their plantations. Side by side with the other settlers, they started plantations first near the harbour

settlements and then moving on further inland. They made use of already cleared land, primary jungle which had been cleared for one or two rice planting seasons for use as rice fields for the local Momogun, and had then been abandoned due to their custom not to replant the same ground again and again. According to their understanding a rice field could only be rented from the earth spirits for a short planting season, (which is actually a very good understanding of environmental ideas). So Chinese settlers just followed the clearing of such fields and applied for permanent ownership from the colonial government, which had declared all land of Sabah to be so-called Crown-land. In this way the British divided the land among the Chinese for a very small sum. The land occupied by Chinese expanded more and more, moving beyond the parts left behind by the shifting cultivation of the Momogun. In this way they even avoided the very heavy labour involved in the clearing of primary jungle. Momoguns had already accomplished this job by preparing their rice fields. The Chinese converted any low land into irrigated rice fields. From these two kinds of yields of their land, rice and coconut copra, they were able to provide their upkeep. They also grew vegetables and kept animals such as water buffaloes, pigs and chicken.

The RC-Christians, too, considered how their Christian community could be developed according to their RC tradition. They built schools and churches side by side with the Basel Christian churches. The road leading to these churches was given the name Mission Road. One can also find a Mission Road, or now Jalan Mission, in Kudat, in Sandakan, in Kota Kinabalu, Tuaran, Tamparuli and Manggatal.

As for the RC church, which is under the rule of the Pope in Rome, there are differences when compared to the protestant churches. This church does not differentiate between people and countries, being a church that is present around the whole world as an international organisation. The Pope, called the Holy Father, is in succession of St. Peter, who had been declared the deputy of Christ. Wherever there is a

RC congregation, they are under the auspices of the Pope regardless of race, country, language or government. As there were soon quite a few RC congregations in Sabah, the Pope sent some missionaries to lead, teach and organize the RC Christians in Sabah. These missionaries came from the Netherlands, from the order of the so-called White Fathers, with their traditional white gown. In assessing their task they realized that there were not only Hokien people who had settled in Sabah but also the original local people, the Momoguns, living near Api-Api or Jesselton, the place they had chosen first. After contacting and meeting the Tanggara-Momogun in Penampang, some missionaries stayed at Penampang with the idea that it was their task to also bring the Gospel to the Momogun. So the Roman Church started in Jesselton, extended to Penampang, Tuaran and went even inland as far as Bundu Tuhan, Tombunan, Keningau and Papar. (If one wants to explain in short the difference between the RC Church and the Protestant churches: the RC church originates from its leader who is called the deputy of St. Peter holding the key to heaven. In Matthew 16 Christ said: You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church. I will give you the key of the kingdom of heaven. >Peter in Greek means rock<. Now the RC church considers the Pope as being the one who knows how to understand scriptures and gives instructions about what the Bible says. He rules over the whole church, appoints the priests and bishops according to his will and the way he organizes the church. There are various taboos such as eating meat on a Friday, as Christ died on a Friday. One can only partake at the Eucharist after confessing one's sin to the priest in the confessional by naming all transgressions, faults and sins. Only after absolution would the person be clean and ready to receive communion. In the communion the priest would consecrate bread and wine to become the real body and blood of Christ. When eating, one would be biting into the meat of Christ. As for the wine, only the priest drinks wine during the communion to prevent a possible abuse of the wine through unruly drinking.

As only the Pope can explain the Bible, it came about in time that ordinary Christians were not even allowed to read the Bible, let alone in ones' own language. It was only in the 1960's that a Pope consented and decreed that every RC Christian could read the Bible and that the Bible should be translated into the mother tongues of all Christians, also that the services should be held in their own language instead of the former church language, Latin. Another extra is the way in which the mother of Jesus, Mary is honoured. One former pope had declared Maria, who was the mother of Jesus, to have remained a virgin until death, meaning that Maria was a woman who never had any sexual contact with a man. This implied that Jesus was a person without any sin, as he was not the product of any intercourse. This is connected with the other idea, namely of intercourse being a matter of sin, as being against the will of God. In this understanding the RC church has been misled by the words written in Psalm 51, where kind David confesses his sin of adultery. From this misunderstanding, it followed in the RC church that any unity between male and female was sin. This even led to the rule, that the pope forbids priests to marry. This rule has applied for seven hundred years and is still valid, saying also, that only the holy priest could administer the Lord's supper and lead and take care of the congregation.

The RC church also keeps in special honour the holy people, people who were killed because of their faith, had become martyrs. To pray to these holy persons or even the mother of Jesus Maria and ask them for intercession would make it easier to find Jesus or Gods' ear. At the time of the Reformation when Martin Luther, Zwingli and Calvin departed from the RC church, that RC church was very different from the RC church of today. Many of the aberrations of the pope and the church then have since been done away with. Christians are allowed and encouraged to read the Bible. The priests and bishops do no longer cooperate with and look up to the rulers who oppress their people but see themselves on the side of the oppressed and neglected people. In some congregations communion is served by moistening the bread with wine, at least indicating that bread and wine is part of the gift of Christ.

Also the so-called inherited sin from the time of Adam and Eve is no longer stressed in the way it had been done for centuries. Yet the present pope still speaks against any family planning and proclaims that only the intercourse aiming at procreating a child is done without sinning. If one evaluates the total faith of RC teaching in matters of baptism, communion and ministry it seems that there is hardly any point of disagreement between RC, the orthodox and the protestant churches. This was summarized in the Lima Agreement of 1982 when learned people from all sides had accomplished a comparison of the different denominations. Only the claim of RC that the Pope is to be the only possible leader of the whole of Christianity is unacceptable for the other Christian denominations.

### **The Anglican Church**

In encouraging again and again Chinese from mainland China to come and settle in Sabah it happened that early in the 20th century one more group of people from the Quangshou province came to Sabah. They belonged to the Anglican tradition. Their language differed again from Hakka and Hokien. The name of this church group goes back to England, originating from the time the English King Henry VIII forced the Christians in England to depart from the Popes' rule and become independent, also allowing for the introduction of the teaching of the reformation. Yet quite a few forms of the former tradition were kept and are still part of Anglicanism: bishops who are still, so to speak, in the tradition of St. Peter. Even in foreign parts this church still adheres to the name Anglican and considers each church to be part of the Anglican Communion.

On arrival, these Anglican Christians followed the other churches in establishing schools and churches by building them next to the others along the Mission Road. Now this particular church got much support from many a colonial officer in the government, being themselves members of the Anglican Church.

Considering the origin of this church, it becomes obvious that the real issues, which had led to the reformation in England, were not the true cause for leaving the Roman church. Political and personal differences between the Pope and the King had caused this departure. Accordingly, at least three types of Anglicanism exist today, one being very close to the RC tradition except for the adherence to the Pope, a second more liberal type and a third tradition following rather the teachings of Luther and Calvin. The latter group follows a very open liturgy without many dress traditions and colours, and rather emphasizes proclaiming the gospel and admonishing people to become real followers of Christ. As King Henry VIII made himself the lord of the Anglican Church, the Anglican Church still adheres to the idea that the King or Queen of England leads the church. The Kings or Queen considered themselves to be the Advocate of the Christian faith, a title still to be found on coins while Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore were British colonies.

### **Other denominations**

Between the two world wars another group of Christians came from China calling themselves adherents of the True Jesus Church, an independent church in China, which tried to get rid of any ties with the western churches. Their aim as church of Jesus was to get properly rooted in the Chinese soil. The church could not flourish if only looking to Rome or England or any other part of the world. The Church of Jesus was established as an original Chinese church with Chinese Christian organisation, using Chinese forms and dresses, Chinese hymns, Chinese music, and was not to incorporate any Western traditions and rites. Only in this way could the church in China be the proper Church of Jesus. With this name they declared themselves to be the only proper church of Jesus, something, which is very much reminiscent of the situation in the Corinthian Church (see First Corinthian cap. 1, 22-25) where one group called itself the group following Christ. Yet this claim to be the only group following Christ properly makes this church unable

to cooperate and communicate with the World Council of Churches or the Federation of Christian Churches in Malaysia.

There was also the **Borneo Evangelical Mission** from Australia arriving in Sabah between the two wars. This mission started in Lawas in Sarawak, where the headquarters are still to be found. Following this they started up in Ranau. As this mission tried to reach more distant people and places, they introduced with their arrival the means of transport used in their homeland, making it possible to reach more distant places by aeroplane. They created airstrips in many places by encouraging their adherents to build them. This mission has no proper church background but is a rather open arrangement of individuals supporting the spread of the gospel in foreign parts, in fulfilment of Christ's commands. The supporters are members of different denominations like the Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and others in Australia, as well as in England. Eventually the mission established the **Sidang Injil Borneo (SIB)** a body, which was very much lacking in terms of form and order. Each congregation is more or less independent with the preacher and his upkeep, its organisation and growth of the congregation. The leaders of the SIB have no real influence over the local congregations. No governing assembly has the power to rule and organize the way of this church. To be a Christian means only to follow the five fundamentals of their faith:

a) The Bible is the true word of God right down to each letter and punctuation mark, without any exceptions. The Bible is the true history of the earth and tells of the purpose of the world. The Bible was written with the fingers of mankind, but the fingers were guided by the Holy Spirit. One does not say: This is what Paul said, but rather, this word is God's teaching, has been said by God and is truly the Word of God.

b) Concerning mankind: mankind is totally lost and sinful for eternity, far from God's grace. Only when mankind is contrite, confesses its

sinfulness and asks for forgiveness for those sins, will salvation be possible. This applies to every single person right from one's birth on.. So many of their songs are full of references to the confession of sins.

c) To be a Christian means to be “reborn”. If a person cannot remember when and where this new birth had happened, this would mean he or she was not yet saved. The Bible teaches that men easily turn away from God. But when one turns again to God and returns to God (Marc 1, 15) they call this being born again, which amounts to having already a ticket to heaven.

d) A Christian has to believe that Jesus died like an animal killed for appeasement - in the Momogun tradition the term is the name of a castrated pig offered up to the spirits - to cool God's wrath and anger. They say that God will not be appeased without an offering of blood flowing. It is not accepted that the book Hebrew in the Bible only uses the example of the offerings of a lamb to explain the death of Jesus, as in any case it is not easy to explain and understand the work and death of Jesus. (St. Paul, in explaining the work of Jesus, uses the phrase: God justifies the unjust person, also, God frees us from imprisonment, God delivers us from slavery and bondage, God gives us freedom. The phrase of God atoning men by using Jesus as sacrifice does not literally mean that Jesus is the one cooling the wrath of God on account of men's trespasses, in order that God will be good again towards mankind.)

e) A Christian hopes and looks forward to the bodily return of Jesus into this world and time, and the whole life and work of a Christian in the midst of mankind is concerned with the preparation to meet Jesus. Activities in this world are of no value and meaning. Marriage, daily work, earning a living, cultivating a field or garden or helping other people are purely worldly activities and have no meaning in spiritual terms.

There are further limitations: a person is only holy if he or she does not smoke or drink alcohol, does not chew betel, does not mingle among worldly matters but brings the gospel to other people.

In Sabah, BEM started in Ranau then spread to Tampasuk, Taginambur near Kota Belud and Tuaran. But in Tuaran there is another rule independent from the BEM. Today there is a Bible School at Emaus near Poring. The headquarters of SIB are now in Kota Kinabalu. The BEM from which SIB stems is called a Faith Mission, meaning a mission living totally according to the belief that all necessary funds and personnel come directly from God's command. Each missionary needs a supporting group in his/ her homeland, which provides for the upkeep of this person while in Sabah. All the gifts and funds sent from Australia, however much or however little, is used for the daily provisions of the missionaries. Only the cost and upkeep of the aeroplanes are budgeted in a different way. In the same way, congregations are taught and guided in terms of this way of independence: the congregation gets established on its own and provides for its expenses, the church building and the evangelist and pastor. There will be no funds from abroad. There is no assistance for the development of the community in terms of planting or other things. (Only Mr White with the Momogun name Asang opened up a sawmill at Taginambur and taught the people to saw and provide building materials for church buildings and private houses around Tempasuk during the 30's and up to the sixties. Even pupils at the Bible School have to provide their own food and expenses while in school. This means that in the four years of bible school, two years are used solely to plant rice and other products for the provision of food for the pupils. The actual teaching comprises just two years. Afterwards the congregation has to provide for its pastor with as much or as little as the congregation can afford, and its pastor is able to encourage his congregation towards his needs. There is no regular or set contribution towards the church centre and the centre has not much influence in the various congregations. It is up to the pastor, the evangelist and the

congregation. To some extent this might be a good arrangement, only collecting funds when there is a proper project. For then the congregation makes much effort to obtain what is needed. The negative side of this is, if the teaching of the pastor or evangelist does not tally with the feelings and opinions of some of the members or the whole of the congregation, even if the teaching is according to the demands of the Bible and the will of God, then there will be hardly any provision for the pastor. He and his family will be starving and will have to look for another congregation. Only when the teachings of the pastor and the wishes of the congregation are compatible with each other will the pastor have enough to live on for himself and his family. Of course, as SIB folk neither smoke nor drink, it will be easier to provide funds for the spreading of the gospel.

From the USA came the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), a denomination going back to the 19th century in America. Back then, there was a man who quarrelled with his pastor, claiming to possess the Holy Spirit and proper understanding of the scripture beyond the pastor's knowledge. After a long argument he declared that the church was sinful, as the church did not keep to the tradition of the seventh day or Sabbath as the Jews did. Only by maintaining this day as a day free of labour would God be properly honoured, as this order went back to the beginning of creation and mankind and had never been changed. Now this teaching has become the focal point of the Faith of SDA. Of course, there is one verse in the Bible saying: *whenever the whole of mankind shall honour the Sabbath without any one person transgressing this day, then the Kingdom of God will begin*. On account of this, the SDA claim: only we SDA people are the true followers of Jesus. All the other Christians are lost for not honouring the Sabbath.

There are other demands: no smoking, (even though SDA people at Goshen plant and sell tobacco and make a great deal of profit from growing tobacco). It is forbidden to eat pork as is the case with the Jews, and it is forbidden to drink alcoholic drinks, tea or coffee.

Momogun women are not allowed to wear their traditional dresses or wear brass rings on their legs and arms or have their hair plaited. All this would be from the demons. It is true that SDA adherents try to forcefully convince other people about their faith, as this was one way of entering heaven. This seems to be the very aim of life: to gain entry to heaven. In this way, the congregation and their groups have flourished. Today there are millions of SDA people all over the world. They have sent missionaries all over the world to start up SDA churches. In Sabah they started at Tamparuli. There they have their headquarters and their training centre. Many funds come from America in the form of clothes and money. Some of their missionaries had been farmers, so they taught people in Sabah to plant rice in irrigated fields and assisted the local people in applying for low land to be used for irrigation as was the case near Kota Marudu. They got people settled there and gave this valley the name Goshen from the place in Egypt where Jacob had settled. They said to these people:

You are the Hebrew folk living in the midst of the heathens.

Around 1950 there were a few SDA evangelists entering the Kudat District. They came to Tamburulan and Merebau, places with a wide valley suitable for irrigated rice cultivation. One of them, Bohan from Sumatra, started a congregation in Merebau and preached in Kumbatang and Parapat.

After the Second World War there were also missionaries from the Baptist Church, a church which only baptizes people once they have grown up. They believed that a child cannot be baptised as it does not understand the meaning of baptism and cannot believe in Christ. They do not accept that baptism is first a sign of God's blessing and grace given to mankind, even to a newborn child.

A group of Lutheran missionaries from a protestant tradition, which puts a particular emphasis on Luther's teachings, came to Sabah after

the war to assist in restoring schools and churches which had been destroyed during the Japanese occupation. These Lutherans worked with the Basel Church in KK and Sandakan. Later on, the Basel Christian Church joined the Lutheran World Federation as the church had received much support and help from the Lutheran Church in the USA. But the Baptists started their own church, following the tradition of the Baptist Church in Southern USA. From there they received a great deal of support for the spreading of the Baptist tradition in Sabah.

### **The beginning of the Protestant Church in Sabah.**

At the time when all missionaries were expelled from China (1950) after the establishment of the Peoples' Republic of China, there was one missionary of the Basel Mission, pastor Bienz, who moved on to Sabah. For a long time there had been revolutionary uproars amongst the Chinese population due to instability in China. There was a lot of oppression of the landless community by the few people that owned the land. Foreign countries tried to influence and govern China. For some 35 years the country had struggled until Communism took over the country. Their chairman Mao Tse Tung demanded that all foreigners who had tried to control the Chinese people leave China, even the missionaries. He said that they would only use religion as a means to gain power over the Chinese people. Actually, after the Opium War (1840-42) the emperor of China had already been forced to agree to the spread of the Gospel in China when he was besieged. In 1839 Chinese soldiers had found in the store houses of the foreign traders some 20,000 cases of opium, each weighing a hundred weight, which was to be sold illegally in the country. Despite a strict order against any trading of Opium, these English, French and US traders had tried obscure ways and means of bringing opium into the country. So the emperor commanded the soldiers to throw all the opium into the sea and rivers so that it would be destroyed. On account of this the traders forced their respective home country to go to war against the emperor and request payment for the destroyed opium.

The British, French, US and Netherlands governments ruled against the emperor, demanding that he pay for all the opium and to agree that the sale of opium should be legalized and that at the same time missionaries be allowed to come to China and evangelise the Chinese people.

For Mao Tse Tung it was now a straightforward matter to forbid any further mission work by people from outside the country. If there was to be a Chinese church, it should be established independently and also find the necessary funds. No funds from outside would be acceptable. The Chinese Church would have its own leaders and its own mission work. This was the reason for expelling all missionaries. Even the missionaries of the Basel Mission were thrown out, despite the fact that they had never interfered in trading or politics.

So the committee of the Basel Mission sent pastor Bienz to Sabah, thinking that there would be work for him with the Basel Fui Church, which had been established in 1924 without the support of the Basel Mission. Mr Bienz started to find his way in Sabah. He was advised to stay in Kudat in the house originally built by pastor Schuele. This house had been an army hospital during the Japanese occupation and many Japanese soldiers had died in this house. So it may be that there was some reluctance on the part of Chinese pastors to move into this building that had such a dubious background. Bienz and his family moved into this place and he began to visit all the congregations of the Basel Fui Church from Tenom and Papar in the West to Tawau in the East. While in Kudat, he visited the congregations in Pinangshoo, Bakbak, Tamalang, Bandau and Pitas as far as his time allowed. It was a matter of course that he saw some of the native Momogun people here and there, at the market or in the plantations where they worked for the Chinese farmers. He also got to know that some Chinese had married Momogun women. Those Chinese had been in the situation that they were very poor and had no means to marry into a Chinese family by

providing a substantial bridal price. To marry a Momogun girl was less expensive.

Bienz, having understood this situation, asked where these people, called Dusun—meaning jungle people, lived. The answer was, that they actually lived in the jungle, speaking their own language, believing in the power of spirits and with a totally different attitude to life and morality. There would be no way of mixing with them. They had no school and were opposed to any development. Only in times when they did not have any food were they prepared to work in the plantations. Yet even with only a small pay they would be hard-working and clear the Chinese plantations from the undergrowth.

There were a few Chinese Christians who wondered whether and how the gospel could also be handed on to these people. One of them was the teacher Tong at Tamalang, himself married to a Momogun woman. But even he had not found the time and the opportunity for this, being a teacher in a Chinese school and with a very small salary. He needed to have his own plantation and find enough to provide for his family and children.

One day, Bienz heard the District Officer in Kudat remark that “these Momogun here are of no value”. He would give them ten or maybe twenty years before they would have ceased to exist. He claimed that there was no chance at all for them to learn to change their attitude and agree to work for the development of the country. For them there would be no hope for change or for any future.

Despite such utterances by the Chinese and government officials, Mr Bienz thought about these natives and encouraged some Chinese to assist him in meeting some of the Momogun people and visiting some of their longhouses. He wanted to tell them about the gospel. He asked Mr Wong Khiam Fuk, the church elder and trader in Sikuati, who was able to converse in Momogun, to accompany him to the longhouses at

Lajong, Handal, Angkob and even Rondonon and Kimihang. There was not a single longhouse where they were not allowed to enter. Following the tradition of the Chinese church, Pastor Bienz used some posters in order to explain the way to God. Mr Wong translated his speech into Momogun. From this attempt, Bienz understood that the people in the longhouses were ready to hear the Good News of the Bible. There would be no reason for not evangelising amongst the Momogun.

Then at Christmas 1951, some Momogun from Kimihang and Masangkung working in Chinese plantations near Tamalang approached Mr Bienz when he held the Christmas service at Tamalang. They asked him whether it would be possible to watch how the Chinese celebrated Christmas. He invited them along. They sat at the back of the church and listened to the Christmas story, although it was told in the Chinese language, the story of the birth of Christ. They were also invited after the service to join the congregation in eating biscuits and drinking tea. There Mr Bienz asked them for their opinion about what they had understood and how they felt about it. Their answer was positive, requesting to hear more about this news.

After this encounter, Mr Bienz wrote to the committee in Basel asking the Basel Mission to consider the posting of a missionary to Sabah for work amongst the Momogun. He said in the letter that he himself had no time for frequent visits to these people, as he was fully engaged with his work with the Chinese church. He also said that it was not sufficient to approach these people via an interpreter: the Swiss pastor speaking Chinese, needing a translator from Chinese into Momogun.

The committee in Basel discussed this request and decided to send the missionary Honegger, who was on leave from his work in Kalimantan. He was to come to Kudat and find out about possible mission work amongst the Momogun people. This meant that the

committee was still questioning the possibility and need for opening up a new mission enterprise. Yet Pastor Honegger, as soon as he had received this order and had read the report from Mr Bienz, declared decisively: For me this is not a question of trying to establish whether there is work to be done, no, the proclamation of the Gospel at Kudat is my task and my duty.

So on November 23rd in 1952, Honegger arrived in Kudat and stayed with Mr. Bienz. He had left his wife and children in Switzerland. The committee was still of the opinion that his task was primarily to study the situation. Only after a positive result would his family follow and join him.

One week after his arrival, Honegger accompanied Bienz to Sikuati. At that time it was only possible to use a car as far as Sikuati, which was the end of this rather narrow country road. They met the church elder and asked him to accompany them to the longhouse at Rampai. A few days later, on December 9, they asked the teacher Tong to lead them to the longhouse of Masangkung. In Masangkung they talked to the headman Tuorong and agreed with him that he would invite the headmen of all the longhouses in the vicinity of Sikuati to meet them there on December 11th.

On the day of this meeting there were 43 headmen and elders from the longhouses near Sikuati meeting Pastor Honegger and Bienz, as well as Mr Wong and the teacher Tong. They gathered in the shed of the Bus company, made of a few posts and covered with Nipa palm leaves forming the roof and walls. Actually the walls were rather torn apart already. Mr Wong Khiam Fuk had prepared some biscuits and tea. Tuorong was there as well as Dompipok from Tinutudan, Ditikon from Handal, Ronsuman from Merebau, Kumbani from Rampai, Tobubul from Kimihang and many others. Everyboday had come. Mr Wong introduced Mr Bienz and Honegger and Tuorong translated his words into Momogun. After this introduction Mr Honegger, speaking in the

Indonesian language, addressed them and explained the intention behind his coming to Sabah. He asked them whether they would allow him to visit their longhouses for the proclamation of the Word of God. Tuorong again translated his words into Momogun and repeated Honegger's request to visit the longhouses. Headman Dompitok and some others replied that they would agree to this request. They said that there was no reason nor obstacle for him not to come into our houses, and all of them agreed to this. So after this meeting of the headmen in Sikuati, Honegger started to go and enter the longhouses near Sikuati and the Gonsomon folk. There now follows an account of the dates on which he visited these longhouses for the first time, as documented in Honegger's diary.

- *16.12.52 I visited Kilahon (Kampong Minyak is its present name)*
- *18.12.52 I went to Kimihang and Bangau.*
- *23.12.52 I went to Barambangun*
- *25.12.52 Worship with some people from Kimihang and Masangkung at the Chinese Church of Tamalang*
- *1.1.53 I went to the longhouse in Lajong*
- *11.2.53 I went to Loro dot opodok*
- *19.2.53 I went up into the longhouse of Tiga Papan and Gumandang*
- *25.2.53 I went up into the longhouse of Handal (Kandawazon)*
- *26.2.53 I moved on to Parapat and Angkob and, on the 27<sup>th</sup>, to Bonduk*
- *10.3.53 I went to Pilang (Ronggu) and on the 11.3. to Lodung and 12.3. to Kodungkung and Mogong and on 13.3. to Pituru*

All the longhouses he entered for the first time after the people had allowed him to do so, he visited again and again in order to continue with the Story of Jesus and his invitation for everyone to follow the Lord Jesus. More and more the people requested to be visited again, and

after a short time some people were first considering and later deciding to turn away from the old Adat and towards “sumuvang sambayang” = to enter worship, meaning to follow and receive the Good News and join the Christian church. The members of the longhouse, who had as a whole decided before all the other longhouses to follow this new faith was the Masangkung house, the village of headman Tuorong and his son Majimil. They wholeheartedly asked to be taught about the Good News. Therefore Honegger started there to teach them the Christian faith, so that they would understand the aim of being a Christian and to be ready to receive Christian baptism.

On December 23rd in 1953, the first baptism took place in Masangkung. Some families had asked to be baptized, first of all Tuorong and his wife Setia, his son Majimil, his wife Sinundihi and their two children Nupia and Masiun. A church building had by then already been erected on the top of the hill on Tuorong's land, covered with Nipa palm leaves. The walls were also made from palm leaves. The posts had been cut in the nearby jungle in the same ways as the Momogun used to build their houses. On Christmas Day, 25th December, the church building at Lodung was consecrated. This building was placed in between the villages of Lodung and Pilang. Together with the opening of this building, a first baptism took place for a few people from the longhouses in Pilang, Kusilad, Kodungkung, Lodung and Pituru who had by then already been instructed in the Christian faith. They had decided that one church building would suffice for their five Gonsomon villages. So on that Christmas Day there were three occasions to celebrate; first Christmas, then the opening of the new church building and the baptism of some of the people. This is why one can truly say that that day was a very special day in Ronggu in 1953. From then on, the Christian faith continued to flourish increasingly among the Momogun people in the Kudat District. So it came about that here one headman and his people decided to “enter Christianity”, in another place it was one family only to do so, in the third place one was thinking about making this decision. Wherever a

headman spoke in this way, his longhouse population was ready to follow suit and throw away all the symbols, tools and effigies of the spirits, the heart stones, the spirit basket and whatever else reminded them of the presence of the spirits in the longhouse. Sometimes the owners themselves took these spirit tools and threw them away, others were afraid to touch them and asked the pastor to take them away and burn them. The pastor then entered each family room, carrying the Bible as a sign that from that moment on, the family was now under the guidance, care and protection of God.

In 1954, a church was built in Lajong first because there were still people in the longhouse who did not yet want to become Christians. A second reason for building a church was that the people who had joined the Christian faith had started to plant coconut trees in the cleared rice field to make a plantation and had moved out of the longhouse in order to be near their garden, living there for a time in their rice hut before building a proper house. The parts of the longhouse that had been deserted started to break down. There was no longer any chance of coming together in the longhouse for Bible readings and worship. Once this church building was completed, there was further trouble. The water buffaloes, which often were let loose after the rice harvest, came to the cleared ground near the church and ruined the walls. So the congregation decided to put up a barbed wire fence around the building.

As soon as Pastor Honegger had called at the longhouses between Lajong and Lodung, there were some families, who had before tried to follow the Seventh Day Adventists, who wished to convert to Protestant Christianity. They asked Honegger to call on their homes. At that time, a dispute arose about the competition between SDA and Protestant Christianity. At the same time as Honegger arrived in Sabah, an SDA evangelist from Goshen had visited the countryside in Kudat and found the Merebau valley and the Tambuluran valley to be suitable for irrigation. This led him to start evangelising there according to his SDA background. As many Momogun were dissatisfied with their old Adat

and had understood that, as an Adventist, one was free from the adat, which forced people to make offerings to the spirits of the earth, and was able to make a living from irrigated rice fields, some families joined the SDA. The District Officer felt that if two different denominations were working in the same region trying to find followers, it could only end in a dispute. He therefore ruled that the SDA would not be allowed in the hinterland of Kudat, while the Basel Mission could not go beyond the boundary at Matunggung. All villages under Bandau administration were under the SDA influence, while all places under the Kudat administration would be part of the sphere of influence of the Basel Mission. Only Angkob (Tambuluran) and Merebau could still be visited by SDA people, and the SDA was able to construct its building for worship there. When Honegger saw the many places where he was to prepare for baptism, he reported this to the committee of the Basel Mission and requested an assistant. The Basel Mission sent Pastor Haeusermann to assist Mr Honegger. Together with Haeusermann, Mr Honegger's wife and their two younger children came along on the boat to Sabah. The two older children, who had already started school, were left in Switzerland to continue their education there. At that time, schools in Kudat were not yet very well organized and there were none at all in Sikuati. By that time, there were already plans to build a station in Sikuati in order to be closer to the longhouses. It was also clear to the missionaries that it was not a good idea to live too closely together in one building, especially with children and with the bachelor Haeusermann. Haeusermann arrived in Kudat on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1954, together with Honegger's wife and children. At this time Honegger was very busy, repeatedly visiting Masangkung, Merebau, Kumbatang, Ronggu, Lajong, Bangau, Kimihang, Suangpai and Tiga Papan. There was a further baptism service at Masangkung and in Ronggu. One group of Lajong folk requested to be prepared for baptism and to be baptized. The station in Sikuati was built on a piece of land bought from a Bajau, situated next to the land of the Chinese Basel Church in Sikuati. In May 1955, Honegger and Haeusermann moved to the new station. An initial course for teaching the alphabet was started

in the Malay language, and Mr Haeusermann himself started to learn Malay. A number of grown up teenaged boys and young family men wanted to learn to read and write, intending to read the Malay Bible. Amongst them were Angkap, Daang, Diyun, Totong, Angkangon, Majimil and Majukin and others. They had already started to assist in leading congregations in worship and in bringing the gospel to other places.

Not long after this, in October 1955, Werner Sigrist and his wife arrived and moved into the second building at Sikuati. Haeusermann, however, went back to Kudat. It was decided that he should be working towards the North of Kudat Tiga Papan, Gumandang Suangpai, Loro, Kimihang and Bangau. The other places would remain under Honegger's supervision. Mr. Sigrist had still to learn Malay, and had lessons with the teacher of the Government Primary School in Kudat.

A further plan of the Basel Mission was now to open up another station in Pitas across the Kudat Bay, providing there would be yet another pastor. So Honegger requested a further missionary for the work in Pitas. The committee in Basel called upon Traugott Forschner to undertake this task. He left Europe before the end of 1955 and arrived in Kudat on February 10th 1956. As he had been informed about the language problems involved when starting off with Malay, he decided from the very beginning to learn and use only Momogun. On the day of his arrival, he started to learn Momogun with his assistant Majimil. Every day, Majimil was prepared to explain and answer all the questions, queries and meanings of the Momogun language.

### **Organizing the Christian congregations in the Kudat District**

As in the times of the apostle Paul who started congregations in Thessalonians and Corinth, soon the time would come to get a congregation organized. It is not enough to simply explain the Good

News to the people and then expect the congregation to stand up and build itself like a house and get itself organized. The old Adat had followed the rule of the spirits and had been managed and sometimes also mishandled by the headman and the priestess, but the Good News was different. It was God who gave a new Adat, telling what was right and wrong. According to the old Adat, some things were allowed, others taboo. Some had been steps, which had to be taken by all means and others totally forbidden; often even just mentioning them was already a sacrilege, let alone making use of them. As soon as one Momogun became Christian he was under the influence of the new Adat and yet still bound to the old Adat, even though he thought that he had left the influence of the old Adat and its tradition.

This manifested itself in various ways and had to be discussed and resolved. For example, for the Momogun, there was a custom that dictated that whenever someone died in ones' family, the relatives had to follow the burial rites and the rites of clearing the grave after some time. The dead would not be buried before all close relatives had assembled, brothers and sisters, children, parents, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces and in-laws. At the funeral and at the grave clearing there were to be offerings for the spirits for the benefit of the deceased and there was also a festive meal. Parts of the slaughtered animal were eaten together with lots of rice wine, often until everyone was drunk, something which should have helped to forget the sorrow about the death and submerge it in alcohol. It so happened that even baptized Christians were called to fulfil their duty at the coffin and grave of their relatives, if their mother, father were still living along the old Adat of the spirits.

Following the old Adat, it was impossible not to join in the funeral procedures and grave clearings. But what should be one's position as a Christian? Was one allowed to go along and be part of the party of the spirits and also get drunk, just like in former times? Mr Honegger, who was teetotal, not touching even a drop of alcohol, would have liked to

forbid the use of rice wine altogether and create a rule similar to the SDA law, saying that it was not allowed for a Christian to drink any alcohol. Yet he knew that such a law was against the gospel of God's grace. For a Christian is not surrounded by walls, forbidding this and that. Instead he is free to say no to any form of pressure and taboo. At that time there were also often Christians who did not ask the pastor first before joining such offerings and drinking rounds at funerals and grave clearings. Only afterwards did the facts of their drunkenness, often even of a headman or church elder, come to the attention of the pastor. Some said again and again: if only you, Honegger, would forbid us these things and tell us that it is a taboo for Christians, we would probably obey. But Mr Honegger was afraid to say so and remained strict on the matter, as he knew very well that forbidding and commanding would not bring about the desired results.

The missionaries agreed that it was necessary to find a way of organizing the congregations and discussing these various problems in order to come up with a new Christian Adat.

### **A first meeting of church elders of the Momogun congregations.**

A first conference of church elders was held in the hut of the former owner of the Sikuati station from the 28th to the 29th of December 1955. The aim of this gathering was to discuss the difference between the old Adat of the forefathers and the Christian way of life. Pastor Honegger explained how the worship of the spirits had so much stuck to the life of the people that there had been no way to leave it. From birth on, at the betrothal and the wedding until death, the power of the spirits ruled over and troubled the lives of the Momogun. But now, as Honegger said, Christians are freed from the influence of the spirits, the old rule has ended and Christians now follow the new way. From birth until the grave, a person lives under God's might and it is God who orders Christian life and gives a new identity. Yet as far as the problem

of attending funerals of relatives is concerned, which are still heathen and involve drinking rice wine, no decision was taken at this gathering.

As for the feast, which could replace the offerings after harvest (*Pamapakan*), Mr Honegger told the meeting how Christians in Switzerland and in Kalimantan honour the end of the harvest. After the harvest there would be a collection for the church to make it possible for the church to help people in need. He encouraged the elders to consider and discuss an arrangement for the Momogun which complies with their way of honouring the end of harvest.

Another matter was brought up in this meeting: the age of a girl at her wedding. Honegger had seen that often, a girl who was still a child had been married off even though the girl had not at all understood what marriage meant. Here Honegger told them how, in his home country, there was a rule stating that a woman had to be 20 years of age before she could at all marry. As soon as Honegger had said this, the elders agreed to follow this rule, saying: Only when a girl has reached the age of twenty can she be married off. (It was not said who would be the one to fix the age of the girl. At that time, not a single person or child had a birth certificate, and it was still at the liberty of the father to decide about the age of his daughter, whether she was 20 already or not. Actually this decision was never practised.)

### **The second meeting of the church elders.**

In April 1956 there was another conference for the church elders. Some 43 people had come from 25 villages. This time, the matters of the first conference were tabled again and its decision repeated and confirmed. Then came the question as to how a congregation should be led and organized: who will be a church elder, who will lead the worship and will be his task? Who will be in charge of the key to the church building and look after the building, how much remuneration should be given to evangelists coming from another village, and what should be done to improve the gatherings of the church elders? After

discussion it was decided to meet every six months, enabling them to establish an order for Christian life and for the congregation.

### **The third meeting of the church elders.**

In April 1957, the representative of the Basel Mission came to hold a visitation of the work of the Basel Mission in Sabah. During his stay there was a further conference of the church elders. The pastors were asked to give an account of what really would be the centre of the church and its congregations. At this meeting, first steps were taken towards, firstly, listening to the teaching of scriptures and worshipping together and, from there on, discussing a possible church order. The themes of this teaching were:

- ✚ Corinthian 3, 11 Jesus is the foundation of the church, nothing else.
- ✚ Corinthian 12 Jesus is like the head of a body and he is the head of the church.

The church is the body of Christ and we all together are members of the body of Christ, sticking to this body, to Christ. There is no life apart from the body and the head, who rules over us.

Now Pastor Witschi, the representative of the Basel Mission, told the gathering how the spread of the gospel amongst the various people had happened and underlined the message heard before that there was no other foundation besides Jesus Christ, as he was the saviour of all mankind. At the meeting, the discussion led to the decision on how to use the Sunday offerings of the congregations: one third of the collection should go to the centre of the church for payments to the evangelists travelling to other congregations. The other portion was to be used for the church building fund of every congregation. One elder should act as treasurer and pass on the collections to the respective pastor.

During Mr Witschis visit in Kudat, the pastors discussed the opening of Bible courses for evangelists with the aim of improving their knowledge. The place of the Bible School was to be at Sikuati. Mr Witschi agreed to find funds for such courses. It was directly after this meeting that Mr Honegger and his family left for Switzerland.

In the following two years, 1957-58, three further conferences were held to learn, discuss and decide on an order which describes the aim of the church and congregation and its members. This is the outcome of these meetings:

***The order of the Christian congregation.***

*From the teaching of the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, the following order has been deduced. There are ten pillars of a congregation:*

- *The church being the community of the Lord Jesus, who lives in the midst of mankind but looks forward to the kingdom of God.*
- *The Bible teaches the church that there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, the saviour who has ruled over the church until today.*
- *The congregation lives by its worship.*
- *Baptism is the sign of being joined to the Christian community.*
- *The Lord's supper is the sign, which strengthens Christians' unity during their lives.*
- *A Christian does not live for him/herself. He/she has partners of three kinds, his wife/her husband, his or her family and his or her neighbours.*
- *In a congregation there are pastors, evangelists and church elders who represent the Lord Jesus in his ordering and leading of the congregation.*
- *A Christian congregation is committed to care for and watch over each member to the benefit of the member and the identity of the congregation.*

- *The congregation lives in the midst of mankind towards the well being of the country and its rule.*
- *The congregation and each Christian give witness to Christ's work before people who are far away.*

Having repeatedly listened to and discussed the teaching of Paul, and after sufficient explanation and seconded declarations of these discourses, the church elders and the evangelists gathered together in January 1958 decided that this order of the congregation was the outcome of the discussion and understanding of the Bible, summarized in the **Order of the Christian congregation**. Every church elder was given a copy of this order.

### **A first Bible course.**

It was only around October 1957 that all the necessary preparation for a first Bible course or Bible school was finally completed. A building was put up on the mission station at Sikuati with four family rooms, each measuring eight by twelve feet. There was a kitchen, a washing place and a classroom. There was provision for four families, as it was clear that the students would not be able to make their own living if they were to leave out one year of rice planting. Going back to their homes there would not be any rice ready for them.

The students of this course were: Majimil Tuorong, Diyun Madalag, Angkangon and Osuman from Rampai. As Mr Haeusermann and Sigrist were staying in Kudat at that time, Mr. Forschner gave lessons from Monday to Wednesday and on Fridays and Saturdays. On Thursdays, Mr Haeusermann gave Malay lessons in the morning and Mr. Sigrist showed how carpentry tools were to be used in making stools, and gave instructions for planting in the afternoon.

To make it easy to worship, a small booklet with hymns and prayers for every day and for special occasions had been prepared with the title: Service order book.

Alongside the teaching of parts of the Bible, translations of the respective sections were made and were put together as **The Story of Lord Jesus and The Story of the Old Testament** to a book with fifty stories of the life of Jesus, and another fifty stories from the Old Testament. Having completed this, a proper translation was put together during the Bible lessons on the First letter of Paul to the Corinthians. (This was in accordance with the readings at the conferences of the church elders leading to the compilation of the Order of the Christian congregation. Having read and understood Paul's writings to the Corinthians, the students took part in talks with the church elders and gave accounts of their own understanding.) When this course originally began, it was thought to be enough to let the course run for eight months. Then the evangelists could go back to their workplaces and start to plant rice again for the new planting season starting in July 1958. Shortly after the start of the course, it became clear to the helpers and the pastors that the course would only be of any value and be effective if another year was added. So the course continued up until June 1959. Having finished these fifty stories on the Old Testament, there was still time to read and translate the prophet Amos. This translation was made into a booklet *Nabi Amos* >The Prophet Amos, a first translation product from the Old Testament.

Other lessons included the Saturday morning joint preparation of the sermon to be preached the following Sunday in their home villages or other congregations. Each helper went home over the weekend to keep up the contact with his village. After the joint preparation of the sermon, the helpers tried in turns to give an example of what they would preach the next day. In this way, the evangelists were taught while at the same time learning from their experience in preaching every Sunday, and discussing their successes and failures the following Monday. There were also lessons in simple arithmetic in order to learn how to enter the collection sum in the Collection book, to learn the four ways of counting as well as how to plan for the provision of the family and do bookkeeping for expenses.

When they went back to their villages after the course finished, each one was given a number of bags of rice so as to be able to do their rice planting and have provision until the next harvest.

### **The first permanent church building.**

The inhabitants of the Popot longhouse decided in 1956 to become Christians. For quite a long time, this growing congregation met in the longhouse for worship and Bible classes. Building a church had been considered for quite a while, but they said that such a building would have to be a permanent building just like their longhouse, which had been built on very hard timber posts and had already been in use for many years. So they decided that the persons able to saw planks and joists should prepare sufficient wood, while others would prepare raw posts found in the former rice fields and left over from primary jungle. Others started to clear a piece of land on higher ground between their irrigated rice fields where the building was to be erected. It was already June 1959 by the time all materials were ready and the people were free to build the church. Ten men were needed to transport the very heavy posts (14 feet long and 15 inches in diameter) on their shoulders. The joist on top of the posts, with a length of over 40 feet, had to be carried by more than 30 men over a distance of more than two kilometres from the jungle on a very uneven path. Each a single shoulder that had carried these pieces of wood was bruised from transporting them in this way over such a distance, up and down hills and across brooks. Yet all were happy to have completed this job. In just three weeks the building was erected, the walls made with the sawn planks, the roof of corrugated iron sheets and shutters, also made of planks with wooden hinges, which could be opened up all along the walls to allow enough air into the building. There was also a small bell tower on top of the roof. Some men with artisan skills made an altar, a baptism font and a pulpit in the forms of their own tradition. So it was that on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 1959, this church building could be dedicated for its use. A week later the first baptism in the congregation was able to take place, as the

congregation had been assembling every evening for baptism lessons throughout the period of building.

### **The sixth conference of church elders.**

At the end of the first Bible course, a meeting of the church elders was held at Sikuati on 29<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June 1959. The theme of this meeting was the office and duty of the church elders and their responsibility for the congregation. Based on the Bible texts of Matthew 20,26-28, Matthew 18,15-17 and 1st Timothy 3,1-7 the church elders' discussions about caring for, watching over and leading the congregation were explained and discussed. In 1957 arrangements had already been made for timetables to be drawn up for each month, showing the places where the pastors and evangelists would be on duty and what the Bible reading would be in each case. A short commentary on the respective text was also included. Each month, all the helpers and evangelists gathered together in order to prepare themselves for their sermons in the various congregations. The idea of having the same Bible reading in every congregation aimed at promoting a general understanding of what Christian life and faith means.

### **The second course for evangelists.**

Directly after the harvest in April 1960, the Bible school was opened again at Sikuati. In the first week further living quarters were built in a joint action to make space for a greater number of evangelists. Altogether, 14 of them attended this second course, most of them together with their family and a few who were still unmarried. The lessons comprised the repetition of the Story of Jesus and the Story of the Old Testament, which had been hectographed for their use. Along with the exposition of the Gospel of Marc, a translation into Momogun was made, followed by the Story of the Acts, Paul's letter to the Galatian, his First letter to Thessalonians, First Timothy and First Peter. Their translations were also bound together to make another booklet. Pastor Haeusermann gave lessons on the prophets of Isaia and Jeremia and on the Malay language. Mrs Forschner started to teach English to

some of the helpers. Arithmetic and the use of money was also added as a subject.

### **Further permanent church buildings were built.**

As the church hut in Lajong had been badly damaged, the *Atap*-walls and roof torn, the church elders decided to replace this building. But the replacement was to be of a more permanent style, as seen in Popot, made of planks and joists and with an asbestos roof. The construction took some months. The new church was ready to be opened on 25th May 1960.

During the Easter service in Kumbatang 1960, a storm shook the church hut and people were afraid that the building might collapse onto the heads of the assembled congregation. With the service still going on, some men left the church and cut down some trees in the vicinity to stabilize the building. Directly after the service, the men gathered to consider what had to be done. How could the hut be replaced? It was obvious that the posts of the hut were already rotten and it did not make any sense just to use some posts to prop up the building. There was no other option but to construct a new building. A long discussion followed, leading to a clear decision. There would be no wood in the neighbourhood of Kumbatang suitable for making planks and joists. There was also no one in Kumbatang skilled in plank sawing. But the congregation had put aside quite a lot of money and would be able to buy the necessary building materials. The question was: how could the materials be transported to the church site using the only existing footpath. No lorry could negotiate this path. There was already the government road leading to Parapat and Angkob. Someone proposed to build a dirt track from the main road at Parapat instead of going to and fro fetching the material from the farthest point accessible to the lorry that was transporting the planks and other timber for the church. This proposal found the acceptance of every man present. On the spot it was decided to start with the building of a road along which a lorry could transport all of the necessary materials right up to the church ground. It

was agreed that on the very next day, all the men would go to Parapat, start clearing the undergrowth and begin to level the road with their hoes. It was predicted that the road could be completed in three months. And so it happened. Late in July 1960, the new church was opened with a roof called London roof. These corrugated asbestos sheets were of a red colour. During the night before the dedication service, the old church hut had collapsed in another strong wind.

### **The seventh conference of the church elders.**

At the end of the second Bible course for evangelists in July 1961, another conference was held for the church elders. This meeting was concerned with finally settling the way in which Christian marriage and wedding should be understood and arranged. At that time the government had issued marriage licences to Pastor Haeusermann and Forschner to certify a marriage agreement to be organised together with a Christian wedding service. This combined act in a church service would give the marriage legal certification and acknowledgement within the congregation. After a discussion, the elders agreed to this new order, stating that as from then on, this form of marriage, with the name Christian Marriage Ordinance of the Government, and wedding was to be used in the congregation.

In 1961, the committee of the Basel Mission gave an order to apply for land for a farm school at Bavang Gazo. The churches in the West were of the opinion that the churches in this region should receive support in matters of development. Funds were collected for this purpose. The committee followed Pastor Sigrist's suggestion to open a farm school at Bavang Gazo. During his first term in Sabah, Pastor Sigrist had already tried to do some planting in various places, e.g. ploughing in Sikuati in order to plant peanuts. Due to the very sandy soil around the Sikuati station, nothing came of this planting experiment. (This very poor soil was probably the real reason that the former owner of the land had sold it to the Basel Mission in 1954). He

then attempted some irrigated rice planting together with the people of Rondonon.

The difficulty there was how to get to Rondonon at all, as there was still no road. Going by boat from the fisherman at the Tunggang (Mile 16), the sea was sometimes so rough that it was impossible to go around Batu Mandi. One of the Chinese had given the Basel Mission a piece of land of some 48 acres at Andab, near the Sikuati station, low land which had thus far not been used for planting rice. The whole piece of land was covered with lalang grass and had been burned off by fire every year. Sigrist led the four helpers from the first Bible course in starting up a rice field by ploughing the field. The problem there was that as soon as there was enough water for planting, it was instantly so deep that the rice seedlings were not yet long enough to be planted in this deep water. In the end, however, some rice was harvested. The rice was stored in the hut, which had been built at the beginning of this trial. The ploughs, harrows and other tools had been stored in this hut. One night the grassy low land went up in flames again. The rice, the hut and all the tools were destroyed. These experiences gave Mr. Sigrist the idea of setting up a farm school on some mission land in order to teach people a way of planting different to the method the Momogun had used. This plan had been put before the committee in Basel and received its support and funding.

However, the conference of the pastors in Sabah, when confronted with the plan for a farm school and the request by the committee from Basel to apply for land, told Basel that this plan would not be compatible with the reality of the Momogun's situation. They said that the Momogun often work on the Chinese plantations and assist with the rice planting there. From this experience, they know already how to plant coconut farms and rubber plantations as well as how to plant rice in irrigated fields. Their problem was not having the means and funds to buy coconut seedlings or tools like ploughs and harrows or water buffaloes for the preparation of rice fields. If only a teacher would go to

the various villages and stay there with the people, teaching and assisting them in starting plantations and distributing funds for seedlings and tools, then the task of the mission would be sufficiently fulfilled. In this way, any field planted and all returns from the planting efforts would be the property of the person who had done the work. If this could be achieved in a few villages, these villages would then become examples for others, encouraging them to follow suit.

Bringing teenage boys into a farm school, who had no formal primary education, would be pointless. After all, according to the Momogun customs of the time, growing up was quite different. As soon as young boys started to become unruly, constantly wandering off and generally getting out of control, the parents would arrange for the son to be married off. This young man would then be the servant of the in-laws for quite a number of years. It was not the father who was teaching the son how to live and how to work towards supporting one's own family. It was the father-in-law who forced the young man to work and support the family. For this reason anything the young teenager learned at a farm school could not be put into practice, as it was the father-in-law who was giving the instructions on what the young man had to do. In this society, the idea that the young man from the farm school could teach the in-laws how things were to be done could not yet work.

Yet the committee in Basel made a decision and requested that the pastors in Sabah apply for land at Bavang Gazo. Before Pastor Sigrist returned to Sabah, he had asked for some land to be cleared for a first season of hill rice planting, so that when he arrived in Sabah in August 1961 he could start with hill rice planting and his farm school project. Shortly after Sigrist, the agriculturalist Mr John Staehelin arrived, joining Sigrist in his work. When the cleared piece of land was burnt, the very old and famous Red Fig Tree of Bavang Gazo also went up in flames. All these wonderful orchids, ferns-some with fronds of six and more feet in length - and other marvellous flora vanished and the *Nunuk Aragang* ended up falling down, turning to ashes.

As the building in Sikuati, built for the second Bible course, was no longer in use - at that time there was no plan to continue with this type of schooling - this building was moved to Bavang Gazo for possible temporary use. In the end, however, Pastor Sigrist and Staehlin decided to travel to and from Kudat while getting the farm school project ready. It wasn't until October 1962 that the farm school was officially opened for young teenaged boys who wanted to learn reading and writing.

### **The Evangelist course 1962.**

From the experiences with the Bible course in 1961, it was decided not to have another yearly course. Instead of this, several lay helpers were to come together directly after harvest (April) for the time between harvest and the beginning of the next rice planting season (July). With the former Bible course, the church effectively had to provide for the families of the evangelists for two years. By using the time between the harvest and next planting season, everyone attending the course could provide for themselves. As many more congregations had come into being in the meantime, many more trained helpers were needed to serve these congregations. So 22 lay helpers came together for nine weeks and read Paul's Letter to the Romans and received instruction in the Christian faith, Dogmatics and ethics.

### **Discussions towards a translation of the Bible into Momogun.**

There was a translating conference from the 2 to the 15<sup>nd</sup> of July 1962 at Lawas, the headquarters of The Borneo Evangelical Mission (BEM) in Sarawak. The aim was to bring together the various missionaries of Sabah and Sarawak with the aim of finding a common Momogun translation of the Bible. A representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London had called and organized this meeting. For two weeks, people from Ranai and Tuaran, from the Kinabatangan and Kudat tried together but were not able to find a solution. The only finding agreed on by everyone was that it was most important for the Christian Momogun to have a translation of the Bible that could be used by them all. It was felt that it could not be too difficult to bring together

the various dialects, if only this was done with enough enthusiasm. But if each mission kept to its own way of work, there would be no way of finding common ground. There was also a demand from one side that the translation be completed in the shortest possible time. It was obvious that the person asking for a quick translation had not done any proper research into the Momogun language. Their method of translating was to give their assistant, a young man, the Malay term and to ask for the respective Momogun word. His answer was simply written down and that was the translation. Furthermore, the representative of the Bible Society in London, too, was still suggesting that a translation should render one word after the other from one language into the other (*kata demi kata*).

The only outcome of this conference was that some Rungus and some people from Inland, from Bundu Tuhan, Ranau and Sunsuran should meet in September 1962 in Ranau. At the Lawas meeting, Diyun Madalag and Forschner had represented the Kudat region. Angkap Mangalis, Diyun Madalag and Forschner attended the meeting at Ranau for a further exchange on the Momogun language. During this meeting it was agreed that the way the Rungus dialect had been written down was the right way to go about things. The Ranau dialect would no longer use two different “e” and “é”-vowels, but “e” and “o” respectively, as was the case in Rungus. Of course, there was considerable opposition to this change, as people had for a long time got accustomed to these two different “e”-vowels. It also became clear during the course of the long discussions and explanations that the difference was not only a linguistic problem. There was also a great difference in theological outlook between Ranau and Kudat. Nevertheless it was decided to meet again at Lawas in March 1963 for a further conference.

At this meeting at Lawas in March 1963, Diyun, Majimil, Haeusermann and Forschner took part with the aim of sorting out the theological terms in the Bible and the Christian faith. The search for these terms went on for a further two weeks, not only all day long but

often carrying on until midnight. Again, no common solution was found. Instead it was decided that each mission should find its own way of translating the Bible.

### **The opening of a hostel for school boys**

After there had been an ABC course in May and June 1956 at Sikuati for whoever wished to attend and learn to read and write, two village elders in Tiga Papan decided, it would be a good thing for their boys to receive proper schooling and not just short courses. With this in mind they came to Mr Haeusermann and asked him to make a school for their boys at Kudat. Headman Madalag and his friend Manahil wished that the Basel Mission would open such a school. Mr Haeusermann, being acquainted with the head teacher of the Government Primary School in Kudat, at that time the only school for just 40 native children (Bumiputra), discussed and agreed with this teacher that Manjil Madalag and Ibing Manahil could attend this school. Before the year had ended, both had advanced to Primary class four.

At that time, the parents prepared rice ready for these boys and the boys were accommodated in the old kitchen building of the Mile Two station. To facilitate their schooling, Mr Haeusermann and Mrs Forschner gave the boys additional lessons in Malay and English during the afternoon. On the 1st of January 1957, during the flag raising and the schools parade at the town playground in Kudat, Mrs and Mr Forschner encountered the District Officer (DIO). Forschner mentioned to the DIO that the Basel Mission intended to open a school at Sikuati with the vernacular language as a medium as soon as the necessary preparations regarding buildings and books had been made, providing that the government agreed to this idea. The school opening could take place by August 1957. The DIO found this to be an excellent idea. He had already seen some Momogun boys among the boys from the GPS. He suggested that this plan be discussed with the Native Chief and said: "I shall invite the Native Chief to come with me to your house at Mile Two".

However, when the DIO and the Dato Mustapha sat down in Mile Two and again heard the proposal of the Basel Mission, that as soon as the school books in Momogun were ready a school could be opened in August 1957, Mustapha replied: "This is too late. If i manage this, the school will be opened by April. Your proposal takes too much time. It is clear that the medium of the school will be the Malay language". The District Officer supported Mustapha and both emphasised: "We will go ahead with the school, not the Basel Mission". (In fact it was in April that this school was eventually opened, but in the year 1959, not 1957. For the Basel Mission, however, there was no way of opening a school using the Momogun language.)

When the two boys Manjil and Ibing came back from their village Tiga Papan in January for the new year 1957 another six boys came along with them. They all wanted to go to school and each of them carried on his head a small bag of rice as provisions. They said that their parents would come by to discuss arrangements for the boys' lodging. The parents proposed to build a small longhouse for the boys at Mile Two. The parents came and planned together with Mr Haeusermann and Mr Forschner, how to construct a dwelling for their children and agreed to supply them with food, one *gantang* of rice for each week. Haeusermann agreed to provide additional food and salt for the children, while the boys would help in collecting coconuts from the plantation. This was the start of the Asrama PCS.

Each year more boys came and made it necessary to extend the small longhouse. It so happened that the posts and beams of this longhouse had not been of the best quality, having been taken from secondary jungle. They were soon rotten and the building was on the point of collapsing. In 1960, it was necessary to consider how forty boys could be accommodated in a proper hostel.

At that time, a report sent to Europe told people there about the housing and food problems with the hostel. It so happened that there

were boys who received the promised provision of rice week after week, while others could not bring any rice at all as their parents did not even have enough to feed the family at home. After a while two letters arrived from Europe. One from the Basel Mission explaining that an organisation, Bread for the World had agreed to send 40,000 Straits Dollars for a hostel building. The second letter came from an organization called Kindernothilfe (KNH) and contained application forms. With these forms it was possible to apply for funds for each boy towards food, clothing and school requirements amounting to 30 German Marks per month. The leader of the hostel applied to Duisburg for support for all the boys, and the organisation in Germany agreed. The idea of KNH was that there were foster parents in Germany for each boy who would pay this amount of money for their respective foster child on a monthly basis. So from this time on there was support for the children in the hostel and the expenses of the hostel were calculated in the budget of the Basel Mission. At the beginning, all provision for the boys and the hostel were provided by their parents, by Mr Haeusermann and Mrs Forschner's salary when she was an English teacher at Lok Yuk School in Kudat for a year. In 1964 the boys themselves built further rooms between the posts under the hostel Duisburg, and made it possible for the secondary boys to have separate quarters instead of staying and sleeping together with all the younger boys. The number of boys in the hostel had by then increased to 56. The first boys to enter the hostel had by then already left the school and some of them found employment as auxiliary teachers in the Village School Lodung and the Farm School Bavang Gazo.

### **The Gospel spreads towards the south and to the other peninsula**

When Mr Haeusermann left for good to Switzerland, there were many requests from longhouses near Matunggung and near the sea as well as from the other peninsula, especially Pantai and Liu-Dandun, for the evangelists to come and bring them the gospel. At the end of a meeting of lay helpers and evangelists early in June 1964, some of them

were ready to answer these requests by visiting the respective places. Six teams of two went for a week, while the team visiting the other peninsula went for two weeks. Their aim was to find out where it would be right and good to start with the proclamation of the Good News.

One group visited Ponudaan and Ritah, another Molongkolong up to Kirangavan and Botutai, another Nangko and down as far as Togumamal, another to the end of the other peninsula Dalas, Kandang, Molubang and Mongkubou, another team went to Suangeloi, Kabatasan and Kusilad while the last team went to Pantai. When they came back, their reports were mixed. From Pantai came not just the news that the people wished to become Christians - they had already taken this step forward and declared themselves to be entering Christianity and had, as a group of various families, already held a first worship service. They also had urged one of the evangelists to stay with them as their leader. From Molongkolong came the message that they, too, were ready to enter Christianity, together with their relatives at Botutai. The others had asked to be visited again by the evangelists, as they still wished to get to know and understand what Christian religion would mean.

In September 1964 a station was built at Pantai together with the people from Pantai, who provided the timber posts and assisted with the building. The new Pastor Dilger, who was still learning the Momogun language, moved to Pantai and began to oversee the growing Christian congregations there. Once he was living there, many longhouses in the vicinity of Pantai asked to be visited and decided to become Christians. In June 1965 a clinic was opened at Pantai and a course was held for additional lay helpers. As so many longhouses had joined the church, there was a need for more lay helpers. 29 lay helpers joined the Bible school at Pantai, that continued to exist until March 1967. By that time the work near Pantai involved the villages of Golom, Taradas, Gunsali, Tangkarason, Penampadan, Medan, Boribi, Lingkuton, Sulakolung, Narandang, Sinukab, Monduring and others Peter Osingko Taganau remembers in his writings how **The Gospel crossed the sea to the**

**peninsula Marudu 1964.** He wrote:

*In 1962 the older Momogun schoolboys staying at the hostel in Mile Two were asked by the government to go to their own people. The government sent two of them to Konibungan in order to get people to apply for identity cards. This was during the school holidays in November and December 1962. It was Mangamban John Kastum and Albert Manangku that went to Konibungan. For two weeks they made the people sign their identity cards and met with the people there and realized that in the area of Konibungan some 70% of the population were Rungus. When they went there for a second time, they came to Pinapak and saw that these people were Rungus. As they were already Christians themselves, they told them about Christianity and how they had left the influence and the power of the spirits.*

*Now they were still going to school. They came back after having finished the work and stayed overnight at Mile Two. During the meal they reported about their work. The Mission was pleased about the news, and that despite being schoolboys they had been employed part time by the government. They reported about their encountering Rungus near Konibungan, who had asked whether or not pastors would also visit them on the peninsula. At Pinapak, so John Kastum said, he had even held the finger of Motumpul (the very tall person, more than nine feet tall who had been called by the government to have his right hand finger examined at the hospital). That finger was sooooo big, like a lunggazan, said John Kastum. Then at the meeting of the lay helpers in 1963 it was Musaat Manangku (Idris) and John Kastum who explained to the helpers and Mr Haeusermann what they had seen and heard at Konibungan and at Pinapak and Pitas. They reported that there were agricultural folk at Sulakolung, Sinukab and Piyas. Haeusermann reported this to the other colleagues.*

*In February 1964 three lay helpers went over to the other peninsula: Mohigan Ringkuzan, Osingko Taganau and Motuka. They*

*travelled in the motorboat belonging to Asun, the father of the Honourable member of the State Assembly Wong Phen Chong, and came to Pitas Kulumpang. They went to Kabatasan by rowing on the river and stepped up into the longhouse of Matarak from Kabatasan at midday. Having talked to the headman Matarak and another older man Amai Tongindang, they went to Rukom. At that place people came together in the evening and they were able to tell them about the reason for their visit. They wanted to talk to them about religion. That evening many listened, even the headman Monugkong and Amai Olilud, but the headman Mongundol was not present. He had gone to Suangkiping with twenty families in order to move there on the advice of Mr Durai from the Agricultural Office. He wanted them to arrange irrigated fields and plant rice there. The following day they went to Kampong Lajong Pitas and stayed there for two nights, meeting with Amai Mogimbang and his people.*

*The next day they went to Sulakolung and spent two nights in the house of Bungkak as it rained very hard at the end of that rainy season. In Sulakolung they met Masanang, the person who often travelled to Kudat selling poison and making people afraid. He was known to own witchcraft and be able to curse people. He tried to frighten the helpers, yet after having seen Motuka, he himself was afraid. He said: I am not as powerful as his mother Muoronzog. She really is perfect. At that time a special offering was in action called Bungkaka, with everyone engaged.*

*On the third day at Konibungan they went to Sinukab, to the village of Rumambal, who was a very strong supporter of the UPKO (United Party of the Kadazan Organisation). There, too, the helpers explained their reason for coming. A similar feast was also in progress there. So the helpers decided to go back to their families of Motuka and Mohigan, both having wife and children at home. In the morning, Motuka and Mohigan left and walked to Pitas while Osingko went on to Piyas, quite content to have these feasts behind him. He entered*

*Rumunji's house, the headman of Piyas. In the evening, people came together and Osingko told them the reason for his visit. In Piyas Osingko met with some very old people, Sugimbung and others. The next day he went to Pantai accompanied by Mosuhal and Lumukad, passing over the valley of Gasop. That evening in Pantai, the headman Basang called some people together in his house, some eleven families. As soon as Osingko had finished his story, these eleven families wished to become Christians. But Osingko refused to accept them, saying: "I have not come to make you Christians. I only wanted to tell you that we on the Kudat peninsula are no longer slaves of the spirits. But if you want to become Christians and I return home, there will be no one who can assist you in worshipping God. Then you will be in trouble". Basang asked Osingko to come with him to Golom to meet Mojihung and to go to Lingkuton to meet Motinggis and his son Rumandut. At Motinggis, too, there was a feast for the spirits. Osingko spent nearly a week at Pantai before returning to Kudat by a boat powered by a Seagull outboard engine. Together with Osingko, the headmen Basang, Rumunji, Rumambal, Majupi and the Amai Bahut and Tungking travelled from Boribi. They wished to meet Pastor Haeusermann.*

*On the first evening of March 1964, these headmen from the villages of Konibungan met Pastor Haeusermann and explained to him their wish to become Christians. They signed a statement declaring that they wished to become Christians and follow the Lord Jesus. Haeusermann and Osingko agreed that Osingko would visit them again the following June together with other lay helpers. However, Osingko had an accident in May and was very badly wounded.*

*At the end of June Osuman, Awasang and Mojukin were sent to Konibungan. They had come to Mile Two wondering how to get to Konibungan. None of the three had any knowledge of that place. That day Osingko was allowed to leave the hospital after his accident. He went to the shops with Pastor Forschner and met Majatig and his brother Lumogi. Osingko had met them while he had been in Pantai for*

*a few days and had also come to Lingkuton. It was strange that Osingko had recognized Majatig, while Majatig could not remember having met Osingko. Osingko brought Majatig and Lumogi along to see Pastor Forschner and it was agreed that Osuman and his friends could travel with them going back to Konibungan. So it was that Awasang, Osuman and Mojukin came to Pantai and assisted these eleven families in becoming Christians. After this, Awasang and Mojukin went back to Kudat while Osuman remained in Pantai. The people would not allow him to leave them, telling him that they wanted him to be their evangelist.*

*When Awasang and Mojukin went back, they travelled with Mojuring and headman Basang. Basang wanted to tell Pastor Forschner that the people in Pantai had accepted Christianity. He also went to see the District Office to get an official acknowledgement for the pastors to visit the other peninsula.*

*On the Freedom Day of Sabah 1964 (31.8.), Osingko was asked to go to Pantai and find out whether it was possible to travel to Pantai by boat. For three days Osingko followed the villagers, clearing the tidal river from undergrowth and wood. It was necessary to dive, find the beams and cut them under water, then have them pulled out by boat in order to make a clear passage.*

*Once back in Kudat, he reported that the tidal river could now be used, so he was asked to find someone who would sell them a motorboat. He found that Haji Mariangin was prepared to sell his boat, so Pastor Forschner, Dilger and Osingko had a trial trip to Pantai. After eleven hours they arrived at the landing place of Pantai. It was midnight. On this visit, the headman Basang and the Pastors agreed to build a station in Pantai at the place where a piece of primary jungle had been left over from clearing due to the fact that the spirits had their special home there. Back in Kudat, the motorboat was bought for the Pantai station and this first boat was called Bayan. There was,*

*however, one problem: Only Basang and Mojuring were available to return with the boat to Pantai, but neither of them had any idea how to start the engine. In the end someone else started the engine for them and they were able to return home. In Pantai, Basang's son Masarap was to be the boat's captain. By September 1964 Pastor Dilger had already started building the station. The timber was taken from the jungle and the planks from the sawmill in Barambangun. Before the end of 1964, Dilger moved with his family to Pantai and many villages near Pantai decided to become Christians, so in May 1965, a Bible School for lay helpers was opened with 27 people. Osuman and Osingko assisted Pastor Dilger in teaching the course, and even new lay helpers from the Kudat peninsula attended this course in Pantai.*

*During the time of the course, the lay helpers joined the other people who were getting a road cleared down to the landing place in Pantai, to Gunsali, Taradas and to Konibungan. They cleared the way, made bridges, cut old, hollow stems to use them as pipes. Altogether some 22 miles of field roads were built from Konibungan to Datong. The people of the various villages worked along the road and were given provisions due to not having had a harvest the last planting season. At the end of the Bible course, even a bridge was built over the tidal river at Konibungan. The government supplied the timber needed for the posts, but the floorboards and the balustrade were made timber sawn at the place that had a sawmill. This bridge was officially opened in July 1966 in the presence of the District Officer from Kudat. Other bridges along this road had to be made at Gunsali and Taradas using local materials. Pastor Dilger also undertook to provide coconut seedlings and to encourage the people to plant them together with other fruit plants. Forschner sent a large number of coconut seedlings to Pantai with each boat. The helpers often assisted people in their villages with harvesting and other work and were of genuine help to the people there. A clinic was also established at Pantai. Before the actual building was ready, an annex of Dilger's house was used as clinic. As soon as nurse Dora Loosli arrived, she started work at that provisional place, caring*

*for the sick and needy while simultaneously learning the Momogun language.*

This is Osingko's report of how the Gospel travelled over the sea to the peninsula Marudu. On the Kudat peninsula, the longhouses Nangko, Penampang, Tinukadan, Togumamal, Pinavantai, Bonduk and others were opened. In Pitas, a congregation was started at Dandon Liu, Suangeloi and a few villages near Baving. The mission therefore opened a station at Nangko with Majimil in charge, and at Baving with Diyun in charge. Ohigan promised to regularly visit the villages in Pitas with his boat until the people there were ready for conversion. There were also a few more villages near Tinangol whose people wished to hear the gospel. It was the task of the Pastor at Bavang Gazo to care for them.

### **The Native Voluntary School at Lajong, Lodung and Tinangol**

As long as the British ruled over Sabah, the Basel Mission was not allowed to open and run any schools. When the British left, there was a rumour that the school policy of the new government might have changed. The Basel Mission therefore applied for permission to open schools and was granted permission to open three schools at Lajong, Lodung and Tinangol. The villages had to apply for land in the name of the Basel Mission, while the Basel Mission had to obtain funds for the school buildings and a teacher from Europe to supervise of these schools. By autumn 1964, these schools were already open with Mr Stettler as supervisor. Each school had four classrooms and quarters for the teachers.

The schools were not named after the Basel Mission but were called Native Voluntary Schools, so that the teachers would be employed and paid by the state administration, while the Basel Mission paid the supervisor. This arrangement was made to avoid the local church having to bear all the running costs of the schools at a later date. The

church in Cameroon, in West Africa, derived from the Basel Mission had had great difficulties in paying for the upkeep of the schools and providing for the teachers of these schools. This experience led to choosing another way of opening schools in Sabah. There was clearly a need to provide schooling for the Momogun people, and this might even encourage the government to at last take an interest in the education of the Momogun children. So it came about that the government did indeed take up this challenge by opening up schools for the so-called *Bumiputras* (natives) all over the Kudat District, in this case for the Momogun youth. As many young Momogun had already attended school while staying at the PCS hostels, some of them were employed as teachers by the government to work in these schools.

### **Towards a health service for the people**

When the missionaries started to visit the longhouses they noticed that there was a great deal illness, disease and serious wounds. There was a lack of any health provision for the people, especially for the little ones. It therefore went without saying that whenever a missionary entered the longhouse, he opened his medical bag and distributed medicines and dressed wounds. When Mrs Honegger, a nurse, arrived, the Basel Mission opened a clinic at the Sikuati station. Each day, many people from the neighbourhood of Sikuati came to request medicine or have injections. The Medical Officer of the Kudat Cottage Hospital agreed to the supply of medicines and the Basel Mission, too, sent various medicines from Switzerland and Germany. When Mrs Honegger left, another nurse took over from her: her name was Trudi Sigrist. At that time, the Red Cross of the Kudat Branch and the Basel Mission agreed to construct a clinic hut near the road, away from the mission station. It was Mr Lo Cham En, the chairman of the Red Cross in Kudat who oversaw the building of a clinic which was big enough not only for the daily out-patient treatment of the people but also with enough room to stay overnight for several days while being treated in the clinic. The Basel Mission was still responsible for providing for the nurse. Later on, even people living as far away as Tinangol and

Pinavantai, having to walk for a whole day, came on foot to Sikuati asking to be treated. At that time the road only reached as far as Lajong, by 1960 as far as Angkob.

As soon as the Basel Mission had opened the Tinangol School, they also built a clinic at Tinangol (1964), in Pantai in 1965 and in Dandun Liu in 1967. While a Chinese contractor built the clinic in Tinangol, men from Tangkarason built the clinic in Pantai. They even provided all the timber, beams and all other wooden materials, having cut tree trunks from the jungle into planks and planed them. The Basel Mission also provided the nurses for these clinics. In the Sikuati clinic, a Chinese woman assisted the nurse in her daily work, also helping in the nurse's household. Some day a Momogun girl came to the clinic with a sick relative from her family. Watching the nurse at work with so many sick people around, the girl started to assist the nurse in her work. At that time it was unheard of among the Momogun people to interfere with sick people, as doing so was believed to come into contact with the realm of the spirits. No one would touch a sick person apart from one's own relatives in order to keep away from any spiritual influence. Yet this girl helped the nurse without being afraid and, after a while, stayed with the nurse and learned how to treat sick people. Even the Medical Officer from Kudat was surprised and arranged for her to get proper training as a nurse. In this way, Momogun girls began to be trained as nurses. Quite a few young women took up such training after having completed their primary and secondary education. Many of them now work in Government hospitals and clinics.

### **Another conference of the church elders from 29-31.August. 1964**

There had been various meetings of the church elders during 1963, but there are no existing records of these meetings in the archives of the Basel Mission. As far as can be established from memories, nothing new was discussed, only the old questions of marriage and the growth

of the congregations were on the agenda. At a further conference in August 1964, the first after Sabah had obtained its freedom from colonialism and had joined Malaysia, this new situation was to be discussed. How should congregations carry on amongst the Momogun people, how could the propagation of the Gospel be continued in other longhouses and how could new congregations grow and be supported? It was decided that Osuman should stay at Pantai as their evangelist and that there should also be an evangelist stationed at Molongkolong, at Nangko and at Baving. A small group was set up to prepare a constitution of a future church. It had been felt that as soon as Malaysia had been established, it would also be necessary to establish the church in Sabah. Should the Basel Mission no longer be allowed to work in Sabah, then there would be already a church able to administer the congregations. This committee for the church constitution comprised the headman Madalag, the elders Onginjan, Osuin, Mojihi, headman Tuorong, elder Asim, Daang, Majaman, Majimil, Diyun and the pastors Forschner, Dilger and Sigrist.

### **At the meeting, that followed on 3-5. August 1965,**

The church elders agreed on the first and second part of the constitution, while discussing the third and fourth parts and finalizing these parts too. While this constitution was being finalized and accepted, Pastor Friedrich Maier, the representative of the Basel Mission for Asia, arrived. He had been a missionary in China up until 1950. The church elders asked the Basel Mission to acknowledge this constitution. During this meeting it was decided to establish the Protestant Church in Sabah at the conference, which was to follow in April 1966. As for the name PROTESTANT, in Momogun POTORONTOG, meaning to put up straight anything that was falling or giving the impression not to be firm upright, it was said that the PRO stands for: *in support of, towards*, while the TESTANT implies *witnessing*. When Luther was expelled from the Roman Catholic

Church, the message of the church with regard to its founder Christ was very distorted. The church was rather like a business. Therefore all churches following the reformation (meaning to reform the church towards its original status) called themselves Protestant Churches. The name Church of the Gospel or in English Evangelical Church has a different meaning, as it carries with it the meaning/idea of fundamentalism. Those churches do not follow the tradition of the reformation but have various points forming their basic concept, which do not comply with the gospel, even if they call themselves the only true Christians. Those churches also generally have a less fixed form, order and liturgy.

### **Founding Synod of the Protestant Church in Sabah 18.-20. April 1966**

At the next conference of the church elders, the PCS was established when this meeting was unanimously called the first synod of the PCS. This happened in the following way: the delegates of the congregations assembled in the Church building of the Chinese Church and held the inauguration service of the PCS, asking for God's blessing for this part of His church. At that time there was not yet a church building at the mission station in Kudat. Earlier, the constitution had been certified and the church committee elected: Asim from Kodungkung, Osuin from Lajong, Mogiling from Tinangol, Basang from Pantai, Dilger, Rusterholz, Diyun Madalag as General Secretary and Forschner as its president. At this meeting there were further delegates from Mongkobou, Baving, Dalas, Suangeloi, Kabatasan, Liu, Dandon and Bilangau. It was decided that Pastor Gugger should visit these places near the Bengkoka-River. Diyun should evangelise the places near Baving and hold the Sunday services in these places. However, Diyun accidentally drowned during a typhoon near Molubang on 20. June 1966, so Osingko and Suyin took over the work at Baving.

## **Second Synod of the PCS on 28.-30. March 1967**

The synod elected Majimil Tuorong as general secretary of the PCS, replacing Diyun who had died, and Osingko Taganau was chosen as the financial secretary of the PCS. The synod again discussed pastoral care in the congregations and organized the training and remuneration of the lay preachers. To finance their pay, it was decided that each family should supply an amount of four gantang rice per year, if the people had planted and harvested rice.

The **Third Synod on 7-8. August 1967** had been arranged to coincide with the synod of the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia (BCCM) in Kudat. Both synods were opened in a joint service. At this joint service, the Chinese Christians realized that there was now also a Momogun church and that this church had more members than they had themselves from all over the towns of Sabah. At the same time, the Momogun understood that they were not the only church of Christ. Before then, there had only been occasional encounters and joint services between local Chinese and Momogun Christians at Tajau and Sikuati, which meant that (only?) two or three congregations had experienced these Christian partnerships and brother- and sisterhood. Only at this synod did it become clear that there existed both a Momogun and a Chinese church. During this meeting, the synod elected Pastor Dilger to replace Pastor Forscher who was leaving with his family for Germany. Although he was only planning to go on leave for a limited period of time, in the end, Forscher did not return to Sabah, as the government of Sabah began to refuse further work permits. Pastor Gugger was also elected to become a member of the church committee.

Although the PCS had applied to be registered as a society shortly after the founding synod on 20.4.1966, the Registrar of Society did not confirm the registration until September 1967. This acknowledgement

by the government finalized, so to speak, the establishment of the PCS as an independent body in Sabah.

**Once the station Dandon Liu at Bengkoka** was built and ready, Pastor Gugger moved there in 1966. At the same time a clinic had been built on the grounds of the station. This clinic was not opened until 1967, as the commissioning of the nurse had been delayed. Gugger was supplied with a boat in order to be able to visit all the places along the Bengkoka River, but the few places near the north end of the Bengkoka peninsula were still under the care of the Kudat station.

During the famine and drought in 1966, there was an attempt to build an earth road from Konibungan to Pitas with a food supply from Germany. People in need would work on the road and be paid in kind (rice). At the same time, the road would be ready for transport from the East to the West coast of Bengkoka, allowing travel even when it was impossible to circumvent the peninsula. This was especially necessary in the case of any emergency. The road was somehow finished, but did not really serve its purpose for various reasons. Nevertheless, people in need had received provisions during the famine, and the work of the mission in organizing villages to clear the jungle and build roads finally encouraged the government to improve these beginnings. Since that time roads have provided more and more access to the villages, eventually opening up the whole district of Kudat.

**The PCS at the end of 1967** was organized into five church districts with their respective pastors: Dilger at Kudat, Rennstich at Sikuati, Rusterholz at Tinangol, Gugger at Dandon, Gerber at Pantai. At the third synod, the church numbered seventy-seven congregations and places of regular worship. By the end of the year, the report was already telling of ninety-nine places with 3354 baptized Christians and 6514 worshippers altogether. The school for the lay preachers had been moved to Kudat early in 1967, and was moved again to Bavang Gazo in August 1968.

**The School for Domestic Science at Tinangol** was opened in 1967, with Miss Ernst in charge. She had already gained experience while staying in Pantai, leading courses for women. That helped her to find the right approach to teaching teenage girls who did not have any basic education. The school aimed to provide young women with knowledge about health and family care. Together with the building for this school, a further station was built next to the school to provide living quarters for Mr Stettler, the supervisor of the native voluntary schools. He had stayed earlier in one of the teacher's quarters of the Lajong School, but left to make room for more Lajong teachers. Later on, this station became the centre of the Tinangol district and for its pastor.

**List of the first villages**, when they started to become a congregation, first got baptized, the first temporary church building , later replaced with a permanent building:

Village Name	Entered PCS	1st Baptism	1st Church Building	Permanent CH.
Masangkung	3. 53	8. 53	8. 53	10. 10.64
Ronggu/Lodung	5. 53	25. 12. 53	25. 12.53	December 63
Lajong/Tinutudan	8. 53	4. 55	25. 12.53	13. 4. 1960
Kumbatang SDA 54	4. 55	4. 55	4. 55	27. 7. 1960
Tiga Papan	10. 1953	4. 56	8. 56	12. 11.64
Kodungkung	~53	~ 54	~1963	25. 12. 66
Kimihang	~53	~57	~1958	25. 12. 65
Pituru	~53	~1961		23. 5. 68
Suangpai	~54	~56	~1962	
Merebau SDA	~54	~58	5. 4. 1958	19. 10. 1961
Loro 't opodok	~54	23. 6. 68	13. 9. 64	25. 12.67
Garau	~54	23. 3. 67	~ 1963	
Barambangun	~55	5. 4. 63	~ 9.60	
Popot	26. 7. 56	3. 57		19. 7. 1959
Rampai	~57	22.9. 68	~1967	
Vingolon	~57	21. 6. 57	15. 5. 65	
Rondonon	~57	~60	~58	
Tuhau	~57	~1965	~1967	
Angkob	~57	~60	25. 11. 65	
Tinangol	~59	~21965	~1968	

Village Name	Entered PCS	1st Baptism	1st Church	Permanent CH.
Radtak	~62	~1965	~1965	~1968
Narandang	~63	~1967	~1967	
Garib	~64	~1965	~1967	
Mompilis	~64			
Bodu	~64			
Kirangavan	~64	~ 1967	~1967	
Loro' t agazo	~64		12. 1966	
Botutai	~64	~1968		
Pantai	5. 1964	~1965	~1964	
Golom	~64	~1966	21. 8. 66	
Boribi	~64		~1968	
Lingkuton	~64	2. 67	2. 67	
Taradas	~64	1. 67	11. 66	
Sulakolung	~64			
Tangkarason	~64	12. 66	9. 5. 65	
Baving	~64		~1965	
Dalas	~64			
Liu-Dandon	~64	~1966	~1966	
Suangelo	~65	~1966	~1966	
Mandurian	~65	~1966	~1967	
Nangko	~65	~1968	~1966	
Pinampadan	~65	12. 66	3. 4. 1966	
Medan, Pias, Manduring, Mapad	~65			
Kabatanan, Gunsali, Rosob, Kobon Rukom, Bilangau, Mangkau- bangkau, Tombilidon Bonsiut, Tongkovit,	~1966			
Gumandang	~1966	2. 6. 68	~1966	DM 231.267
Enggaton	~66	4. 8. 68	~1966	
Pinampang	~66	11. 1968	~1968	
Timukadan	~66	21. 1. 1968	~1968	

Village Name	Entered PCS	1st Baptism	1st Church Building	Permanent CH.
Bambatu	~66			
Torongkungan	~66	19. 9. 67	4. 7. 67	
Ponudaan	~66	~1968	~1967	
Gombizau, Lotong, Simukab, Tanggui, Pinggan-Pinggan, Porupuk, Mandamai, Sumbilidon, Nungu, Penapak, Mandurian Ulu,	~67			
Bonduk-Kiopu	~67	25. 8. 68	5. 5. 68	
Muhang	~67			
Pomonzukan	~67	~1968	~1968	
Timog, Onduon, Pinavantai,	~67			
Guomon	~67	~1968	~1968	
Bintasan, Mangin	~67			
Norungan, Botition/Moriun, Kampar, Timbang Batu, Mosolog, Kapok	~68			

For all these congregations, there were dates detailing when either the whole longhouse or some members of the longhouse decided to become Christians, when the first temporary church building was built, the first baptism took place and a permanent building was constructed and dedicated.

*(The Momogun edition of this history stated that for all the places and congregations not mentioned above, either no record existed or the church office had not been notified. It also admonished the congregations and church districts to report all the available details as mentioned above to the General Secretary).*

Looking back at the growth of the PCS, it is clear that during the transition of leadership from the missionaries to the indigenous leaders, the task of recording and collecting data in an archive had been neglected. One pastor in charge of the Sikuati parish had even destroyed all the family records, when he left. These records had been painstakingly collected for the Sikuati parish, giving details of the families, their children and ancestors, birth, marriage and death dates, their interrelationships with all the families in their longhouse and even the background of the longhouse tradition over one or more generations. The handover from the Western missionaries to the new parsons had withstood the test of the time. Afterwards there was a great fluctuation with the parsons in charge of the various parishes. This did not help to create some continuity. It was and still is difficult to organize an administration when there is no proper precedent indicating which way things should be administered and recorded. For this reason, the following **records of the meetings of the church elders and the synods of the PCS** may offer some examples and details of what the concerns and aims of these conferences had been. Some of the matters dealt with at these meetings have already been mentioned above. Yet they are described here in full to help establish the important points and questions, as well as the decisions taken at these meetings.

## **1. First meeting of the church elders 29.-31.12.1955**

At the end of 1955 the first meeting of leaders of the congregations took place with the aim of establishing an order for the congregations and considering the importance of being a Church of Christ. The discussion was reported in the following way:

*We missionaries encouraged the elders to discuss and sort out the old traditions, deciding which parts of these traditions could be used by Christians as far as they complied with the Word of God, and which parts are no longer suitable, being connected with the power of the spirits. Or, more directly: what about the Adat regarding birth,*

*betrotal, marriage, burial and remembering the dead. During the meeting, we missionaries were very satisfied that the church elders themselves decided on the marriage age for young people. They declared that a young man and a young woman had to be twenty years old before they could marry. On the second day, the discussion concentrated on harvesting rituals. Formerly one could only begin threshing the rice after a chicken had been offered as a sacrifice to the spirit Bambarazon and before the husked rice could be put into the rice hut. Mr Honegger then told them that the people in Switzerland or the Dayaks in Kalimantan had an alternative procedure, celebrating the harvest with a feast in the church in order to thank God for the year's harvest. He then continued by asking whether this might also be a good solution for them.*

*There was a further point of discussion: the collection during the service. How much of the collection should be used for the local congregation and how much could be given to the fund to provide for the lay helpers.*

Actually, the decision on the marriage age had been taken in a hurry. After the meeting it became clear that not even one church elder was following this decision.

## **2. Meeting of the church elders April 1956**

The next conference of the elders of the congregations took place in Sikuati, when 43 elders from 25 villages came together. At that time, Christians from different villages worshipped together in one church building (e.g. in the church of Ronggu, Christians assembled from the villages Ronggu, Lodung, Kusilad, Kodungkung and Pituru). Many of the elders had not yet been baptized and the meeting lasted for one and a half days. This is what Pastor Honegger wrote about this meeting:

*We discussed the order of the congregation in general terms. The subject of the discussion was as follows: What should Christians retain*

*from the former Dusun Adat on the matters of birth, betrothal, marriage and wedding, burial and the planting of hill rice? What parts of the Adat should be discarded for the reason that the Word of God is the light? We provisionally settled the following aspects of an order for the congregation: who was to be responsible for the church building and who was to be in charge of the worship service. The discussion about the harvest festival concluded, that there should be a thanksgiving at the time when the rice is stored in the rice hut. We also settled the way in which the collections should be used in support of the work of the evangelists serving in other places, to honour their efforts.*

*We missionaries were very glad to see how the elders understood and participated in the meeting. It was also agreed that there should be regular meetings every six months.*

### **3. Third meeting of the elders in April 1957 in Sikuati**

The representative of the Basel Mission Committee, Pastor Witschi, known as the Big Pastor due to his size, also attended this meeting. During this meeting, various lectures on St. Paul's First letter to the Corinthians (3, 11 and 12, 1-12) were given, as Paul explained in these chapters how a congregation should be ordered. These few verses told the assembly the base of an order for the Christian congregations. The Christian congregation in Corinth was in a similar situation and had had problems similar to the Christians in Sabah. It became clear during this meeting, that it would not be easy to come to a conclusion on how congregations should be administered. Further attention to the Bible would be needed; simply listening to the experience of Christians in other countries would not be enough. It was necessary to find in Sabah an understanding of the aims and purpose of the Word of God. Only then would it be possible to follow the Lord and give witness to Jesus as the Saviour.

#### **4. Fourth meeting of the elders on 14.-15. July 1958 in Sikuati**

At this meeting, the way to administer and lead a congregation was discussed in various groups. First of all, an outline from Scripture was given regarding the state of the individual Christian and the Christian congregation, and how the life of each Christian and his family and the whole congregation should reflect Christianity in their respective village. From some of the suggestions from the earlier meetings, ten points had been tabled for an **Order of the Christian Congregation**, which had been prepared beforehand by a group of elders, layhelpers and the Pastors Haeusermann and Forschner. All these sections were supported by verses from the Scripture and were applied to the situation in Sabah (at that time one still used the British name North Borneo for Sabah). This order was to help Christians to determine a Christian way of life that is not blended with a tradition bound to the spirits. After a considerable time spent introducing and discussing this, it was finally decided that the order should be made the Order of the congregations. The elders agreed and seconded this, promising to follow this Order of the congregations from then on .

#### **5. Meeting of the elders in January 1959 in Sikuati**

At the end of January 1959, there was another meeting of the elders in Sikuati on the subject: **The holiness of the Christian congregation** and the way towards a true Christian life for every Christian. Once again, all the lectures followed the teachings of the Scriptures. At that time a translation of the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians had been available, prepared during the Bible course for Lay preachers in Sikuati. These lay preachers assisted in expounding the themes and the heart of these teachings.

1. Cor. 6,1-8 The unity of the Christian congregation and the troubles, quarrels within a congregation. Paul said: Christians do not bring others before the court to be tried by a judge who belongs to another religion. Christians should make peace and settle their differences within the congregation.

1. Cor. 6, 9-11 If there are problems within the congregation, it is the congregation that must care for each Christian and help make sure that no-one goes astray or falls.

1. Cor. 6, 12-20 The holiness of Christians is based on the blood of Jesus. Having been redeemed by this very high price, how could one turn away again from Christ and do wrong again?

During the meeting, Majimil Tuorong and Diyun Madalag reiterated the Order of the Christian Congregation and continued to explain it point by point so that the order would reach the hearts of the elders.

## **6. Sixth meeting of the elders in Sikuati on 29-30. June 1959**

The main purpose of the discussion at this meeting was: The task and work of the elders within their congregation. The lectures about these tasks were taken from the Scriptures as follows:

Matthew 20, 25-28 The origin of the caretaker work of the elders

Matthew 18, 15-17 The way to bring back Christians who had left the order of the congregation as part of pastoral care.

1. Timothy 3, 1-7 The identity of the church elder, his behaviour and responsibility. It is a pity that despite all the discussions nothing was gleaned, recorded and added to the outline of the Order of the Christian Congregation. This could have helped the elders to execute their duties,

especially as the old Adat, also their own wishes and those of the persons concerned often disagreed with the aims of the Scriptures and the Order of the Congregation. It was still very difficult for the elders to stick to the Word of the Bible and use the Bible as the criterion and as the New Adat of Christian life.

## **7. Meeting of the elders in Sikuati on 1- 2. January 1960**

During this meeting Pastor Honegger and Sigrist gave talks on the purpose of prayers. The lectures followed Matthew 6, 5-14-The Lords Prayer. There are no minutes from this conference as the writer was on leave in Germany at that time.

## **8. Meeting of the elders in Sikuati on 26-27. July 1961**

At this time the pastors had been given the right to certify marriages according to the Christian Marriage Ordinance of the State of Sabah (in place of the Registrar for marriages). For this reason the topic of this conference was to introduce the Christian Marriage Ordinance of the State and to explain what Christian marriage means according to the Bible, in order to have this marriage order accepted by the elders for use in the congregations. These were the lectures during the meeting:

1. The Christian Marriage Ordinances declared that Christians should have their marriage legalized before the congregation and the state. This includes the application for marriage and the way in which the wedding is witnessed, signed and registered at the district office.

2. How God provided mankind for this particular partnership of man and woman. It is the individual himself or herself that chose their respective partner, not the parents or any of the relatives. But a person must be an adult and must have the necessary awareness in order to be

able to make this choice. It is wrong to marry off children and individuals who have not yet passed into adulthood.

3. Marriage is a union of body and heart; a union, which excludes any other partners, and a union until death.

4. Marriage begins in front of the congregation and the government, as the pastor acts on behalf of the government and sends the certificate of marriage to the district registrar of marriages.

It was decided to implement this marriage order within the congregations. But it was not easy to change the former way of marrying and holding a wedding in the village. It had already become a habit to settle first everything between the prospective families and elders up to the young man moving in with the girl's family. Only then the pastor was asked to bless the couple in church.

## **9. Church elders' conference in Sikuati, 22- 23. October 1962**

The topic of this conference was how a Christian congregation should live within the population of Sabah. This subject was outlined in three lectures:

- First Corinthians 12: The congregation and church is the body of Christ
- First Cor. 15, 58 The resolution of the congregation and church and its work is not in vein.
- First Cor. 16, 13 Christians have a responsibility to the government.

This meeting took place shortly before the very first election in Sabah. Christians had asked for an explanation of what this election meant and how the country would live and be ruled in this new situation. The elders understood from the teaching of the Bible that the

Christians had the task and duty within the population to witness the will of God regarding the behavior and actions of men, so that the country may be blessed and supervised by the grace and care of God.

## **10. Church elders' conference at Kudat, 29-30. July 1964**

This meeting was concerned with how a Rungus church could be established. Two lectures were given to present this idea:

1. First Thessalonica 5, 12-13. The grave responsibility of the leaders of a congregation to care for the congregation.
2. Pastoral care for Christian neighbours, helping to bear the heavy burdens of others, how to save other people, how to comfort people in trouble and to bring someone back into the fold, if they have gone astray, how to reconcile members with each other and how to work together.

A further point of discussion that had to be decided was the manner in which each congregation should be organized and how all the congregations could be organized together and be part of the Sabah churches.

A small committee was then set aside to consider the **Constitution of the Church in Sabah**. It was also announced that many villages had asked to be visited and taught about the Gospel.

There were already some people from Pantai in the Bengkoka Peninsula who had accepted Christianity, therefore the meeting agreed to post Osuman in Pantai as an evangelist and Majimil in Molongkolong. The whole assembly of elders was glad to hear that the Gospel had reached Bengkoka and the places south of Kudat.

## **11. Conference of the elders at Kudat, 21-23. April 1965**

This meeting took place after Easter and was concerned with the understanding and verification of Christian marriage as what it means to marry and to be married. (*The Rungus tradition differentiated between the active part of the male partner and the passive role of the female partner in the act of marriage*)

This meeting began with a joint service of Chinese and Momogun Christians at the Chinese Church in Kudat, and was also intended to greet the Chinese Head pastor Chee and commission him for his journey to Basel. He had been invited to attend the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Basel Mission and was to represent as well his Chinese church and the congregations of the Momogun at this gathering in Basel.

Afterwards there was a discussion of the point, that for a marriage to function in the right way, the persons wanting to marry must be an adult in both mind and body. Additionally, the partners planning to marry should carefully consider their intentions by planning and providing what is needed in the marriage, and should not to go against the will of their parents. Last but not least, they should start a life that is not dependent on the parents of the woman. It was agreed that the elders should accept this idea of marriage and follow this order of Christian marriage.

## **12. Conference of the church elders at Kudat from 20-22. July 1965**

This meeting was concerned with the growth of the Rungus church, therefore the lectures were taken from First Corinthians 3,11, Jesus Christ as the only foundation of the church following the first and second article of the proposed church constitution:

1. The church in Sabah is a part of the universal Church, which is the Church of Christ.

2. The church understands that there is only one foundation of its faith and that is the Holy Bible; that the Apostle's Creed is like a stronghold for believing and that the Holy Spirit assists and guards the church. The elders accepted these two proposed articles of the constitution and the third and fourth articles were set out:

3. The church is a union of believers who follow the way towards the kingdom of God according the Will of God. The church lives by worshipping and witnessing God in the midst of the other people.

4. The baptism is a sign that one has joined the church. During the baptism, God reveals himself and gives a sign that the person now belongs to God. It is not knowledge and the way of believing which is most important but the grace of God that touches the person who asks to be baptized. It is not a matter of being already an adult and believing wholeheartedly. The faith of the parents asking that their child should receive baptism is enough to have children blessed with the grace of God through baptism.

### **13. Conference of the church elders at Kudat on 13-14. November 1965**

This meeting continued reading and explaining the church constitution, from article five to article ten. At the end, the conference agreed that the congregations should accept this constitution and thus become the Protestant Church in Sabah. The representative of the Basel Mission, Friedrich Maier, was present at this conference. He said that the committee of the Basel Mission accepted that the Christian congregations in Sabah had established themselves as the Protestant Church in Sabah. Hereafter the elders decided that the very next conference should become the first synod confirming the establishment

of the PCS. The Momogun name should be Gorija di Potorontog sid Sabah with the meaning: a church that always seeks and strives to be a upright church in case the church would experience any falling or skidding (*afigurative speech for a building or a person*). This is actually also the meaning of the term Protestant - to bear witness to the right order if ever the witness and work of the church to its Lord should get distorted or would fail.

### **First Synod of the Protestant Church in Sabah at the church headquarters in Kudat, 19-20. April 1966**

The purpose of this gathering was the establishment of the Protestant Church in Sabah. The following lectures were to explain the meaning of becoming a church and how we have become part of this church. 1st Corinthian 15, 1-20 Jesus has risen. 1st Cor. 15, 21-28 Adam and the new Mankind. 1st Cor. 35-50 The resurrection of the body. 1st Corinthians 15,58 Because Jesus is alive this makes us faithful followers today.

The gathering once again unanimously accepted the establishment of our church, which originated in the work of the Basel Mission proclaiming the gospel, together with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, who opened up the hearts of the Momogun people. As soon as the assembly had accepted that this meeting was to establish this church, the representatives of the congregations elected the Church President and the Executive Committee, the Vice-President, the General Secretary and Treasurer. When the church elders began the process of electing the president, there was a certain amount of uncertainty among them. They asked the missionaries present what would happen when the Protestant Church had been established:

“Are you leaving and returning to your country or are you still prepared to assist us here in Sabah? It is quite obvious that we are not

yet ready to organize ourselves and to carry on on our own! Is it possible to chose one of you for this office?” They wanted their doubts about independence to be cleared. As this was agreed, the gathering elected Traugott Forschner to be the President and Diyun Madalag to be the Vice-President. Tinzan from Lajong was elected as Treasurer and Mr Dilger as General Secretary.

After the election of the office bearers, the President made the point that he would apply to the government for the registration of the PCS. The conclusion of this first synod took place in the form of an inauguration worship service in the church building of the Chinese Church. Quite a few Chinese Christians took part in this service and witnessed the existence of the Momogun Church in Sabah. This Momogun Church had emerged and was established on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 1966.

### **Second Synod of the PCS in March 1967 at Church Headquarters in Kudat**

The day after Easter 1967, the second synod of the PCS took place. The synod was concerned with the growth of the church, how funds could be collected, how the evangelists and preachers should be trained and how the contributions of the church members should be arranged. As regards the contributions, it was decided that a family should provide one tin of rice per year. All decisions made were still only provisional, according to the constitution of the Protestant Church in Sabah, as the registration of the church was still pending. The conclusion of this synod was celebrated once more in a Eucharist worship service in the Chinese Church, as a way of confirming our unity and community in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Third Synod of the PCS on 7-8. August 1967 at the Church Headquarters Kudat**

This synod was mainly concerned with the duties and work of the church elders in their congregations. The following points were outlined for this purpose:

1. The church elders are chosen by God. Their office is not something attained by their own will and desire to be a leader.
2. The church elders are to continue in the proclamation of the Gospel, follow Christian rules and act according to the Word of God.
3. The church elders can be likened to a roof in the way they provide shelter and protection for the congregation. If a roof is leaking, all the other parts of the house will be affected and decay.
4. A church elder can be compared to a nail, which has to be replaced every four years. If a nail gets rusty it must be replaced with a new nail. In the same way, the task of leading and strengthening the congregation needs fresh motivation from time to time.

The opening of this synod took the form of a joint worship together with the synod of the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia, which was in session at this time in Kudat. After this service, the committees of the BCCM and the PCS had a public dinner in a hotel in Kudat to celebrate the encounter.

During the course of the synod Pastor Otto Dilger was elected to replace Traugott Forschner who was leaving for Germany on the 25th of August 1967. This leave was necessary as his children were due to start school. In Germany he planned to continue preparing translations of the Scripture, some Momogun dictionaries and a Momogun grammar during his leave. As a result of the more severe rules regarding

foreigners under the government with Tun Mustapha as Chief Minister, Forschner did not return to Sabah. The government had begun to turn down the extension of work permits and further residence in Sabah.

#### **Fourth Synod of the PCS, 17-19. April 1968 at the Church Headquarters Kudat**

At this synod the president was able to inform the assembly that the PCS has at last been registered by the Registrar of Societies of Malaysia, meaning that the PCS has been acknowledged as a legal organisation in Malaysia. At that time the PCS had a membership of 6514 people, of which 3354 had been baptized in a total of 99 congregations.

The main topic of the gathering was concerned with marriage matters: the bridal-price and counselling married couples. The synod agreed on a Regulation of Betrothal (Hoturan do Mirait). 79 delegates agreed to adopt this regulation.

There was also a discussion on how to honour deceased relatives (mongukas). The outcome of this discussion was as follows: the synod agreed that there should be a service at Easter at the burial ground in which the deceased person would be remembered before God. In the same way, the name of the deceased persons should be mentioned at the end of the ecclesiastical year, i.e. on First Advent, and remembered during the worship service. The synod also confirmed O. Dilger in his office as President, Majimil Tuorong as General Secretary, Tinsan Amu as Treasurer and Basang, Osuin, Masandul Kastum, Karl Rennstich, Heinrich Rusterholz and Ueli Gerber as members of the Executive Committee of the PCS. Despite the fact that the church building on the grounds of the PCS headquarters had not yet been completed, the synod took place in this new building of PCS. A guest from Kalimantan, the president of the Protestant Kalimantan Church (GKE) Pastor Kiting,

attended this synod in order to initiate a partnership with the Kalimantan Church.

### **Fifth Synod of the PCS, 3-6. October 1969 at the Headquarters of the PCS in Kudat**

Guests from Germany, Basel, BCCM and GKE had been invited to this synod and attended the gathering. At this time the pastors Neubauer and Rusterholz and Mr Voegeli and Mr. Staehelin were still in the country. Only Sister Ruth Weber had left for good. It had become clear that the government would intensify its efforts to expel the missionaries. For this reason, the synod considered how the church and the congregations should be organized in the context of this new situation. It was feared that if all pastors were to be expelled, the church would no longer be in a position to grow further. Therefore the synod discussed an alternative way of leading the congregations, i.e. a team ministry (Tumpuk do Kopitabangan). Having considered this possibility, the synod decided to introduce the team ministry, proposing and agreeing right away on which congregations this team ministry should be installed in. The following team ministries were decided on:

- a) Pantai, Golom, Lingkuton and Boribi
- b) Tangkarason, Pinampadan and Medan
- c) Nangko, Marbahai and Lokuton
- d) Lodung, Kusilad and Dompiping
- e) Mongkobou, Tanggui and Dalas
- f) Botition and Tandek

These various team ministries had already been agreed on during the course of the synod. The synod instructed the church committee to decide on further team ministries. This was carried out accordingly with the team ministry of Angkob and Vingolon and of Rondonon, Tuhau and Pata.

As for the lay preachers, it was decided that they should have a distinctive uniform consisting of a long-armed black shirt with a so called white dog collar. The synod was shown a sample of these shirts which had first been introduced in the congregation of Botition. This pastoral dress should be worn during baptism services, at the Lord's supper and during wedding services.

The way to install a lay preacher in the team ministry was decided by the synod in the following way: The pastor of a church district or the Parish in Charge is responsible for the installation of the team pastor. At this installation service, two delegates from the Executive Committee are to be present as witnesses of the installation.

The synod accordingly passed an amendment to Article 6 of the constitution, reading as follows: The pastors will be assisted by the team pastors in preaching and administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper.

Another point was decided during the synod in regard to marriage and weddings: Christians should be allowed to choose between the way of the Christian Marriage Ordinance and the way following the Native Court according to the village tradition.

Should the village tradition be chosen, Christians could still ask to have their marriage blessed in the church, whereby the congregation would be witnesses of these Christians' marriage.

The synod also elected Patrick Manjil Madalag to be the new President of the PCS, replacing pastor O.Dilger. Team pastor Masanduh Majupi was elected as Vice President. Because of the pressure from other religions at that time, the president explained that in matters of religion, according to the Constitution of the State of Sabah, it was said that every Sabahan had the right to choose whatever religion he or she wished to follow. It was forbidden either to press and demand or hinder

anyone concerning their religious aspirations. With this, the synod was concluded.

**Sixth Synod of the PCS,  
14-16. May 1971 at Church headquarters in Kudat**

The membership of the church by now amounted to 8700 Christians, but since the last synod some five hundred Christians of the PCS had left. At the time of the synod, seven hundred more had become Christians in various congregations. The synod had to explain that the annual collection had decreased due to the floods, which had destroyed the new harvest, while the year before a drought had resulted in a very poor rice harvest. Due to this lack of rice, it was decided that in future, the annual collection per family or person could be contributed in cash, two Ringgit instead of one tin of rice.

The synod elected a committee to be in charge of the PCS properties. The office bearers of this trustee committee were: Patrick Manjil Madalag, Majimil Tuorong, Pastor Dilger and Pastor Poong Shon Khon. They were given the power of attorney to sign on behalf of the PCS.

The team ministries of Sikuati, Tinangol, Dandun, Pantai and Sinimpadan were decided (on).

**Seventh Synod of the PCS,  
16-18. June 1972 at Church headquarters in Kudat**

This synod elected a replacement for Pastor Dilger on the Executive Committee, as Mr. Dilger had to leave Sabah. Andan Mongintod took over from Mr. Dilger. As Team Pastor, Masanduh had returned from a visit to Indonesia, and reported to the synod about the Batak Church in Sumatera. Various other minor points were discussed and decided during the synod. The synod had to acknowledge the fact that the lay

training centre at Bavang Gazo had to close, as there was no longer a lecturer or any teachers. All of them had been expelled.

**Eighth Synod of the PCS,  
22-24. May 1973 at Church headquarters in Kudat**

The representative of the Committee of the Basel Mission, Miss Jenny and Pastor Haeusermann, as well as a delegate from the BCCM, Pastor Chong Yu Kiong attended. This synod. In the name of the BCCM Pastor Chong was able to tell the synod that the BCCM had agreed to send Pastor Thu En Yu and Tong Far Dung to work with the PCS in the various parishes. Team pastors Masanduh Majupi and Masandul Kastum were elected as the PCS partners in a Joint Committee with the BCCM. Before the synod it had been agreed to send three graduates from the government schools to study theology at Trinity College in Singapore. These students were Matius Majihi, Kololong Sokuroh and Inggol Puluk.

**Ninth Synod of the PCS,  
7-9. June 1974 at Bavang Gazo, Tinangol**

Before this synod could be opened, the government's security officer had taken the President Manjil Madalag into custody at the Kudat Police Station for the whole day. After his return, the synod was concerned with the problem of the land belonging to the Basel Mission's former Farm School in Bavang Gazo. It was decided that members should be invited to work together in sustaining this plantation.

It was necessary to amend the article in the constitution on church discipline in view of church members who had left the church to join another religion, but wished to return again to Christianity. Their return should follow a different path in as much as they would need a written declaration from the other religious leader stating that they had left that

religion. Only then could the PCS receive these people back into the Christian community.

As far as the marriage certificate was concerned, it was agreed that the fee to be paid to the office bearers should be two Ringgit.

### **Tenth Synod of the PCS, 27-30. July 1975 at Bavang Gazo, Tinangol**

This synod was called the synod of the police. As soon as the synod had been opened, the police arrived, sealed off the area and took all twelve members of the Executive Committee of the PCS into custody. All the delegates of the congregations were sent home without delay.

### **Eleventh Synod of the PCS, 28-31. July 1976 at Bavang Gazo**

The minutes of this synod were written in English and in Momogun. Present at this synod were Pastor Honegger, Pastor Kiting from GKE, Banjarmasin, Pastor Yusak Sakai from GKPI Tarakan and Pastor Chong Yuk Kiong from BCCM.

Already before the beginning of the synod, the presidency had been transferred from Majnil Madalag to Masandoh Majupi, as the former president had accepted another position with the government. Manjil gave a report of his visit to and participation at the Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Nairobi in 1975. (This assembly of the WCC takes place once every seven years and its participants include representatives from more than 300 churches from all over the world). He told the synod how the PCS had also applied for membership with the WCC and had been accepted as member No. 312. The delegates were delighted to hear that the PCS had been accepted as part of the worldwide and universal Church.

There were various points on the agenda: the way Christian marriage and the wedding should be concerned about the abuse of alcoholic beverages and how Christians should behave regarding this matter.

The synod also had to confirm the offices of the acting President Team Pastor Masandoh Majupi from Tangkarason, the Vice President Team Pastor Majimil Tuorong from Masangkung, the General Secretary Team Pastor Opook Sokuroh, Tinangol, the Vice Secretary Team Pastor Olusin Sogumpit from Merebau, and the General Treasurer Henry Gonduman Marajam from Rondonon.

The following sections of the PCS leadership were officially installed and the duty bearers appointed: Joint Committee with the BCCM, The Hostel Committee, The Committee for the Bible School at Tinangol (Sekolah Al Kitab Tinangol SAT), the Committee of the School for Domestic Science at Tinangol, the Trustee Committee and the Full Time Workers Committee of the PCS.

Before closing the synod, the Basel Mission was requested to send missionaries to work as teachers in the Bible school SAT, with the condition that these persons should know the Momogun language.

### **Twelfth Synod of the PCS, 25-28. July 1977 at Bavang Gazo, Tinangol**

The report from this synod states the number of PCS members as being 13,594 at that time. As it had become clear by then that many members were scattered around the capital. Kota Kinabalu, Patrick Manjil Madalag was asked to look after these members and assist them in their faith. Manjil agreed.

The clearing of the land at the former farm school Bavang Gazo was once again organized as a joint operation between the congregations. Dr Rennstich, who was at that time a lecturer at Trinity College in

Singapore and the intermediary for the Basel Mission and the PCS, gave a lecture about Church discipline and administration.

Before the synod took place, it had already been decided that Pastor Thui En Yu, who had been in Hong Kong to further his studies, should be stationed at the Kudat Headquarters with the task of holding training courses for the evangelists and lay preachers as well as for the church elders, following the principles of what is known worldwide as TEE (Theological Education by Extension).

Matus Majupi, who was still doing his practical (training) for Trinity College in Singapore, had been in charge of the Tinangol Parish. The synod wanted to extend his time at Tinangol for another year as there was no alternative person for this parish, so he was only to return to Singapore and complete his studies after this additional year. When the synod was told about the aims and purpose of the Federation of Churches in Malaysia, it was agreed that they should apply for membership of the Federation of Churches in Malaysia.

Another point of discussion and reiteration was the Christian Marriage Ordinance and its use in the congregations.

### **Thirteenth Synod of the PCS, 26-28. July 1978 at Church headquarters in Kudat**

The theme of this synod was: Your Kingdom come (Matthew 6, 10), following the theme of the next Assembly of the WCC on matters of Mission, which was to take place in Melbourne Australia in 1980.

It was said that from the Lord's Prayer, with which Jesus taught his followers and us how to pray, we Christians are reminded of Jesus who has power over the whole world (Matthew 28, 16-20). He made Christians be witnesses of his power and his love among all people and nations. We Christians should be symbols of his Kingdom and God's

rule over the universe. Because of this role, the church and its members live their lives with the aim of expanding Christ's rule over the world.

During the discussion, the government's financial assistance for the churches was considered. Should the PCS accept such funds at all and thus become dependent on the state or could this state support be considered to be the state's acknowledgement of the work of the churches towards the well being of the population? It was agreed that these funds should be accepted, but that the Church should try to use them together with its own funds in a kind of jointventure. The government funds should not constitute the only financial means of constructing church buildings, with no contribution from the church itself or the congregation. The synod decided to install a committee to administer the government funds, and a further committee to find a way to deal with members who married a second partner. This was intended to act as a shield for the families.

Regarding Christian burials, it was arranged that the sign of a cross should be placed at the head end of the grave. It should not be obligatory to cover a grave with a cement structure, but should depend on the means of the family of the deceased. In either case, a meal of remembrance should be held, not according to the traditions of the former Grave Clearing, but as a gathering intended to commit the deceased to the love and mercy of God.

As far as the following synods 14 to 22 up to 1992 are concerned, the Secretary General had already agreed in 1990 to write short reports on the findings of these synods. However, at the point when this manuscript was due to go into print, and despite many reminders, nothing was put forward that could be inserted here.

The following account details the various sections of the PCS since its establishment.

## **The various sections of the PCS since its establishment A. The way of preparing the writings and books in the Momogun language for print.**

When the missionaries arrived in Kudat there was not a single Rungus person able to write in his native language. Only headman Tuorong was able to sign his name in Javi, the Arabic script.

After a few earlier attempts, the written Momogun language first came into being in 1956, with the aim of having more and more various Bible Stories available in Momogun. As soon as any of these stories had been mimeographed, they were distributed among the lay helpers and preachers for use in the Bible readings in the congregations and groups of worshippers. For the first Bible Course for Lay helpers (1957-59), a hymn booklet had been prepared with some twenty hymns and songs in Momogun and other liturgical parts such as a selection of Psalms, daily prayers, prayers for worship and special situations and an order of service for worship and for funerals.

During this first Bible course, the Story of Jesus Christ, written in fifty parts as a gospel harmony, and taken from the four gospels was translated and made ready for mimeographing. In the same way, fifty stories from the Old Testament, from creation to the prophets, were taught along with their translation. Three parts of a Momogun Primer were also prepared, first and foremost to give the children of the lay helpers the chance to learn to read and write instead of being a nuisance to their fathers in school. Being with the parents at the mission station, these youngsters were keen to find out what their fathers were doing. This rather disturbed some of them, seeing that the little daughter was quicker in understanding what had been written on the blackboard. So this primer made it possible to hold a kind of childrens' class at the missionary's home with his wife playing with and teaching these children. As soon as it was understood that this primer would also be of value to others,- the children had taken the primer home to the children in their longhouse during their visits and had passed on their learning to

other children and adults - these three Primer parts were mimeographed repeatedly and spread throughout the longhouses of the Rungus society.

Along with further biblical teachings, the translation of St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians was produced as well as an initial direct attempt to translate the Words of the Prophet Amos, together with a small commentary on Amos. When reading and explaining about Amos, it became obvious to the lay helpers how directly Amos's story related to the situation of the Rungus people, who were also suffering from oppression, bad rule and being despised by the rich and mighty. In this Bible Course it was also possible to prepare an Order of Christian life and of the Christian congregation for use with the church elders.

During the second Bible Course (1960-1961), the gospel of St. Mark was translated and read. The translation had been ready for mimeographing in November 1960 with just a hundred copies (with a spirit duplication system which only managed to draw a hundred copies from the master-copy before the ink was finished). Yet after only four weeks all copies had been handed out to anyone who could prove that he was already able to read. Further teaching and Bible readings covered The Acts, First Timothy, First Peter and First Thessalonians. The First Corinthians was reread and a booklet was put together outlining the meaning and substance of Christian Faith and Christian Life (Dogmatics and Ethics).

The reading and translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew during various short courses made it possible to mimeograph the Book of St. Matthew in 1967, and St. Luke and Romans in 1968. In Basel, the first offset-print of The Stories of Jesus was arranged, with a thousand copies being made, ready for distribution during 1968. In 1974, the Letter to the Hebrews was mimeographed in Kudat and, for the Silver Jubilee of the PCS, an Almanac, **25 Years of the PCS**, was printed in 1978.

All these booklets, mimeographed using the mimeograph-machines at the mission and church headquarters, were reprinted again and again from the same stencils. The hymnbook grew in size from time to time with further liturgical parts added, including service orders for baptism and the Lord's Supper. There were more than ten improved and extended versions of this hymnbook serving the church year after year in a progressive form of worship and singing. Besides these books, with their teaching of biblical knowledge and understanding of Christian belief, other books were also produced, e.g. a Momogun Grammar, a Dictionary of the Rootwords of Momogun explained in English, an English Dictionary explained in Momogun and a collection of Rungus legends and sagas.

In 1978, Rev. T.A Forschner visited Sabah. During his stay, the president of the PCS asked the Protestant Church in Wuerttemberg, Germany to make it possible for Rev. Forschner to complete the translation of the New Testament by releasing him for the necessary period of time. As the Church in Germany agreed to this request, Rev. Forschner returned to Sabah twice in the course of the following two years for three months each. With the assistance of Mr Osingko Taganau and a few other church members, the translation of the still missing parts of the New Testament was completed and all the previously translated texts were reread and revised. On September 4th 1980, some representatives of the PCS discussed the completion of this translation with the representative of the United Bible Society for the Far East. It was agreed that the manuscript should be forwarded to the Bible Society of Singapore for getting printed. Before the end of 1980, 5000 copies of the New Testament in Momogun arrived in Kudat.

When Rev. Forschner presented the completed manuscript of the New Testament to the Executive Committee of PCS before leaving for Singapore and Germany, the Committee applied once more to the Church in Wuerttemberg to release Rev. Forschner for the translation of the Old Testament. The Committee stated that there were many stories

in the Old Testament that were very close to Momogun tradition and culture. It would also be possible to pertain our language in a better way by reading the Momogun Bible. As the children were only taught in the Malay language in school and no longer stayed in the village, it would be only a short time before they would forget their own language, especially the more meaningful words. Being away from home, they would no longer hear their own language on a daily basis. For this reason, the Momogun Bible would be of great value, not only for the understanding of the Word of God, but even for the preservation of our language, it was said.

So, in 1981, a translation committee of eight people was formed to prepare a translation of the Old Testament. In the discussion about the best way to tackle this task, Forscher said at the first meeting of this committee that it had taken Martin Luther fourteen years to translate the Old Testament into German. He was not sure whether he would be granted such a long time to do this on top of the work he was engaged in for the German Church. He pointed out that, in the Old Testament, there were repetitions and some sections dealing with Jewish tradition which were not of great importance for the PCS. He also told this committee, that a selective Old Testament Bible had been made especially for the youth in Germany, with its cover made of denim, leading to this particular Bible edition being known as the Jeans-Bible and suggested to follow this selection when tackling a Momogun translation. This committee came to understand that the task of translating of all the complete portions and chapters of the Old Testament, sometimes with long passages just listing the names of former generations and several stories telling how offerings of slaughtered animals should be made, not even fifteen years would be sufficient to complete this task. It was therefore decided to adopt the selective nature of the German Jeans Bible in translating the Old Testament, using the English, Indonesian and Malay versions of the Bible, and also the modern Malay version of the Good News Bible, while checking would be done by referring to the Hebrew Bible. It took

Rev. Forschner five visits, each of three months duration, to get this translation ready for print. Each section, once translated, was mimeographed right away for use as Lectio Continua in the Sunday services and for personal use, allowing a further check of intelligibility by the congregations.

At the end of 1985, all portions were completed and ready for print. By the time this manuscript was presented to the Bible Society in Singapore, a problem turned up. Due to Custom problem when importing Bibles containing the name Allah for God into Malaysia it had been decided in the meantime to form the **Bible Society of Malaysia** in order to overcome this problem. The manuscript was in Singapore, but the Bible Society of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur had not yet started to arrange any printing apart from what had already been done for the Christian people in West Malaysia. Additionally, this new Bible Society did not have any means of printing, so the manuscript of the Momogun Bible remained in Singapore for three years without being printed.

It was only in 1988 that the Bible Society of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur was prepared to consider printing the Momogun Bible, and had this printing done in Singapore in the same way. This printing involved quite a few new problems. The print setter did not have any knowledge of Momogun. The master-copy of the New Testament had been lost at the Singapore-Bible Society, which meant that even the New Testament had to be reset. The blueprint included tens of thousands of typing mistakes. The blueprint and the following second, third, fourth and fifth revisions went back and forth between Singapore and Germany, with corrections being checked again and again. Sometime during the type setting, pages of the manuscript had been turned over by the wind resulting in either the text of a few pages being repeated or left out altogether. Previously corrected pages were also turned over by the wind, making it necessary to correct them all over again. When the book was finally printed, it turned out that mistakes were still be found.

All the painstaking reading and correcting, checking each letter, each marker, number, verse and chapter to make sure that nothing had been left out, changed, misprinted or added could not prevent the final print version still containing some small errors.

It was at last in September 1990 that this Momogun Bible was finally printed and arrived in Kudat in an edition of 5,000 copies. The Church in Wuerttemberg had provided the funds for the printing run. The following sale of the Momogun Bible, at a price of six Ringgit per copy, was used to establish a PCS Bible Fund.

In 1984, the **PCS hymnbook** was properly printed for the first time at the Kudat-based printing firm Tan Enterprise, who successively reprinted it on several occasions, with a total of more than 15,000 copies being printed.

In 1992, the same firm also printed the REGISTER OF ROOTS in the Rungus Dialect and an ENGLISH-RUNGUS DICTIONARY, a History of Christianity worldwide and of the PCS and, last but not least, some commentaries on parts of the Old and New Testament. It should not be forgotten that, from 1957 onwards, the Sunday service programmes with texts and an outline for the sermons, as well as the places of worship to be served by pastors and lay preachers had been made by the printing office. In the beginning this booklet was prepared monthly, and then later at six-week, eight-week and three-month intervals until it was finally issued twice a year, with a total of five hundred copies printed for distribution to all the lay helpers, preachers, team pastors and parsons. The edition for July-December 1993 was set using a computer for the first time and also printed by Tan Enterprise together with lectures presented at various training courses.

Many attempts had been made, either by the Executive Committee or the various sections of the church, to produce a church magazine or a newsletter about the PLA and the women's contributions to Church

work) To date, such efforts have not amounted to more than solitary issues, as everyone in the congregation, church district and the various groups had more important tasks to attend to than writing newsletters and the like.

The names of the people who carried out the mimeographing during these long years and up until the present day were as follows: Osingko was the first to occupy this office, followed by Ajadap for a short while, then Asun from Kodungkung, Masanduh Majupi, Majimil, Majatig, Osingko again, Abui and Asung. Their work done at the headquarter without much attention has contributed a lot towards the growth of PCS.

## **B. The Bible School in Bavang Gazo**

(written by Jensey)

Although there was no actual Bible School when the PCS started off, there had been various Bible courses long before the Protestant Church was registered as the Protestant Church in Sabah.

The early courses were organized by Pastor Honegger, who had started preaching the Gospel to the Rungus people. At that time people were beginning to be able to recognize and understand the letters of the alphabet. Majimil Tuorong and his father Tuorong bin Dato Sobunal were the first to be able to identify the letters.

After this, the Momogun people accepted Christianity and developed rapidly, with many of them wanting to be baptized. There were not enough teachers to teach and guide them all. Therefore some younger men were called on to assist the missionaries. However, their knowledge was of little use as the Momogun people could not read or write at that time. Various courses were organized to deal with this problem.

A first weekly course to teach preaching began in June 1956. This course was intended to prepare the lay preachers for leading Sunday worship. It began in June 1956 and took place every Saturday morning to prepare for the following Sunday service. After a midday meal the lay preachers marched off on foot to their respective preaching places the following Sunday.

The first longer course began in September 1957 and went on until July 1959. The people from the Basel Mission arranged another Bible course, which could only be attended by those who could already read and write. The missionaries selected four evangelists to attend this course in Sikuati, beginning in September 1957. The participants were: Mr Manjimil Tuorong, Angkangon Mogupis, Diyun Madalag and Osuman from Rampai. They all moved to Sikuati together with their families. The Basel Mission provided for their upkeep, as they were not able to earn their own living during this time. Initially, this course was only intended to last until the beginning of the next rice-planting season at the end of June 1958, but it was in fact extended until to July 1959, making a total of twenty months without any break or holiday. At that time Momogun people had no concept of taking holidays.

### **The course functioned as follows:**

Every Saturday afternoon, the evangelists went back to their own longhouse or to other villages to lead the Sunday service the following day. At that time every village could only be reached on foot and these visits involved a trip of up to six hours on foot each way. The teaching began at 2PM on Monday when the evangelists were back in Sikuati from their weekend duty. Teaching was not exclusively about the Bible. There was much discussion and reporting about life and work in the longhouses, also covering the way in which congregations should be guided and supervised, and how to reach people with the gospel.

From Tuesday to Saturday, lessons started at 7.30 AM and went on until noon. There was still a need to improve reading and writing skills

and working with numbers so as to be able to count and write down the details of the Sunday collections. The main goal was to learn about the story of Jesus and the Old Testament, while at the same time preparing a translation of it into Momogun. In this way, by the end of the course a collection of fifty stories about Jesus and fifty stories from the Old Testament starting from creation right up to the prophets was compiled and ready for use. Every Thursday Pastor Haeusermann gave lessons in Malay and, in the afternoon, Pastor Sigrist gave instructions on how to use tools for woodwork and carpentry. The teaching on Saturday morning was concerned with preparing the sermons for the following Sunday service and to learn and practise new hymns in the Momogun language. While singing, people should also be able to understand the meaning of their hymns and how they could tell of and celebrate Christian faith and life.

In this way, the knowledge of the evangelists grew day by day. Looking back, one has to say that the outcome of this course was very positive. Two books about the gospel, a hymnbook, the book of the Prophet Amos, the First Letter of St. Paul to the congregation in Corinth, the First Thessalonians, First Timothy and quite a number of Psalms and prayers had been completed by the end of the course.

### **The following course took place between April 1960 and July 1961:**

This time fourteen people took part in the course, which was to some extent a repetition of the first course, building on the foundations of its achievements. Besides Majimil, Diyun, Angkangon and Osuman the other participants were as follows: Osingko Taganau, Mojukin Gundorong, Alung Ganggang, Majaman Gombiluk, Daang and Totong from Lodung, Asandul Kastum, Angatang Kadim, Mongolinsig Mongingkap and Abbah Mongimpal. Some of them were married and had families, while others were still bachelors. The course started off

with the construction of a house for four families. The obtained knowledge of carpentry during the previous course was very useful.

After having covered all the lessons and the material from the previous course, the biblical teaching concentrated on the Gospel of St. Mark, the five important sermons of Jesus in the Gospel of St. Matthew and the parables of the Gospel of St. Luke. Before the end of 1960, the Momogun translation of St. Mark had been mimeographed and sold to any interested church members who could certify their ability to read.

One problem came to light during this and other courses: concentrating on learning and attending lessons all day long was almost beyond the capacity of adults who had only just started formal learning. Some of the participants already considered themselves to be old and incapable of learning new information. When still a child, one is ready and eager to accept changes and adapt to them, such learning and understanding lessons. It was not their personal talent or disposition that hindered them, but the fact that from childhood on they had never had the opportunity to go to school.

Once the course had ended, the new building was dismantled and moved to Bavang Gazo to provide a first shelter for the preparation of the Farm School at Bavang Gazo.

Further short courses between 1962 and 1964: During the following years, only short Bible courses were held during the two to three months between harvest and the next rice-planting season. These courses were mainly concerned with the preparation of sermons for the congregations.

The two-month course in 1964 was attended by thirty lay helpers, all male, and was held at Mile Two in Kudat. No women had as yet attended such meetings, as it was still tradition that parents would not allow young women to go away from home and stay overnight. During

this course, it became known that God had opened some places for the spread of the Gospel. Many people from the villages had come along and asked the Basel Mission to visit them. At that time, Pastor Forschner was living in Kudat and was responsible for most of the congregations, while Pastor Sigrist and Mr Staehelin were busy running the Farm School. During discussions, the participants of this course were more and more concerned about the new situation that many people from around Mompilis and Molongkolong, Pantai, Suangeloi, Dalas, Mongkobou and other places in Bengkoka wished to hear the gospel. (>Read about the outcome of these discussions in other parts of this history).

### **Bible School at Pantai, May 1965 to March 1967.**

A Bible School was started at Pantai, as proclamation of the gospel had been requested for the neighbouring villages of Pantai, so evangelists were needed to take on this task. Pastor Dilger, who had moved to Pantai, started this school with local men in May 1965 and continued with it up until March 1967, when he went on leave to Germany with his family. He was assisted in his teaching by Osingko Taganau. Thirty men, both married and bachelors, attended this school, among them Masanduh Majupih.

In March 1967, this Bible School moved to Kudat. Pastor Forschner took over and continued with further translation work while working at the school, completing the Gospel of St. Matthew and the Acts. Some of the participants had the opportunity to learn the English language, which was taught by Mrs. Forschner. When Pastor Forschner left Sabah in August 1967, Pastor Dilger replaced him in Kudat and carried on with the Bible School until 1968.

## **Moving to Bavang Gazo.**

Once the government of Sabah started withdrawing the missionaries' working permits, the school was moved to Bavang Gazo. The Farm School was converted into a Bible School with Pastor Rennstich becoming head teacher of the school.

The students from the Pantai and Kudat schools went along to Bavang Gazo in Tinangol to continue with their fourth year of study. A first and second year class was also started for some students who had already had partial training, while others were called upon to take over work in the church districts of Botition, Molongkolong, Nangko and other places. The Closing of the Bible School in Tinangol Once the pressure on the missionaries from the government reached its pinnacle and all missionaries were required to leave in the course of 1972 and 1973, the school had to be closed for some years due to the lack of teachers. The government suppressed Christianity until all missionaries of the PCS had left the country.

In 1969, The BCCM, realising that there were hardly any teachers or pastors available to teach in the PCS, started to help PCS with an open heart. Pastor Poong Shong Khon took over the parish in Sikuati. Pastor Thu En Yu, who later became Bishop of the BCCM, was installed in the parish of Tinangol, while Pastor Tong Far Dung started to work for the PCS in 1974.

## **The re-opening of the Bible School in Tinangol in 1976.**

After the closure of the Bible School in 1973, the Executive Committee and the President thought about how best to teach Christians and familiarize them with biblical knowledge. In the end, the Executive Committee decided to re-open the school in September 1976, running only a one-year course. Pastor Poong was to be head teacher, while others who had completed their studies at Trinity College in Singapore

were to assist him in giving lessons. Since opening, the Bible School in Tinangol has become the main source of development for the Protestant Church in Sabah.

### **Changing the school name**

During 1986, the education committee of the PCS decided to change the name of the school, which had been known as Sekolah Alkitab Tinangol (SAT) to Pusat Latihan Alkitab (PLA), meaning “Learning Centre for the Bible”. The Committee also approved a second year course in 1989 for students who had earlier successfully completed the first year. These former one year students could come back for a second year. After some time it was also decided to let students go into the second year directly after their first year’s study.

Quite a large number of graduates from the PLA have continued with further studies at STS in Kota Kinabalu and have been promoted there to various academic grades. They are since working full time for the PCS.

### **C. Native Voluntary Primary Schools in Lajong, Tinangol and Lodung** (written by Chong That Shung)

These schools were built during 1964 with funds from the Basel Mission. The (original) idea was to open these schools as village schools, therefore they were given the name “Native Voluntary Schools” or SRK (Sekolah Rendah Kampong). At that time, not a single Momogun child had had the opportunity to go to school in his own village or nearby without having to stay (overnight) in the hostel in Kudat or some other place. The Christians in the various villages asked the Basel Mission for assistance in making/building schools for their children. In answer to these requests, the Basel Mission provided the school buildings as well as teachers’ quarters erected on land belonging to the Basel Mission and sent over a European teacher to act as supervisor of these schools. As the Ministry of Education was against

the use of Momogun as the teaching language, the committee agreed unanimously to use the English language.

The schools started with the new school year in January 1965. In Lajong, the school had to start right away with two first-year classes and a second-year class with a total of 58 pupils. 67 pupils were registered in Tinangol and 83 pupils in Lodung, where there were also parallel first and second (-year) classes. Mr Stettler from Switzerland acted as Principal and supervisor of these three schools. After his term of office, Mr Werner Braun took over from him in 1971. Both of them were concerned about the development of the school and organized the necessary provisions and funds. And this has remained the same up to the present day. After Mr. Braun left, Mr Chong That Shung, the former teacher in Lajong from 1965 onwards, took over the post of supervisor and continues to hold it at present. The education committee of the PCS and the Village School Committee assisted Mr Chong in organizing the schools. Parents and pupils helped the teachers to further develop schooling by increasing the numbers of pupils, extending already existing school buildings and adding new ones.

Following the Education Ordinance of Malaya of 1961, which was accepted by the State of Sabah in 1969, the Malay language became the (official) language of primary teaching. Together with this change, the schools also changed their name to Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan in 1974.

In 1989, two further teachers' quarters were added at the Tinangol SRK. In 1990, six more classrooms had to be built in Tinangol to accommodate the increased numbers of pupils. The SRK Lajong received a further teachers' office and a store-room, financed by a government fund of some 70,000 MR.

The school committee applied for six more classrooms in Lajong, as the old buildings were decaying and there was no way of repairing them.

Today, in 1993, a total of 42 teachers are employed at these three schools, together with seven caretakers, while 660 pupils of up to 99% Christian background attend the schools, with 158 pupils in Lajong, 337 pupils in Tinangol and 165 pupils in Lodung for classes one to six.

#### **D. School for Domestic Science in Tinangol (SRT)**

(written by Lilah N. Gilong)

The committee of the Basel Mission had for a long time considered the opening of a School for domestic science in Sikuati, but the Pastor stationed in Sikuati had spoken out against this location, as the land around the station in Sikuati consisted of very poor soil, mostly sand, unsuitable for gardening and planting vegetables. As a result, the pastors decided to only organize such a school once they had a teacher with experience in the Sabah way of life. When Miss Ernst arrived in Sabah, she stayed in Pantai for some time to gain experience, get a feel for village life and to help her get to grips with the task and challenge of a school for young girls who had not had any previous schooling.

The school aimed to provide teaching in reading and writing, housekeeping, health care and to offer information on planting various vegetables and healthy cooking. With this plan in place, the school was started up in 1965 with annual courses, continuing in this way up until 1969, after which Miss Kachel took over from Miss Ernst. Kachel stayed on until the withdrawal of her working permit in 1974. As of 1975, Lilah Nancy Gilong headed the school and was aided by some other assistants up until 1993.

The school was organized in the following way: The girls had to be at least fifteen years old and were required to pay 20 MR school fees

per year. The girls also had to pay half of the costs of the materials used during the year. If a girl left before the end of the year, the family had to compensate for the empty place with either 40 MR or one bag of rice. At the end of each month, the girls were allowed to go home for two to three days, while girls coming from nearby villages were also able to go home on Sundays. On Sundays, the school attended the church service in Tinangol, went to various villages near Tinangol with the District pastor or the evangelist. At the end of each year's course there was an excursion to the National Park at the Kinabalu, to Ranau and the Hot Springs before returning to their own villages. The main subjects of teaching and learning were: Sewing, embroidering, crocheting, baking, cleaning, health care, reading and writing, house work and planting vegetables. The courses also included familiarizing oneself with various diseases and prophylactic measures. During these 27 years of SRT, some of the annual courses were attended by more than twenty students, whereas some had only sixteen or seventeen students.

### **E. The PCS Hostels**

(written by Mojuntin Bongkol)

As has already been mentioned above concerning the beginning of the hostel work, it was clear by the end of the Sixties that girls who had completed primary education wished to continue their schooling at High School or Middle School. Kudat had such schools, therefore the PCS discussed the matter and agreed to provide housing for the girls. The BCCM offered to rent out a former school building of the Lok Yuk School to the PCS to serve as a temporary girls' hostel. As far as hostel wardens were concerned, it had already been decided to have two people trained in this capacity. The idea was to send these people to a school for wardens belonging to the Kindernothilfe in India, but nothing came of this plan as the Indian government refused to issue the necessary visas. Therefore Jimmy Asam and Mariam Majaman went to Trinity College in Singapore, despite the fact that Trinity College offered no training course for hostel wardens. They had to attend the

Christian Education study courses. Once these studies were completed, Jimmy took charge of the Hostel in Mile Two, while Mariam took over the temporary hostel at the Lok Yuk School. It was not until 1979 that a girls Hostel was built at Mile Two, with grants from the government providing lodging for one hundred and fifty girls. The BCCM had already considered further assistance towards the housing of students and had built a hostel near the Lok Yuk School for eighty boys. Teachers from Lok Yuk living near this hostel were to look after it. The BCCM was even prepared to pay for the provision of some of the most needy boys with food, clothing, school fees and books. After some time, the BCCM felt that it would be better if the PCS were to take over the organisation of this hostel, as there had been various misunderstandings between Momogun boys and Chinese teachers. From then on, PCS wardens and the head warden were also responsible for this hostel, named Asrama Basel. Although the PCS put a great deal of effort into providing lodging places for all children entering middle school and high school, there were never enough places for them all, so a decision was taken during the synod 1978 to build a longhouse at Mile Two to serve as an additional home for eighty students who had enough support from their families to provide for themselves. PCS only paid for water and electricity, while food, school uniform and fees had to be financed by their own families. The parents of these children collected the timber of this longhouse. The planks and the roof were provided by the PCS. This longhouse was in use for more than ten years with changing occupants until it was so dilapidated that it could no longer be used. Funds from the Basel Mission allowed it to be replaced with a new building, called Asrama Baru (New Hostel).

As the number of students increased over the years, Kindernothilfe in Duisburg (KNH) was prepared to increase its support for even more students, up to a maximum of 237 students.(when KNH aid started, the school boys were called foster children because they were sponsored by so-called foster parents in Germany). Later on, this support was given for hostel work in general, rather than distinguishing between supported

and non-supported students. While in the early days of hostel work each student had to write an annual report to his foster parents, later on there were only summary reports about the hostels and the use of KNH funds.

In 1982 another hostel was built and put into service at Kota Marudu. It was called Asrama Geneva, because the World Council of Churches had provided the funds to cover building expenses and the running costs for the first five years. There was lodging space for up to 72 students, divided equally between male and female students, with a common kitchen and dining area. As far as this hostel was concerned, it must be said that the building was planned and constructed in a most unsuitable way. Being a long building stretching from North to South, the early morning sun hits the brick wall on the Eastern side, while in the early afternoon the Western brick wall is exposed to extreme sunshine, making the inside like a smoking cell for rubber.. On top of this, the very small windows were placed rather high under the roof and therefore do not provide sufficient air circulation. The land on which the hostel was built was part of the garden belonging to the BCCM parsonage. A rather one-sided agreement between the local BCCM and PCS says that the hostel would become the property of the BCCM after twenty years.

In 1987, the government started a middle school in Pitas. The PCS therefore sought land on which another hostel could be built for the Momogun students attending this new school., It was only possible to find a suitable site some three kilometer away. Basel Mission provided funds for the building, which was constructed by Mogimbang from Tangkarason. From the very start, the attendance of the students living in this hostel in Pitas fluctuated greatly, as these students had to come from very remote places, places which could often be reached only by boat via the Bengkoka river, or not at all due to floods or droughts. In other cases, the families could not provide for the students during the seasons after a bad harvest. These students had to bring their own rice

and food while the PCS was only able to pay for the warden, the water supply and kerosene for the lamps.

As soon as the middle school at Pinavantai was opened, the PCS opened a temporary hostel there in longhouse style, providing space for sixty students and a warden to organize the hostel. In 1990, the roof of the hostel was blown off and the rest of the building was badly damaged by a typhoon. A new hostel was built by the Honourable Member of the State Assembly of Sabah and Minister of Sports, Matius Majihi. However, when a further middle school was opened in Sikuati near the sea, the Pinavantai school was closed down and the students were sent to Sikuati.

So it came about that in 1992, the PCS provided a further hostel for Momogun students at the parsonage of Sikuati. With the opening of this middle school, many students who had started in Kudat and had stayed in one of the PCS Kudat hostels, Duisburg or Titiu, from then on moved to the Sikuati school, with the advantage that they now could live in the village and attend school from their home. Only some of them stayed at the PCS Sikuati hostel. They still had a much shorter journey to Sikuati from their village than travelling in stages all the way to Kudat or back home. The Sikuati hostel was able to be built with funds from the government. Only the kitchen was paid for by the Basel Mission on special request.

- In the year 1993 there were the following numbers of students in PCS hostels:
- In the girls' hostel Titiu at Kudat Headquarters 90 young women and girls
- In the "Duisburg" hostel at KM 4 at Kudat HQ 85 boys and young men
- In the "Basel" hostel near Lok Yuk School Kudat 60 boys
- In the Sikuati hostel 95 boys and girls
- In the "Geneva" hostel at Kota Marudu 72 boys and girls

➤ In the Pitas hostel... 60 boys and girls

In 1961, the Kindernothilfe in Duisburg (Children's aid work in Duisburg),KNH, had started to support the hostel work because of a very poor harvest and had since continued to support more and more primary school children, later on students of the middle and high schools. The KNH committee decided to streamline its work early in the 1990ties, which by then had expanded all over the world., Supervision of this work had become rather complicated. On account of this decision support for the PCS hostels was to be cut by the end of 1993. They wanted to concentrate their efforts)in fewer countries with many hostels requiring aid. KNH also felt that, after more than thirty years of support and aid for the PCS, life in Sabah and the situation of the PCS must have improved to the point that PCS was capable of finding its own means of running the hostels. Parents should also be more able to support the students. The prospect of this cut in aid put PCS in a difficult situation. In the end, from 1991 onwards it was arranged that each student should contribute some 25 MR per month to the hostel's expenses. Despite this arrangement, the hostels still face difficulties today in collecting these hostel fees. Many families are still in no position to pay this amount in cash, as the earnings from the farms barely amount to such a sum, especially considering the low prices for rubber and copra.