Migration, Community Forming and Language Change Among the Urak Lawoi' of Thailand's Andaman Coast

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Abstract

In this paper the link between migration, community forming and language change of the Urak Lawoi' (UL) people is made evident. My own descriptive and comparative linguistic field research, conducted from February 2010 until January 2012 in several Urak Lawoi' communities on Thailand's Andaman coast[2] has supplied most of the data that constitute the basis of this paper. Some comparative and supportive data have been selected from earlier research, notably that by Thawisak (1986) and Wongbusarakum (2002).

Urak Lawoi' is a highly adaptive language that has developed alongside other Malay languages within the Malayan group (which also includes Para-Malay languages as Minangkabau and Temuan). Like the vocabulary of other Malay languages, such as Johor-Riau, Jambi, Kedah, Bengkulu and Pattani, that of UL is for the greater part cognate with the modern standard Malay (SM) languages, the most well known of which are the national languages of Malaysia (Bahasa Malaysia; BM) and Indonesia (Bahasa Indonesia; BI)[3]. When spoken, UL cannot be properly understood by speakers of SM. This is, however, primarily due to certain regular sound changes that have occurred during the last few centuries. By comparing UL with other Malay languages, and by considering loans in vocabulary and grammar which have occurred over time, we can define the place where the Urak Lawoi' originated as a people, where they migrated from there, and in which places they chose to settle semi-permanently before making Southern Thailand their permanent domicile.

The Urak Lawoi' have a lot in common with other Malay people, but there are also many things in which they differ. Originally a nomadic sea people, they have hardly been Indianized and never been Islamized, and until today hold on to their

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[2] This research was mainly conducted at Ko Sire (Phuket Province), Ko Lanta (Krabi Province) and Ko Lipe (Satun Province); the islands are centers for the three different dialects of Urak Lawoi', respectively the Northern, Central and Southern dialect

[3] For both national languages, Johor-Riau Malay was used as a basis.

original animistic belief. Nomadic as they were, the Urak Lawoi' have been in contact with many other peoples and cultures, and although they never yielded to complete adaptation to a dominant society's culture, and only recently gave up their nomadic life style, they were still to an extend influenced by the groups they came into contact with. Many of these influences are reflected in the Urak Lawoi' language. Urak Lawoi' has loaned from, among other languages, Sanskrit, marginally from Arabic (via SM), from SM, English - directly and via SM - and most recently from Thai. So even though no written sources about the ethnic homeland of the Urak Lawoi' exist, by considering natural phonetic change as well as loaning and grammatical influences from surrounding languages we can trace back the path that the Urak Lawoi' people took from their place of origin - which lay along the east coast of Sumatra - with comparative ease. This paper offers to point out how migration, community forming and settlement of the Urak Lawoi' is mirrored in their language.

Keywords: Southern Thailand, Andaman Coast, Urak Lawoi', Ethnic Homeland, Sumatra, Migration, Community Forming, Language Change

การย้ายถิ่น การสร้างชุมชน และการเปลี่ยนแปลงของภาษาพื้นเมืองของชาวอูรักลาโว้ยที่ชายทะเลฝั่งอันดามันของประเทศไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

บทความฉบับนี้เป็นการศึกษาการเชื่อมโยงกันระหว่างการย้ายถิ่น การสร้างชุมชน และการเปลี่ยนแปลงของภาษาพื้นเมืองของชาวอูรักลาโว้ย โดยข้อมูลพื้นฐานส่วนใหญ่ได้รับจากงานวิจัยด้านภาษาศาสตร์พรรณนาและภาษาศาสตร์เปรียบเทียบที่ได้ดำเนินการตั้งแต่เดือนกุมภาพันธ์ 2553 จนถึงเดือนมกราคม 2555 ในชุมชนอูรักลาโว้ยหลายกลุ่มที่อาศัยอยู่บริเวณชายฝั่งทะเลอันดามันของประเทศไทย ซึ่งผลการวิจัยนี้ถือเป็นการสนับสนุนข้อมูลของงานวิจัยที่ผ่านมาแล้ว โดยเฉพาะงานวิจัยของ อมร ทวีศักดิ์ (2529) และ สุพิณ วงษ์บุษราคัม (2545)

ภาษาอูรักลาโว้ยเป็นภาษาที่เกิดมาพร้อมกับภาษามาเลย์อื่นๆในตระกูลภาษามาลายัน (รวมทั้งภาษาพารา-มาเลย์ เช่น ภาษามีนังกะเบาและเตมวนด้วย) และเป็นภาษาที่สามารถปรับตัวเข้ากับสถานการณ์ที่เปลี่ยนแปลงได้ คำศัพท์ในภาษาอูรักลาโว้ยส่วนมากมีลักษณะคล้ายกับคำศัพท์ในภาษามลายูมาตรฐานสมัยใหม่ นั่นคือ ภาษาประจำชาติมาเลเซีย (บาฮาซามาเลเซีย) และอินโดนีเซีย (บาฮาซาอินโดนีเซีย) ซึ่งเหมือนกันกับคำศัพท์ในภาษามาเลย์ถิ่นอื่นๆ เช่นภาษายะโฮร์ - เรียว ภาษาแจมบี้ ภาษาเคดาห์ ภาษาเบงกูลูโกตา และภาษาปัตตานี และเนื่องจากภาษาอูรักลาโว้ยมีลักษณะการออกเสียงที่เปลี่ยนไป (phonetic change) จึงทำให้เจ้าของภาษามลายูมาตรฐานไม่เข้าใจภาษาพูดของชาวอูรักลาโว้ยได้อย่างถูกต้อง

หากเปรียบเทียบภาษาอูรักลาโว้ยกับภาษามลายูถิ่นอื่นๆ โดยพิจารณาจากการยืมคำศัพท์และไวยากรณ์ที่ใช้ในอดีต เราสามารถกำหนดบริเวณที่ชาวอูรักลาโว้ยถือกำเนิด สถานที่ต่างๆที่มีการอพยพย้ายถิ่นฐาน และพื้นที่ที่เริ่มตั้งถิ่นฐานในบริเวณภาคใต้ของประเทศไทย

ชาวอูรักลาโว้ยและชาวมลายูในถิ่นอื่นๆมีลักษณะหลายประการที่คล้ายกันมาก แต่ยังคงมีหลายประเด็นที่แตกต่างกัน นั่นคือ เดิมชาวอูรักลาโว้ยเป็นผู้เร่ร่อนทางทะเลที่แทบจะไม่ได้รับอิทธิพลจากกระบวนการกลายไปสู่ความเป็นวัฒนธรรมอินเดีย (Indianization) และไม่เคยได้รับอิทธิพลจากศาสนา

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อิสลาม (Islamization) จนถึงปัจจุบัน กลุ่มคนดังกล่าวยังคงยึดถือความเชื่อแบบวิญญาณนิยม ซึ่งเป็นความเชื่อแรกเริ่มดั้งเดิม และในฐานะที่เป็นชนเผ่าเร่ร่อน ชาวอูรักลาโว้ยได้มีการติดต่อกับผู้คนโดยรอบที่มีรูปแบบวัฒนธรรมที่หลากหลาย สิ่งที่ปรากฏคือ ชาวอูรักละโว้ยได้ปรับพฤติกรรมและวัฒนธรรมของตนเองตามสังคมรอบข้างน้อยมาก และเพิ่งจะเลิกวิถีชีวิตที่เร่ร่อนเมื่อไม่นานมานี้ แต่พวกเขาก็ยังได้รับอิทธิพลมากมายจากกลุ่มชาติพันธุ์ที่ได้มีการติดต่อกันในลักษณะของภาษา เช่น การยืมคำศัพท์จากภาษาสันสกฤต ภาษาอาหรับ (โดยผ่านทางภาษามลายู) ภาษามลายู ภาษาอังกฤษ (โดยตรงและโดยผ่านทางภาษามลายู) และล่าสุดภาษาไทย ดังนั้น แม้ว่าไม่มีหลักฐานที่ยืนยันเกี่ยวกับแหล่งที่มาของชาวอูรักลาโว้ย แต่การพิจารณาวิวัฒนาการของภาษา คำยืม และอิทธิพลจากภาษาอื่นๆต่อไวยกรณ์ทำให้สามารถย้อนรอยสถานที่ที่ชาวอูรักลาโว้ยถือกำเนิด ซึ่งอยู่แถวชายฝั่งตะวันออกของเกาะสุมาตรา บทความฉบับนี้ จึงได้ทำการศึกษาลักษณะภาษาที่ใช้ในปัจจุบัน เพื่อเข้าใจถึงการย้ายถิ่น การสร้างชุมชน และการตั้งถิ่นฐานรกรากของชาวอูรักลาโว้ย

คำสำคัญ: ภาคใต้ของไทย ฝั่งทะเลอันดามัน อูรักลาโว้ย แหล่งกำเนิดของกลุ่มชาติพันธุ์ เกาะสุมาตรา การย้ายถิ่น การสร้าง**ชุมชน** การเปลี่ยนแปลงของภาษา

Introduction

Data for this research were collected mainly during fieldwork done in the years 2010/12 by method of interview. I questioned 62 native Urak Lawoi' speakers on matters of language, culture, social relations, citizen status, folklore, oral tradition, social history, religion, beliefs, living conditions, cultural adjustment, fishing methods, preferred foods and social contentment. For different reasons (continuity, checkability, linguistic prowess, outspokenness) the interviewees were of as different age and social background as possibly achievable in a close-knit monocultural society as that of the Urak Lawoi'. Interviewees included among others fishermen in their eighties, their fifties, their thirties and their twenties, two traditional religious leaders in their seventies, a vice-village head in his early forties, a 70-year old man who spent a third of his life in a Burmese gaol for fishing in the wrong territorial waters, three new-born Christian ladies (28, 35 and 45 years old), some older schoolchildren, and descendants of legendary Urak Lawoi' leader To' Kiri (between 35 and 50). The 62 interviewed Urak Lawoi' live on the islands of Phuket, Lanta and Lipe. Interviews were mostly conducted in Thai, which most Urak Lawoi' under 60 years old speak fluently and most elders speak sufficiently well to be able to communicate in the language without difficulties. On the island of Lipe some of the interviews were partly conducted in Malaysian, as through labour and trade the Urak Lawoi' there have frequent contacts with the Malaysian territories of Langkawi and Perlis and have learned Malaysian as a trade language which some prefer speaking over Thai.[5] As my proficiency in Urak Lawoi' grew during the research, its vocabulary became part of the field languages used. During all interviews information was recorded with both pen-and-notebook and Sony MP3 IC Recorder.

Collected linguistic data were transcribed when necessary, analyzed and when possible compared with existing sources (such as Thawisak, 1986, Thailand Bible Society, 1998) to prevent misinterpretations. In case of doubt about any subject, back-up information was provided at all times by the Urak Lawoi' community of Ko Sire, Phuket, the group who live closest to my home.[6] Historic Information collected through my interviews with Urak Lawoi' elders (under whom traditional religious leaders To' Moh Marasi Thalayluk of Lanta and To' Moh Juy Pramongkit of Phuket, and first generation inhabitant of Lipe Labu Hanthalay), is supported by older research (CORIN and Prince of Songkhla University, 1999; Wongbusarakum, 2002).

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[5] Malaysian is also preferred over, or at least spoken in a greater proportion than Thai during the Urak Lawoi' religious services at the 'Hope of Lipe' Church during service.

[6] Everything within my power has been done to prevent misinterpretation, but Thavisak is far from complete in his 1986 description of Urak Lawoi', while the translation of the New Testament in Urak Lawoi' (1998) is, according to Urak Lawoi' who have read (parts of) it (e.g. To' Moh Juy Pramongkit of Phuket, Mr. Suthin Thalayluk of Lanta), notoriously artificial. The members of the Urak Lawoi' community of Yuban (Laem Tukkae, Ko Sire, Phuket) proved invaluable in reviewing and correcting my data.

The general objectives of my research were to compile a grammar of Urak Lawoi' - something that had not been done in more than 20 years, to identify the changes the language has undergone through the constant travel and resettlement that has characterized the lifestyle of the Urak Lawoi' since the world became aware of them in the early 1900's, and to compare Urak Lawoi' with other Malay languages in order to define era and area in which their split-off occurred and their wandering started. Initially I was unaware of the fact that the travels of the Urak Lawoi' people could be so closely followed: Not only by observing the natural deviation of UL from a proto-language (an archaic form of SM that has in the mean time developed into modern SM) that occurs when a group starts to become isolated, but also by considering the loanwords that UL has gathered during the last hundred twenty years, linguistic evidence of their exogenesis and onward wanderings readily appears. Loanwords explain very specific things about the outside contacts of an isolated group at a certain time, and by combining the disciplines of comparative linguistics and etymology it became possible to follow the Urak Lawoi' on their decades-long trip from their original homeland to their present home on the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea.

The Urak Lawoi'

The Urak Lawoi' are a Malay ethnic group nowadays living primarily in permanent settlements on the islands of Phuket, Phi Phi, Jum (also called Pu), Lanta, Bulon, Lipe and Adang along the Andaman coast of Thailand. According to oral tradition the Urak Lawoi' were originally a nomadic sea people, living mainly on their boats and in temporary settlements along the islands' coasts. From around the beginning of the 20th century the Urak Lawoi' appeared rather suddenly in Thai waters. In 1909 they were encouraged to settle down on the islands of the Adang Archipelago to provide a reason for the Siamese government to proclaim these islands to be Siamese territory, against the British claim that they belonged to British Malaya (Anglo-Siamese Treaty, 1909). The Siamese claim stood, but permanent settlement of the islands by the Urak Lawoi' was not to happen for another 30 to 40 years. During this time the Urak Lawoi' lived in non-trade-based communities, and sustained themselves by fishing. Depending on the seasons and the connected availability of sea products they would either camp on coastal islands like Lanta, Talibong or Tarutao, or venture further out and set up house on the outlying islands of Adang, Lipe, Rawi, Rok Nai or Phi Phi. Beginning in the 1940ies, forced by population growth, the advancement of the market economy and the death of their leader of legend, To' Kiri in 1949, the Urak Lawoi' settled on the islands which had formerly been merely their provisional domiciles, and they became permanent, though not yet fully empowered, citizens of Thailand (Labu Hanthalay, personal communication, April 4, 2010; Wongbusarakum 2002).

The Urak Lawoi' people have kept no written records of their journeys and their whereabouts before they arrived in Thailand. Only since their permanent settlement on Thailand's Andaman Sea islands they have allowed to let themselves be registered. In 1986 the Urak Lawoi' received surnames by Royal Decree (a project that was under observation by the Princess Mother), and education in the national language started relatively recently. Since the 1990ies Urak Lawoi' is written in an orthography of adapted Thai script, developed by missionary David Hogan in 1988 (Hogan, 1998). There is still no literature production in Urak Lawoi' to speak of, although some children's books and pamphlets have been printed in Urak Lawoi', and the New Testament of the Bible has been translated into the language (Thailand Bible Society, 1998). In some places an effort is made to preserve Urak Lawoi' culture: On Lanta Island is a primary school with a curriculum in Urak Lawoi', and on Phuket an Urak Lawoi' cultural centre is being built[7]. On Lipe Island, on the other hand, the Urak Lawoi' live marginalized lives and have been all but deprived from their rights to own land. Generally, it can be claimed that Urak Lawoi' language and culture is slowly losing ground, as Thai is taking over as the preferred language of communication among the younger generation on Lanta, Phuket and surrounding islands. On Lipe Island many young Urak Lawoi' are fluent in Malaysian (BM) as Langkawi Island, which is a Malaysian territory used for trading by the Urak Lawoi', is considerably nearer to Lipe than the Thai coast, and Malaysian is easy to learn for Urak Lawoi' speakers. Also, education is cause for the demise of Urak Lawoi'. With few exceptions, school curricula are in Thai. Furthermore, Urak Lawoi' secondary school students now often leave their islands to study on the mainland. The first Urak Lawoi' students have recently graduated from Thai universities (Labu Hanthalay, personal communication, April 4, 2010; Suthin Thalayluk, personal communication, May 10, 2010.)

The Urak Lawoi' in Thailand (ca. 1910 - 2010)

From around the beginning of the 20th century the Urak Lawoi' have lived on and around the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea. According to oral tradition (recorded on a brass plaque situated at a small monument erected at Ko Lipe's northern beach), the Urak Lawoi' arrived at Ko Lipe first under the leadership of their legendary Chief To' Kiri, who persuaded his clan to come and live on Lipe Island in the year of the Buddhist Era 2452 (1909 AD)[8] . Later, groups of Urak Lawoi' moved on to other islands. They settled on the Southern islands as Tarutao, Lipe, Adang and Rawi first, then made their way up North to islands as Lanta, Libong and Phuket in the years that

[7] The centre is called 'ศูนย์วัฒนธรรมชาวเลบ้านแหลมตุ๊กแก', and in English, strangely: 'THE CULTURAL CENTER SEA GYPSY OF BANLAEMTUKKAE'. Ban Laem Tukkae is the Thai name for the Urak Lawoi' village of Yuban, Phuket.

[8] Retrieved from inscription on brass plaque at Ko Lipe, 2-5-2011 (De Groot, 2011).

followed. On most islands they encountered local fishermen; mostly of Thai Muslim stock. On Lanta they also had to share the island with Chinese charcoal burners. The larger island of Phuket had been settled since the second quarter of the 19th century by Thai administrators and Chinese tin miners, who had come from the Thai mainland, Penang and Melaka, but large areas of the island were still unspoken for, and the Urak Lawoi' settled in Ko Sire, Rawai and on the Northern beaches of the Thalang district. In the next decades especially the large community at Ko Sire remained somewhat reclusive, and developed into the largest single Urak Lawoi' settlement in Thailand during the nineteen sixties and seventies. Nowadays, this village - called Yuban by the Urak Lawoi' - is one of the best integrated Urak Lawoi' communities in Thailand. It is represented by a *phûu jàj bâan* (village chief) and has a Thai style administration, while at the same time the traditional function of *to' moh*[9] is maintained. There is a school, and there are some shops, some of which are starting to cater to tourists. Urak Lawoi' culture is strongly present in Yuban. Traditional ceremonies are organized meticulously. Yuban has a *rongeng* (traditional dance) school led by the venerable Ma' (Mother) Jiw Pramongkit, who is also the owner of a large number of original Urak Lawoi' stories and songs. Members of the community have found jobs ashore, although the beach in front of the village is still a mooring ground for fishing boats. Wicker flags on stakes are set up on the beach to appease the spirits of the sea. There are some modern problems such as gambling addiction and alcoholism. Relatively modern Thai style housing has replaced the earlier huts on the beach, and on a hill behind the village is a shrine built to the memory of the Urak Lawoi' deified ancestor To' Kiri (De Groot, 2012).

The Legend of To' Kiri

An Urak Lawoi' oral tradition tells us that four to five generations ago the Urak Lawoi' moved from Aceh in the then Netherlands Indies to the Thai islands in the Andaman sea via British Malaya. Counting generations and taking into account and a good reason for the Urak Lawoi's migration, we may conclude that this happened around 1900 or a little before the turn of the century, a logical time to flee the northernmost provinces of Sumatra because a war was going on between the Dutch colonizers of Indonesia and the Acehnese. The legend of the Urak Lawoi's journey has been recorded in books and - first of all - on a brass plaque which can be found on the north side of Lipe Island, near a number of graves: In one of those graves lies To' Kiri, the legendary leader who led the Urak Lawoi' from Aceh to Thailand. To' Kiri is highly revered. He has a shrine in every Urak Lawoi' village. In the shrine his effigy is kept, which is offered flowers and water regularly. To' Kiri is considered

[9] *To' moh* (Malay cognates *dato (datuk);bomoh*) is nowadays a ceremonial religious function in Urak Lawoi' communities. In earlier days the To' Moh decided on all important issues, e.g. where to fish, when to marry, where to migrate, etc., for which he consulted magical or supernatural sources.

a spiritual as well as a political leader, and has been attributed magical powers: To' Kiri could summon fish by singing or calling out to them, and had a superior sense of direction when he led the Urak Lawoi' people from Aceh via Malaysia to the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea. According to the oral tradition To' Kiri was a Muslim from Aceh. He was an outsider who came to the Urak Lawoi's help (De Groot, 2011/2; Wongbusarakum, 2002). The legend tells us a lot about the way the Urak Lawoi' wish to remember their heroic journey across the Strait of Malacca. Whether true or not, it informs us at least that the Urak Lawoi' had come from elsewhere before they settled down on the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea. As the legend tells us that To' Kiri came from Aceh, let's start looking in that direction.

My research shows that the Urak Lawoi' Language has a strong tendency to loan, but no Acehnese loan words can be found in Urak Lawoi'. Even the claim that To' Kiri was Acehnese eventually makes no sense. To' Kiri, or Jae Kiri, as he is also known, is not an Acehnese name, and no alternative names of the leader are known. Even if the name To' Kiri would be his Urak Lawoi' appellation in spite of his Acehnese background, the fact that not a single Acehnese loanword can be found in Urak Lawoi' should make us suspicious[10].

On the other hand, the appearance of the Urak Lawoi' on the Thai islands in the Andaman sea coincides with a series of especially gruesome wars waged by the Dutch colonizers of Indonesia against the Acehnese freedom fighters led by Teuku Umar and later his widow Cut Nyak Dhien. Fleeing from a war torn area is a good enough excuse for migration, especially when one is adapted to travel, as the Urak Lawoi' according to oral tradition always were (Mani Pramongkit, personal communication, June 5 2010; To' Moh Jui Pramongkit, personal communication, June 5 2010.). Coincidence is no proof, however, and while we may conclude that the Urak Lawoi' possessed enough knowledge on Aceh to include it in their legend, they never stayed long enough near that northernmost tip of Sumatra to be influenced by Acehnese language and culture in any way. Apart from a decided lack of Acehnese loan words, a complete absence of Muslims among older Urak Lawoi' seems to co-support the unlikeliness of the story. Aceh was, and is, well known for its strict adherence to Islam, and at least a few conversions more would have been natural if the

[10] The cognate word for Urak Lawoi' *to'* in Acehnese is *teuku* (Malay: *datuk, dato*; clear cognates with Urak Lawoi'), which is a title for officials in the court of the Sultan who hold a non-religious rank (especially army). Possible cognates for 'Kiri' in Acehnese are 'giri' (a kind of lemon), 'kire' (to segment) and 'kirek' (to pull on something while turning), hardly words that make suitable names for an Acehnese leader. Here it must be said that also the word 'kiri' in Malay or Urak Lawoi' (it means 'left' in both) doesn't make much sense either as a leader's name. A possible SM cognate could be 'giring' ('to herd animals or to gather or drive men in a group'). The [g] - [k] and [ing] - [i] sound changes would be irregular. In any case, for the Urak Lawoi', the name is supposed to be Acehnese.

two communities had really been in intensive contact with each other.[11] Although the fact remains that To' Kiri was a Muslim outsider and actively tried to convert some Urak Lawoi' to Islam after their arrival in Thai waters (Labu Hanthalay, personal communication, April 4, 2010), this eventually doesn't make him Acehnese.

Influence from Bahasa Malaysia and English in Urak Lawoi'

If we look at modern loanwords in Urak Lawoi', we may conclude that most of those loans are from Thai, but then a number of obvious loans from Malay, from English and from English via Malay, presents us with evidence that the Urak Lawoi' must have once stayed in Malaysian, or rather British Malayan territorial waters. In the Urak Lawoi' oral tradition about their journey to Thailand, Gunung Jirai in present day Malaysia is mentioned as a stopover, where they 'rested'[12]. Gunung Jerai[13], a mountain in the state of Kedah, is recorded in oral tradition as the place where the Urak Lawoi' went ashore. Gunung Jerai is Kedah's highest peak at 1217 meters, and it has been a landmark for seafaring people since Indian and Arab merchants arrived in the area at the time of the Malaccan Sultanate: A landmark that can be impossibly missed from the sea. It may be suspected that the Urak Lawoi' stayed for a little longer than just for a rest at the foot of Gunung Jerai. How long we'll probably never know, for no independent sources exist about their sojourn there. Fact is that the Urak Lawoi picked up words from the Malay that was then spoken in British Malaya. They also picked up some English words via Malay, and even some English words that the Malayan/Malaysian Malays never included in their own language. My collected data include the following examples:

Loan words in Urak Lawoi' from Standard Malay (SM):

SM kopi (coffee) UL kopi[14]

[11] Since their coming to Thailand, only few Urak Lawoi' have converted to Buddhism, even fewer to Islam, and a larger number to Christianity (less than 5% - retrieved from Joshua project (http://www.joshuaproject.net/index.php, 21-02-2012). Since the nineteen eighties, American missionaries have been active on most islands where the Urak Lawoi' live. The greater part of the Urak Lawoi' is still animistic.

[12] 'ระหว่างทางได้หยุดพักที่เทือกเขาฆูนุงณีรัย ประเทศมาเลเซีย' (on the way, they stopped and rested a while at the mountain range of Gunung Jerai, Malaysia), it says literally. Retrieved from inscription on brass plaque at Ko Lipe, May 2, 2011 (De Groot, 2011).

[13] 'jiraiʔ' means 'grave' in UL. It is cognate with 'jirat' in SM, which means 'grave for non-Muslims'. In BM the mountain is called 'Gunung Jerai'. A 'jerai' is a species of ficus, which grows in abundance on the mountain. Gunung Jerai is a long, ridge-shaped mountain which from a distance might look to some like a grave. It is unlikely that UL has a word for the species of ficus called 'jerai' in SM. The BM name 'Gunung Jerai' might be a backformation from the UL 'jiraiʔ'. A vice-versa backformation might also be possible.

[14] Although 'kopi' is not an original Malay word: From Arabic *qahwah*, via Turkish *kahve*, via Italian *caffe*, English and Dutch formed *coffee/koffie (pronounced almost identical: 'kʰɔfi:/'kɔfi)*, which, when

SM	lotɛŋ	(loft, attic)	UL	lotɛŋ	
SM	pəluru	(bullet)	UL	prulu[15]	
SM	tunaŋ	(fiancé)	UL	tunaŋ	

(No phonetic change has taken place in [lotɛŋ] and [tunaŋ] as would occur in regular SM-UL pairs where final ŋ → k).

Loan words in Urak Lawoi' from English via Standard (Malaysian) Malay (SM):

EN	engine	SM	enjin	UL	ijen[16]
EN	stocking	SM	stoking	UL	sətukin[17]

Direct loans from English (not loaned from English in Standard Malaysian Malay):

EN	motorboat	UL	mutuboiˀ
EN	bomb	UL	bom (to fish with dynamite)
EN	hammer	UL	hama
EN	radio	UL	ridiw (possibly via spoken English; SM 'radio')

The words loaned from SM have to do with things that one hardly finds at sea, but for which one will need words when one goes ashore. The loans from English via BM are words which had only recently been incorporated into the Malay language, and the goods to which they referred obviously appealed to the Urak Lawoi'. The direct loans from English are words that have to do with the changing lifestyle of the Urak Lawoi', who started fitting their boats with engines and fishing with dynamite. Nowadays, fishing with dynamite is prohibited, but people are still alive who remember doing it, and it was done enthusiastically. Also, having a motorboat and a hammer could make all the difference in a world where sailing had been the norm for a long time and boats had traditionally been made without using iron nails.
The loanwords given above are obvious signs of beginning modernization in the Urak Lawoi' households and communities of those days. Also, they are definite proof of the fact that the Urak Lawoi' either had temporary settlements in British Malaya or were frequenting the place. A relevant fact is that the 'technical' terms were not loaned from Dutch, as would have been the case if at that time, just before arriving in

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eventually loaned, through a regular f-p sound change in pre-independence loans from Dutch/English into Malay/Indonesian became *kopi* in SM. Urak Lawoi' then loaned the word from modern Standard Malay.

[15] Notice the metathesis, found regularly when comparing UL with SM (see also note 19 and 20).

[16] In Standard Malay as well as in Urak Lawoi' 'j' is pronounced 'ʤ'.

[17] Note that this modern loan for this garment never used by the Urak Lawoi' has an irregular sound change. Compare SM 'kəping' - UL 'kəpik' (piece); SM 'kəring' - UL 'krik (dry)'; SM 'cacing' - UL 'caˀcik' (worm), etc.

Thailand, they would still have sojourned in Aceh in the Netherlands Indies[18]. The loan of English words indicates the Urak Lawoi's exogenesis to British Malaya at that time, which we may pinpoint to be the late 19th or beginning of the 20th century. Through this we may carefully conclude that while the legend of To' Kiri mentions Aceh as a place of origin, the name Aceh might stand here as a pars pro toto for the whole island of Sumatra or even the whole of the Netherlands Indies. A stay in British Malaya, however, is very probable if one considers the clear loans that Urak Lawoi' took from SM and English.

Influences from Islam: Arabic and Persian

No Urak Lawoi' who is asked about the legendary leader To' Kiri fails to mention that he was a Muslim man, but apart from that fact there is not much that links the Urak Lawoi' to Islam. If we study the words that in Malay (that is BM and BI and the other Malay languages) have been replaced with Arabic or Persian loans (classic indicators of Islamization), we see that Urak Lawoi' has in most cases retained either their original Urak Lawoi' (Malay) word or - in case of words only since recently needed - taken a Thai loan:

SM	kahwin	(Persian: to marry)	UL	bəkapok	(Urak Lawoi')
SM	miskin	(Persian: poor, abject)	UL	najaˀ	(Urak Lawoi')
SM	Allah	(Arabic: God)	UL	Tuhat	(Urak Lawoi'; Malay: Tuhan: 'Lord')
SM	sahabat	(Arabic: friend)	UL	bəgu	(Urak Lawoi')
SM	kabar	(Arabic: news)	UL	habə	(Urak Lawoi')
SM	kərusi	(Arabic: chair)	UL	koˀ e	(Thai: kâwˀîı – เก้าอี้)

When no Islamization takes place, religious terms will not be borrowed. This was the case with the Urak Lawoi', so a much smaller number of Arabic loanwords was picked up by Urak Lawoi speakers than by the Islamized speakers of related languages in the Malay world. Three Arabic loans, and a Persian, that have nevertheless entered Urak Lawoi', probably via SM, are:

SM dunia	(Arabic: world)	UL	dənia
SM jirat	(Arabic: grave)	UL	jiraiˀ
SM waktu	(Arabic : time)	UL	waˀtu
SM jam	(Persian: watch)	UL	jap

[18] One loan word that suggests that the Urak Lawoi' had contacts with the Netherlands Indies is the loan 'duwit', which is from Dutch (and loaned in Indonesian) 'duit' (coin), pronounced dəwt (Dutch); duwit (Indonesian).

Note that the regular sound changes which have occurred over time between SM and UL have been retained in these loan words (De Groot, 2012), indicating that the Arab and Persian loans were not likely loaned directly from the two languages of Islamic influence, but were incorporated into the Urak Lawoi' language via contact with Standard Malay. Undoubtedly the Urak Lawoi' met Arabic and Persian traders and religious teachers, just like everyone else did in the Malay Archipelago. They just never came into deep enough contact with these men to give them a fair chance to convert them to Islam, or to even loan them more than a smattering of Arabic. This is much unlike the situation in Standard Malay, in which Arabic loans abound.
The Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian Archipelago were Islamized from the coasts inwards. Coastal towns in Java, Sumatra and on the Malay Peninsula already had mosques and imams when the interiors of the areas were still ruled by Indianized states such as Sriwijaya and Mataram. This foregoing of Islamization and shortage of Arabic loans leads to the conclusion that the Urak Lawoi' were not part of any land dwelling culture or state during the time of the arrival of Arabic, Persian and Indian Muslim pioneers, or they would have converted to Islam as king and community did. When Islam started to established itself as a dominant religion in the East Indian Archipelago in the 15th century AD (Rickleffs, 2001; Brown, 2003), the Urak Lawoi' were already living on their boats, in close connection with the sea, and out of continuous contact with other Malay peoples[19].

Influences from Indianization: Loans from Sanskrit

This was decidedly different during the time of the Indianization of the Malay Archipelago, which occurred from the 1st century CE on and waned from the 14th century until most coastal areas of present day Malaysia and Western Indonesia had been Islamized in the early decades of the 17th century CE (Rickleffs 2001; Brown 2003). Linguistic evidence points to a fair number of Urak Lawoi' words in everyday language which are of Indic origin. Thus the fact that the Urak Lawoi' either lived in Indianized areas, or had intensive contact with them, can be proven by the many Indic (predominantly Sanskrit - abbreviated SK below) loanwords that exist in Urak Lawoi', just like in practically all other Malay languages. Some examples are:

[19] Aceh had converted in the mid-fourteenth century, Melaka converted half a century later, Gresik, in east Java, was converted a decade after Aceh; Ternate, 2000 kilometers to the east in the Maluku islands converted in 1460, Demak in central Java in 1480, Banten in west Java in 1525, Buton in southwest Sulawesi in 1580 and Makassar in south Sulawesi in 1605. By the early decades of the seventeenth century, Islam had been introduced to virtually all the major coastal societies of the archipelago (Brown 2003).

SK	rupa	(shape)	UL	rupa	SK	bharat	(India[20])	UL	baraiʔ
SK	rasha	(taste)	UL	rasa	SK	karya	(to work)	UL	krəja[21]
SK	manushhya	(man)	UL	səmiya[22]	SK	kala	(time)	UL	kala
SK	dosa	(sin)	UL	dusa	SK	raja	(king)	UL	raja
SK	kaphala	(head)	UL	pala	HI	ghoda	(horse)	UL	kuda[23]
SK	mukkha	(face)	UL	mukha[24]	TA	gulai	(curry)	UL	gulai[22]
SK	kaca	(glass)	UL	kaca	TA	kədai	(shop)	UL	kədai[22]
SK	gajha	(elephant)	UL	gajah	TA	kappal	(ship)	UL	kapan[25]

The sort of loanwords the Urak Lawoi' took from Sanskrit and other Indic sources indicates an interest in novelties (*kuda, kuci*, *rupa*), and further in cuisine (*rasa, gulai*), the metaphysic (*dusa, kala*) and social and economic techniques (krəja, kədai). As is the case with Arab loans, the Indic ones have been adapted to fit Urak Lawoi' phonology. One interesting word is *semiya*. It is used to indicate one man or one person. Another word for 'man' in Urak Lawoi' is *urak* (Malay cognate *orang*), which is used to indicate a type of man, and which possesses an 'inclusive' element, a sense of 'belonging to a group', as in *urak lawoi'*, 'people of the sea', or *urak puteh*, 'white foreigners'. Other Malay languages don't recognize this difference in meaning between the two words

Indic loanwords alone do not indicate Indianization to the extent of Hinduization or conversion to other Indian religions such as Buddhism. As becomes apparent when entering any Urak Lawoi' village, attending any Urak Lawoi' religious ritual (such as the 'plajak', the twice-yearly sending of all evil and sin into the sea on a ceremonial boat model), or talking in depth with any Urak Lawoi', the Urak Lawoi' never left their animistic religion and never altered their lifestyle, which is deeply rooted in belief in spirits and magic. An Urak Lawoi' culture based on Hinduism never developed, and no Hindu traits entered the Urak Lawoi' brand of animism as happened in other Malay and Austronesian societies in Sumatra, Java and elsewhere. A logical conclusion we may deduce from this fact is that, although the language that was spoken by the Urak Lawoi' at that time contained Indic loans like the Standard Malay of those days, the culture of the sea people was already developing into a different direction than the one which that of their farming Malay brethren who lived under the rule of Hindu kings was taking. This deviation, which is now so apparent in language as well as customs of the Urak Lawoi', can only be explained through the diminishing contact the Urak Lawoi' had with other Malay peoples during the period of Indianization. Maybe the Urak Lawoi' went from coast dwellers to seafarers;

[20] 'baraiʔ ('barat' in SM) means 'west' in UL
[21] Notice the metathesis.
[22] Can be reconstructed via metathesis < +məsiya < +mənəsiya. The word in SM is 'manusia'.
[23] From Hindi
[24] One of the few instances where UL has retained the aspirated /k^h/, whereas SM has not.
[25] From Tamil

maybe they were boat builders and fishermen already. In any case, we can logically assume that it was in this era that the identity of the Urak Lawoi' took on a quality after which they still name themselves: They became sea people.

The Urak Lawoi' Community

As concluded above, the Urak Lawoi' detached themselves from their nuclear Malay family to roam the seas during the time of the Indianization of the Malay Archipelago before the influence of Islam became too manifest. Between the mid 14th and the beginning of the 15th century all Malay speaking areas had been Islamized (Rickleffs, 2001). The Urak Lawoi's separation and eventual exogenesis from the rest of the Malay world must have had its origins some generations before that time. Contacts must have been thoroughly broken with neighbouring peoples for Islamization to go by unnoticed. Still, the close relation of Urak Lawoi' with SM and other versions of Malay (over 80% cognate) indicates that the direct relatives of the people who speak the language are indeed Malays. In a cultural sense, the Urak Lawoi may have changed less than the Malays themselves since the time of Indianization, as they experience much less of the two major waves of influence from outside that changed society: Indianization and Islamization. Instead of converting to an imported religion, the egalitarian Urak Lawoi' have remained animists until today.

When considering all linguistic and circumstantial evidence - the link between Urak Lawoi' and Malay, the historical distance and cultural differences between the Urak Lawoi'and the Malay, and the legend of a journey out of Sumatra - it appears most logical to place the ancestors of the Urak Lawoi' as denizens, or rather close neighbours of a Sumatran, Malay Indianized state of before the 13th century. Such a state existed in the era; it was the Buddhist empire of Sriwijaya. Sriwijaya's power was mainly based upon its capacity to control maritime traffic in the Malacca Strait, possibly through an alliance with the ancestors of present Orang Laut[26] (Muljana 2006). Later sources - from the time of the Kingdom of Johor - indicate that in those days sea people were all too common in the area, and were even recruited to perform duties for the local rulers. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for example, differently named groups of sea people were incorporated in the Kingdom of Johor by formalizing their ties to the ruler. These ties were articulated in terms of the specific corvée duties assigned to each of these groups. Corvées were associated with degrees of status. The corvée duties of the sea people were to gather sea products for the China trade, perform certain special services for the ruler at weddings, funerals, or on a hunt, serve as transport for envoys and royal missives, man the ships and serve as a fighting force on the ruler's fleet, and patrol the waters of the kingdom. Except in times of

[26] Orang Laut is the Malay nomenclature for sea people, and is very closely related to Urak Lawoi' "Urak Lawoi'".

actual warfare when their services were needed for the fleet, the Orang Laut were usually on patrol providing protection for Johor's traders or to those wanting to trade in Johor while harassing all other shipping (Andaya, 1974). Urak Lawoi' might well have been under the servants of the Sultan, although only circumstantial evidence of their presence in the Johor navy can be produced[27].

How and how long exactly the Urak Lawoi' roamed the waters along the Sumatran coast is still not known with certainty. They did not keep written records, did not build stone houses, and also otherwise left little or no trace of their existence. It can be surmised that their lifestyle changed little during the centuries they lived as sea people, for when they eventually settled in Thailand it was still basic. They built temporary shelters in coastal areas and on islands, but they remained nomads until their eventual arrival on the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea in the first decade of the 20th century. Then still the Urak Lawoi' did not settle in permanent dwellings on land. From the beginning of the 20th century until the late nineteen forties the Urak Lawoi' were semi-sedentary. Subsisting on fishing, they constructed groups of simple huts near fresh water sources on many islands of the Tarutao and Adang Archipelagos[28]. These *bagad*[29]-places, as they were called, served as communally owned temporary shelters used when curing fish, taking on water and performing other tasks ashore. Home and instrument of making a living was still the boat. Trade was marginal and mostly with other minorities such as the Chinese and Malay settlers on Lanta and other coastal islands in the Andaman area (Labu Hanthalay, personal communication, April 4, 2010).

Thus the Urak Lawoi' remained mobile. Urak Lawoi' Elders can still tell about journeys to Burma and Indonesia. Mostly these journeys were for fishing purposes, although sometimes there was also some trade involved. When the control and protection of national borders became more efficient after the Second World War and the independence of most countries in the region, those journeys sometimes ended in prison time for a fisherman if he was picked up in foreign territorial waters. The actual enforcement of international marine law, and the real division into Thai, Malaysian, Indonesian and Burmese territorial waters of what had always been a place to roam free for the Urak Lawoi' obviously also hastened their settlement (Labu Hanthalay, personal communication, April 4 2010). The last major factor that changed the lifestyle of the Urak Lawoi' was the conversion of the Tarutao and Adang Archipelagos into a national park in 1974 (Mahidol University, 1974). When the park developers arrived at the newly established Tarutao National Marine Park, the Urak Lawoi' living on the islands were en masse transported to the tiny island of Lipe, lying

[27] Urak Lawoi' has, for instance, a word for 'king' (raja; Malay: raja) though the Urak Lawoi' people never had one.
[28] These have been particularly well charted and documented by Wongbusarakum (2002)
[29] A 'bagad' was a foraging trip, organized seasonally, to supply the community with food.

off the southern tip of Adang and former basis of To' Kiri. Bagad places were left unused, apart for the occasional illegal trip. Lipe, in its turn, was transformed into a holiday island in the 1980ies. It is now full of resorts and beach hotels - many of them rather luxurious, and the Urak Lawoi', who are mostly landless, have moved into the sandy interior of the island (Kitchai Horphisutthisan, personal communication, April 5, 2010).

On Lanta, Phuket and other islands the situation is slightly better. Especially in Phuket the local authorities make an effort to integrate the Urak Lawoi' into mainstream Southern Thai society. Luckily, these days the local authorities are genuinely concerned about preserving as much as possible of the heritage of the Urak Lawoi'. The cultural centre mentioned above stands as an example. Cultural festivities, such as the bi-annual plajak[30] ceremony, held in May and November, are sponsored, and tourists as well as anthropologists from all over the world come and watch.

The Urak Lawoi' communities on all Thai islands are tightly knit societies, but Thai as well as foreigners do have an impact on traditional society. The biggest impact of the outside world is social and economical, but also cultural influences abound. On the holiday islands of Phuket and especially Lipe, Urak Lawoi' society is undergoing a rapid change from self-sufficient, ecologically sound communities to consumer villages as tourists set the standard. On Lipe, a 'walking street' flanked with shops and restaurants leads across the island. North and south beach are now dominated by resorts, fishermen have become guides and salesmen, and since the nineteen eighties investors have started investing in tourism instead of fishing. (Kitchai Horphisutthisan, personal communication, April 5-6, 2010; Wongbusarakum, 2002).

Marriages to persons outside the ethnic group occur more often. It must be said that intercultural marriages are not something that shock the Urak Lawoi'. Urak Lawoi' leader To Kiri himself was a foreigner and his direct descendants married into Thai society, as is recorded on the aforecited brass plaque marking the leader's grave on the north coast of Ko Lipe.

Nowadays mixed marriages between Urak Lawoi' and (Southern) Thai do occur regularly. Children born of these marriages who are now in their twenties and thirties consider themselves Urak Lawoi' rather than Thai, and prefer the Urak Lawoi' language for communication, although most of this generation is fluent in Thai. Younger children, who have gone to Thai schools for as long as they have been learning, often prefer speaking Southern Thai (in Phuket, where the Southern dialect of Thai is used extensively next to Central (Standard) Thai) or Central Thai (especially on Lanta and Lipe, where several Thai and Sino-Thai men have married into the Urak

[30] Thai: 'ลอยเรือ' (*lɔɔy rɯa*) An event in which model boats with aboard all bad things that happened in the previous half year are ceremonially set afloat into the sea.

Lawoi' community) over Urak Lawoi'[31].

Education is mostly in Central Thai, as Urak Lawoi' certified teachers are still hard to come by. Schools keep to the Thai curriculum and teach the Urak Lawoi' children respect for Nation, Religion and King to prepare them for Thai citizenship. Also in other ways, Thaiification of the Urak Lawoi' takes place in a rapid tempo. The younger generation is attracted to the big, modern society. Many Urak Lawoi' have found employment in the tourism industry, where knowledge of Thai and foreign languages is a prerequisite. Fishing has become more and more difficult because of the development of resorts, overfishing by commercial vessels and the strict adherence to national boundaries. On the negative side, also many Urak Lawoi' have become unemployed, and stay home, left behind by the society that surrounds them (Mani Pramongkit and To' Moh Jui Pramongkit; personal communication. June 7, 2010).

Grammatical Influences and Loanwords from Thai

Thaiification also left the Urak Lawoi' language with a lot of Thai influences. The most interesting is the loan phenomenon of the question particle. Thai makes, other than Malay, active use of several question particles; short morphemes put at the end of a phrase or sentence to indicate a question. Where SM has only a rudimentary final question particle (*-kah*), which is not consequent or compulsory in use, Urak Lawoi' has, perhaps through Thai influence, developed question particles out of original Malay words, and which are just like in Thai compulsorily used when forming an interrogative sentence. Like in Thai, when a question is indicated by an interrogative pronoun, no question particle is necessary in Urak Lawoi':

kau	na'	abit	nama
he	shall	to-take	what

What does he want?

(Compare Thai: *khăw cà aw àrai* - *เขาจะเอาอะไร*)

kau	na'	pi	ka	diha
he	to-shall	to-go	to	where

Where is he going?

(Compare Thai: *khăw cà pai năi* - *เขาจะไปไหน*)

[31] On Ko Lipe Southern Thai is hardly spoken. Urak Lawoi' as well as immigrants use the Central Thai dialect when speaking Thai.

But in all other cases, a general question must be indicated by a question particle ‘gə’, which in form looks similar to [-kah], and is comparable to the Thai question particle ‘măi’ (ไหม):

payah gə
difficult question particle
Is it difficult?

(Compare Thai: *jâak măi* - *ยากไหม;* Malay : *payah ?*; *payahkah ?*)

kau na’ bali’ ka rumah gə
you shall to-return to house question particle

Is he going home?

(Compare Thai: *khun cà klàp bâan măi* - *คุณจะกลับบ้านไหม*; Malay: Kamu/awak akan pulang?)

A second question particle in Urak Lawoi’ is the word ‘tet’, which also means ‘no’. The word ‘tet’ combines the meanings of the Thai question particles ‘rŭu plàaw’ (*หรือเปล่า*) and ‘rŭu jang’ (*หรือยัง*):

na’ makat nama tet?
Shall to-eat what/something question part.

Do you want to eat anything (or not)?

(Compare Thai: *jàak kin àrai rŭu plàaw* - *อยากกินอะไรหรือเปล่า*; Malay: Mau makan sesuatu?)

kau iŋai’ ca pulau lipe’ kaca’ tet
You to-think that island lipe beautiful question part.

Do you think Lipe Island is beautiful (or not)?

(Compare Thai: *khun khít wâa kòˀ* lĭipéˀ *sŭaj rŭu plàaw* - *คุณคิดว่าเกาะหลีเป๊ะสวยหรือเปล่า*; Malay: Kamu/awak kira pulau Lipe indah?)

makat nasi dah tet
to-eat rice already question part.
Have you eaten (rice) already (or not)?

(Compare Thai: *kin khâaw lέεw rŭ̌ŭ jang* - *กินข้าวแล้วหรือยัง*; Malay: Sudah makan nasi?)

Apart from this grammatical loan from Thai, loanwords for modern items are being loaned in greater and greater numbers. Obviously, words as ‘computer’, ‘cd’, ‘motorcycle’ and other names for new inventions have been borrowed after Thai had borrowed these terms from English. Urak Lawoi’ has borrowed the words for ‘vintage’ modern items from Thai:

TH	โรงเรียน	(rooŋrian)	(school)	UL roŋrian
TH	ไฟฟ้า	(fajfáa)	(electricity)	UL fajfa
TH	จังหวัด	(caŋwàt)	(province)	UL caŋwat
TH	สตางค์; ตัง	(sàtaaŋ; taŋ)	(money)	UL taŋ

Thai is the last language from which the Urak Lawoi’ have borrowed (and still are borrowing). Thai is also the first language of many young Urak Lawoi’, who were born and have been registered as Thai citizens in this country. Thaiification of the Urak Lawoi’ and the Urak Lawoi’ language will go on.

Conclusion

Urak Lawoi’, as a language of a roving and wandering people, has always been a borrowing language. Wherever the Urak Lawoi’ journeyed, they came into contact with cultures that had established themselves in that area already. And if not, other cultures would encroach on areas where the Urak Lawoi’ had had their eye on first. Vocabulary and grammatical features have been borrowed from Sanskrit and other Indic languages, Standard Malay (Malaysian), English (either directly or via Malay) and Thai.

Now, Urak Lawoi’ has become a borrowing language of a no longer wandering people. Nowadays, more and more Thai words are necessary to understand the workings of post offices, banks, government institutions, laws, schools, football matches, restaurants and ice cream. Urak Lawoi’’s natural tendency to borrow only helps its transition go onwards. Through its inadequacy in putting the modern world into words, more and more loans will be added to the language, until it will eventually consists for the greater part of loans.

That the Urak Lawoi' haven't always lived where they live now becomes clear from the deduction of linguistic evidence. This evidence provides proof for the proposition that the Urak Lawoi' were not an integral part of any organized Malay state at the time of the Islamization of the Archipelago. No Arabic religious loans are found in the Urak Lawoi' language, and as far as linguistic proof can tell us anything, they were never in intimate contact with Islam before the Muslim To' Kiri led them from Sumatra to Siam. It is safe to conclude that at the time of the Islamization of the Malay Archipelago the Urak Lawoi' were a mobile, seafaring people already, with no constant contact with mainstream Malay societies, and at most marginally dependents of Malay rulers. The split-off from the Malay, though often considered maritime, but principally land dwelling civilizations at that time, occurred at a time when Indianization had already left its influence on the Malay language. Thus, far before settling down on the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea the Urak Lawoi' had been independent seafarers. By means of this gathered linguistic evidence, we can pinpoint the earliest presence of the Urak Lawoi' in Indianized Indonesia. By the Urak Lawoi' people's use of the Malay language, we may propose that their homeland was Sumatra rather than Java. The Malay spoken by the Urak Lawoi' has however deviated significantly during the at least 600 to 700 years since their separation from the rest of the Malay world. The loaning in Urak Lawoi' of a non negligible amount of Sanskrit words suggests though, that during the first centuries of Indianization the Urak Lawoi' had not yet permanently taken to the sea, and were at least marginally part of a Malay community, whether that be a fully fledged Indianized state as Sriwijaya, or just a larger community of marginally Indianized Malay speakers on the island of Sumatra.
This exercise in following the Urak Lawoi' back to their earliest domicile thus leads us to the conclusion that the Urak Lawoi' are in origin a Sumatran people, though not from Aceh, where no Malay is spoken. Legendary and deified leader To' Kiri might have had Acehnese roots, but without even an Acehnese title or name, this is not probable. He might have travelled north via Aceh with his band of sea-people and then crossed the Malacca Straits by navigating to the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea via Pulau Perak, a rock island both visible from some miles off the Acehnese coast, from Langkawi and the Kedah coast, as well as from the Adang Archipelagic islands of Lipe and Rawi.

Also the break the Urak Lawoi' had before sailing on to the Siamese islands is well provable by means of looking at collected loan words. The Urak Lawoi' obviously stayed for a long while near Gunung Jerai and/or in other places in Malaya/Malaysia, loaning words and concepts before they eventually moved north to the Thai islands in the Andaman Sea, where they arrived in the early 20th century, in time to let the Siamese government use their presence as pretext to claim the Tarutao-Adang Archipelago for Siam. In Thailand the Urak Lawoi' found the unspoiled and yet uninhabited islands to their liking, and after a period of bagad-based fishing and living, in the late 1940ies settled down in permanent dwellings, eventually

becoming Thai Mài: new Thai citizens, with a surname ceremonially issued by the Princess Mother.

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