SUVANNABHUMI

Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

Vol 13, No 1

January 2021

BUFS **KIAS**
Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies

SUVANNABHUMI:
Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

SUVANNABHUMI means "The Land of Gold" in Pali, which location implies Southeast Asia.
Cover Photo: Sri Mariamman Temple, Singapore's oldest Hindu temple founded in 1827 by Naraina Pillai.

SUVANNABHUMI

Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

Vol 13, No 1

February 2021

BUFS KIAS
Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies

CONTENTS

Articles

Epistemic Reflexivity and its Applications to Southeast Asian Studies*

Yekyoum KIM**

[*Abstract*]

With a view to contributing to the epistemological and methodological debates in Southeast Asian Studies, the aim of this paper is to examine critically the epistemic concepts and approaches in the social sciences and then to seek an epistemic reflexivity and its potential methodological applications to Southeast Asian Studies. Although the field of social sciences has attempted to search for a means of tackling the ontological and epistemological dilemmas in its major paradigms, Southeast Asian Studies still demands a more 'actor-centered' epistemic account of reflexive interaction between actors and social structures. Bearing in mind the need for a more 'actor-centered' epistemic approach, this paper continues to discuss the 'epistemic reflexivity' in the social sciences and its potential applications to Southeast Asian Studies. In this paper, I will consider 'epistemic reflexivity' as an alternative methodological orientation. It emerges as interlinked with the ontological standpoint of what is called 'reflexive approaches' and its application to the detailed 'reflexive methodology' which I am proposing in

this paper. In doing so, this paper discusses the autobiographical experiences of the author arising from his ethnographic field research in North Sulawesi, Indonesia and their implication for a reflexive methodology in Southeast Asian Studies. In conclusion, the paper argues that we need a 'more actor-centered' epistemic framework to compensate for the epistemological and methodological dilemmas in the social sciences and the alternative framework will equip Southeast Asian Studies with a reflexive methodology relevant to the life-dynamics of the social world in the process of developing its inquiries, methodological technics, analysis, and validation.

Keywords: Southeast Asian Studies, Indonesia, Methodology, Reflexivity, Fieldwork

Ⅰ. Introduction

The multi-disciplinary journal of Southeast Asian Studies, SUVANNABHUMI, has been an international academic journal since 2009 that extensively focuses on epistemological and methodological issues in Southeast Asian Studies. This was thanks to the 10-year-research project agenda (2009-2019) of the journal organizer (Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies) sponsored by the National Research Foundation of Korea, 'the Recognition and Construction of Southeast Asia as a Holon: Building Southeast Asian Studies on Compounding Area Studies and Cultural Studies'. In particular, Victor King has published with SUVANNABHUMI a number of significant articles in a search for alternative epistemological concepts and methodological approaches in Southeast Asian Studies (King 2015a, 2015b, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2018a, 2018b, 2020a, 2020b). With a view to contributing to the epistemological and methodological debates, the aim of this paper is to examine critically the epistemic concepts and approaches in the social sciences and then to seek an epistemic reflexivity and its potential methodological application to Southeast Asian Studies.

In a previous paper (Kim 2019), I had an opportunity to discuss extensively the three major ontological paradigms (realist,

interpretative-actor perspective and reflexive approaches) in the social sciences in the analysis of the relations between the two main determinants of social outcomes, 'social structure' and 'human agency'. The paper argues that the premises of 'reflexive approaches' seem to provide a means of tackling the ontological dilemmas in the 'realist' and 'interpretive-actor' paradigms. Nevertheless, Southeast Asian Cultural Studies still demand a more 'actor-centered' account of reflexive interaction between actors and social structures (Kim 2019: 206). Bearing in mind the previous argument, this paper continues to discuss the 'epistemic reflexivity' in the social sciences and its potential methodological applications to Southeast Asian Studies. In this paper, I will consider 'epistemic reflexivity' as an alternative methodological orientation. It emerges as interlinked with the ontological standpoint of the previous paper (see Kim 2019) and its application to the detailed 'reflexive methodology' which I will suggest. In doing so, this paper examines the detailed application of 'reflexivity' in the social sciences and then proceeds to discuss autobiographical experiences of the author from ethnographic field research in North Sulawesi, Indonesia and their implication to epistemic reflexivity in Southeast Asian Studies..

This paper largely reflects on ethnographic field research in a Minahasan region (Tomohon), North Sulawesi, Indonesia, between June 1999 and July 2000 (see Kim 2004). It still clearly shows a stereotyped example of the epistemic nature in transition of Southeast Asian Studies at the beginning of the 21st century. The discussion and argument of this paper are primarily based on qualitative approaches in the field research and distinguished from those of macro-level or quantitative approaches. In this regard, what I mean by 'Southeast Asian Studies' in this paper is Qualitative or Cultural Studies on Southeast Asia.

Ⅱ. Towards a reflexive methodology

In social research, conceptions of 'reflexivity' range from 'self-reflection on self-consciousness' to the 'careful interpretive accounts of empirical data' (see Alvesson et al. 2000: 5-6; Dodgson 2019; King 2021; Palaganas 2017; Wacquant 1992: 37). For such scholars as

Cohen (1992) and Davies (1999), 'reflexivity' is concerned primarily with the 'self' of social researchers and their reflection on their self-consciousness in the processes of knowledge production. For such scholars as Rabinow (1977) and Bell (1993), the concept of 'reflexivity' emerges as the critical appreciation of the ambiguous position of social researchers who explore the 'subjectively' grounded lifeworld but then translate it into 'objective' formats of scientific reification. For other social researchers, however, the notion of reflexivity is directed primarily to the 'social and intellectual consciousness' embedded in an epistemological framework rather than to the individual researcher, while they are also significantly aware of the equivocal distinction between subjectivity and objectivity (Alvesson et al. 2000; Bourdieu 1992; Giddens 1984; Habermas 1987; Hervik 1994;). They all vigorously tackle the prevailing 'social and intellectual unconsciousness' in functionalist, structuralist, and interpretive-actor paradigms, the unconscious that leads social researchers to be biased in comprehending the 'intersubjective' nature of the social world. Aware of the phenomenon of 'social and intellectual unconsciousness', I will move on to explore the detailed application of 'reflexivity' in the social sciences.

2.1. 'Epistemological turn' in the interpretive-actor paradigm

Over the past century, the various schools of social sciences have attempted to search for reflexive ways of analyzing or interpreting human agents and their social world according to their own epistemological and ontological commitments. The scholars working within the functionalist and structuralist paradigms have emphasized the pre-eminence of the social structure over its individual parts. With this view, they have drawn upon the Comteian positivist epistemology which holds that the scientific methods of the natural sciences can be employed in social science so as to explain the coexistence and succession of natural and social phenomena and to generate true scientific knowledge of objective social facts. They thus focused on 'scientific' and 'quantitative', rather than 'naturalistic' and 'qualitative', methods by means of which they believed that 'objective' and 'concrete' structural properties of society as 'social facts' are made analyzable (see Comte 1853; Dilthey [1910]1976: 177;

Giddens 1984: 1; Husserl [1931]1958: 80-97; Kim 2019: 13-25). On the other hand, scholars in the interpretive-actor paradigm have rejected the positivist epistemology of Auguste Comte (see, for example, Comte 1968-1970). Instead, they turned 'inwards' towards individual human beings and attempted to reflect their consciousness and subjective experiences in their understanding of the lifeworld (Kim 2019: 15-18).

Phenomenologists such as Husserl and Schutz were the earlier pioneers who adopted the epistemological properties of hermeneutics. According to hermeneutics, 'the mental' [meanings] is distinguished from 'the physical' [contexts] and the mental affects the physical through the development of its structure across time. For this reason, hermeneutics attempts to rise to a 'higher' understanding [*verstehen*] in order to grasp the 'mental content expressed in the normal context of human beings' (see Dilthey ([1910]1976: 170-171, 220-231). With the epistemological properties of hermeneutics, Husserl treated the essence of being as transcendentally 'pure' phenomena and facts as 'real' but not purely universal. He thus believed that the 'pure' essence of being is given in the 'natural attitude' of human beings, not in social facts. With this view, he attempted to interpret this 'natural attitude' and reflect the essential universality of human beings in their lifeworld. In so doing, his way of reflecting the essence of being was to employ a phenomenological reduction, '*epoché* [bracketing]'. It was designed to 'disconnect' the 'pure' themes of phenomena from the 'fact-world' and clamp them to the 'natural standpoint' with a view to delimiting empirical 'facts' and concentrating on the transcendentally 'pure' essence of beings (Husserl [1931]1958: 41-47, 107-110). Following Husserl, Schutz also believed that the existence of the lifeworld is given in the 'natural attitude'. However, he inverted Husserl's phenomenological '*epoché*' to the '*epoché*' of the natural attitude and thus focused on 'trivial' social phenomena which he believed reveal the 'typicality of contents of lifeworld' (Schutz 1970: 116, 1971: 229). To develop the concept of '*epoché*', the epistemological concept of 'relevance' is crucial to Schutz. For him, the observer stands in a face-to-face situation but what he called 'Thou-orientation' (awareness of the others, for the observer) is one-sided: the observational conduct of

the researcher is oriented to the others observed but the others' conduct need not be oriented to the researcher. Consequently, the motives of the researcher do not necessarily interlock with those of the others being observed. To solve this discrepancy, Schutz suggested that the researcher should establish the 'relevancy' of the conduct of the observed to 'his past experiences' [motivational relevancy], 'stock of knowledge typification' [thematic relevancy] and 'his inference' [interpretive relevancy]. As he admitted, however, it is an inescapable fact that what is relevant to the observer is not always relevant to the subjective reality of the observed (Schutz 1964: 33-36, 248; 1970: 122-127; 1971: 26-27, 34-46). Ethnomethodologists such as Garfinkel and Sacks also utilized a variation of the phenomenological procedure of '*epoché*' in investigating 'indexical expression' and 'other practical actions' in everyday life; this is 'ethnomethodological indifference', a reflective way of interpreting members' practical actions and their organized everyday activities. They bracketed off 'professional' scientific reasoning in favor of what they called 'members' methods', that is, how they produce, accomplish, recognize, or demonstrate the practical purposes of their action in everyday life. They asserted that a phenomenon for the interest of ethnomethodologists is congruent with members' phenomena. They thus sought to describe members' accounts of formal structures of action while abstaining from the view that members' accounts are inadequate, valueless, unimportant, unnecessary, impractical, unsuccessful, or inconsequential (Garfinkel 1967: 1-10; Garfinkel et al. 1986: 165-166).

Symbolic interactionists such as the Chicago School (e.g. Mead) and Blumer also turned attention towards human agents and their empirical conducts. Strictly speaking, their advanced methodological positions are distinct from those of phenomenologists who concentrated on the construction of phenomenological models, and those of ethnomethodologists, who paid attention exclusively to conversation analysis and documentary method. Like phenomenologists and ethnomethodologists, symbolic interactionists argued that the empirical world has an 'obdurate' character, as the mark of reality, which can 'talk back' to or 'resist' the scientific pictures of it. The 'obdurate' character cannot be seen and cast in terms of the findings of advanced natural science. Their project thus was to

search for answers to questions directed to the 'obdurate' character of the given empirical world. In so doing, their 'naturalistic' methodology, which avoids mathematical models, formal schemes to construct definitive theories, the application of natural science schemes, and such statistical and quantitative techniques as survey research, occupies a pre-eminent status in their project and appears to be more elaborate than the analytical methods of phenomenologists and ethnomethodologists (Blumer 1969: 22-27). Another element unique to the naturalistic methods of symbolic interactionists is a distinction between 'sensitizing concepts' and 'definitive concepts'. For Blumer (1954: 7-9, 1969: 40-47), a 'sensitizing concept' provides the researcher with 'a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances'. This may be achieved through what he called 'exploration' of the empirical world and developed through so-called 'inspection' to become a 'definitive concept' which serves as 'a means of clearly identifying the individual instance'.

2.2. Epistemic 'unconsciousness' in the interpretive-actor paradigm

Having discussed 'reflexivity' in the interpretive-actor paradigm, it is recognizable that interpretive and qualitative properties of the paradigm have contributed significantly to the 'epistemological turn' towards accounts of the subjective experiences of people observed and encountered in social research. Indeed, the social researchers mentioned above have made an indicative footprint in the advancement of qualitative research methods such as 'interviewing', 'life-history analysis', and 'participant observation'. Nevertheless, the interpretive-actor paradigm has epistemological weaknesses with regard to 'reflexivity' in the methodology (also see Kim 2019: 19-20). Firstly, those who use this paradigm focus too much on spatio-temporal phenomena, thereby failing to grasp diachronic instances across time and space. Secondly, they have no adequate scheme to probe the objective reality of the social world while exclusively concentrating on the subjective experiences of the people observed. However, what is fundamentally problematical in the interpretive-actor paradigm is the 'epistemic unconsciousness' which encompasses all problematical implications of reflexivity in their research methods (see Bourdieu 1992; Habermas 1987). To interpret the social world,

the social researchers in the interpretive-actor paradigm utilized interpretive methods such as '*epoché*', 'ethnomethdological indifference', and 'naturalistic research methods' on the basis of the principle of 'relevance'. At the same time, however, they were ontologically biased insofar as they believed that the objective reality of social life is solely an internal social construct of knowledgeable and skilled human agents. On the basis of this, what was relevant as a research topic or theme to these social researchers was what is relevant to their ontological commitment (see Bourdieu 1998: 80-83; Garfinkel 1967: 7-9). With this view, they bracketed off what was not relevant to their ontological commitment and took as themes the spatio-temporal phenomena and subjective experiences of human agents. Consequently, they failed to explicate the unavoidable objective reality of human agents and to come to terms with what is objectively relevant to their social world. Moreover, they repudiated quantitative research methods which they believed were too blunt in reflecting subjectively-grounded instances of the empirical world. As a result, they failed to generate a reflexive methodology relevant to the objective reality of the social world in the process of developing their inquiries, adopting new points of observation, changing the directions of observation, examining the units of analysis, and defining their validation.

2.3. Epistemic consciousness: 'reflexivity'

Bearing in mind the epistemological deficiencies mentioned above, I will move on to the search for an alternative reflexivity, that is, 'epistemic consciousness' which addresses both the subjective implications of human agency and the objective reality of the social world. It was Max Weber who was one of the earlier pioneers to seek 'epistemic consciousness'. He based his epistemological understanding heavily upon the concept of '*verstehen*' [interpretive understanding] in 'hermeneutics' (Weber [1924]1968: 8-26). Using the concept of '*verstehen*', he attempted to interpret social actions in terms of subjective social reality involving motivation, consciousness, and tradition. However, what distinguishes his approach from hermeneutics and the interpretive-actor paradigm is that he applied epistemic reduction to the subjective understanding of the empirical

world so as to attain objective 'verification of subjective reasoning'. His research methods were thus ideally open to the use of quantitative data such as statistics which he believed constituted a kind of understanding of the empirical world (Weber [1924]1968: 11-12). Clifford Geertz also argues for the importance of 'epistemic consciousness' by seeking a 'thick' interpretation in which peoples, cultures and local knowledges are described in a reflexive way, not in terms of the use of ethnographic techniques per se but as products of an elaborate epistemic consciousness (Geertz 1973: 5-6). In 'Local Knowledge', Geertz reveals clearly what he means by 'thick interpretation':

> the interpretative study of culture represents an attempt to come to terms with the diversity of the ways human beings construct their lives in the act of leading them. In the more standard sorts of science the trick is to steer between what statisticians call type-one and type-two errors - accepting hypotheses, one would be better advised to reject and rejecting ones, one would be wiser to accept; here is to steer between overinterpretation and underinterpretation, leading more into things than reason permits and less into them than it demands (1983: 16).

Here he suggests a flexible approach to an understanding of the empirical world, accepting reflexive dimensions to avoid subjective exaggeration or objective manualization of cultures (also see Bourdieu 1993: 29; Steedman 1991: 55). As briefly mentioned earlier, Habermas and Bourdieu also advocate epistemic consciousness as reflexivity. Habermas asserts that society is characterized by 'communicative' and 'intersubjective' features of both 'social systems' objectively external to human agents and lifeworld subjectively internal to human agents (Habermas 1987: 153-197, 1994: 11). In this circumstance, human agents are the social constructs of social systems as publicly-shaped social structures and also social initiators who master the lifeworld through their communicative action and subjective experiences (Habermas 1987: 119-152; Habermas 1990: 135). If social researchers are ontologically biased, however, they tend to represent society exclusively either as social system or lifeworld alone. The fundamental task of social researchers is thus to connect in a reflexive way the two perspectives (Habermas 1987:

150-153). Habermas points this out in a clearer way.

> If we understand the integration of society exclusively as social integration, we are opting for a conceptual strategy that, [….], construes society as a lifeworld. The reproduction of society then appears to be the maintenance of the symbolic structures of the lifeworld [….] If, on the other hand, we understand the integration of society exclusively as system integration, we are opting for a conceptual strategy that presents society after the model of a self-regulating system. It [….] poses the problem of interpreting the concept of a system in such a way that it can be applied to interconnections of action. [….] The fundamental problem of social theory is how to connect in a satisfactory way the two conceptual strategies indicated by the notions of 'system' and 'lifeworld' (1987: 150-151).

In a similar sense, Bourdieu argues that the double truth, objective and subjective, constitutes the whole truth of the social world. Thus, neither objectivist nor subjectivist schema alone can fully explicate the nexus between 'objective truth of the world' and 'the lived truth of what we are and what we do in it' (Bourdieu 1992: 254-255). He thus urges that social researchers have to rise to a 'higher' objectivity which makes room for subjectivity by reintroducing into themselves the epistemic consciousness of presupposition and prejudices associated with human agents (Bourdieu 1993: 17). He clarifies this point in another form:

> *il est trop évident qu'il faut se garder de prendre des limitations conditionnelles pour des limites de validité inhérentes aux méthodes de l'ethnologie: rien n'interdit d'appliquer aux sociétés modernes les méthodes de l'ethnologie, moyennant que l'on soumette en chaque cas à la réflexion épistémologique les présupposés implicites de ces méthodes concernant la structure de la société et la logique de ses transformations.*

> [it is too obvious that one should not take for the conditional limitations the limits of inherent validity in the methods of ethnology: nothing prevents the application to modern societies of the methods of ethnology, provided that, in each case, one submits to epistemological reflection the implicit presupposition of these methods concerning the structure of the society and the logic of its transformations.] (Bourdieu et al. 1973: 67)

16

Ⅲ. An autobiography and reflexive methodology

Having discussed epistemic 'unconsciousness' and 'consciousness' in the social sciences, I will move on to talk about autobiographical experiences of the author from ethnographic field research in a Minahasan region (Tomohon)[1], North Sulawesi, Indonesia, between June 1999 and July 2000 and then their implication to epistemic reflexivity in Southeast Asian Studies.

<Figure 1> The Location of Tomohon
(Source: www.minahasa.net / accessed on 13 December 2020)

---

[1] Tomohon was a sub-district (*kecamatan*) while the author was carrying out field research. It was acknowledged as a municipality on 4 August 2003. Eventually, the municipality (Kota) of Tomohon today consists of 44 quasi-urban villages which are divided into five sub-districts.

3.1. My Field Research: an autobiography[2]

Before I went to my research site, I was tempted to surf on the Internet, in search of a glimpse of the 'imagined' community! Actually, most of the web-sites concerned with Minahasa provided information for tourists. On the Internet, I established contact with a young Minahasan called 'Maxi' from Tomohon. When I encountered him on the Internet, he was doing a Master's degree in marine sciences in Denmark. He was later to become a lecturer in *Universitas Sam Ratulangi* in Manado, the provincial capital of North Sulawesi. During my field research I received great help from him.

For the first month of my fieldwork, I stayed in Manado. The primary reasons were to find an ideal research site which seemed to me to satisfy my research interests, and to complete the formal registration procedures required for foreign researchers. Maxi introduced me to a local family in Manado, with whom I lived during my residence there: pak Frans, ibu Merry and two cute boys (Randy and Noldy). They unconsciously or consciously became my 'faithful' teachers of the lingua franca in Minahasa, *bahasa Manado*, which I used throughout my research. In Manado, I also contacted local scholars at *Universitas Sam Ratulangi* who had undertaken some research on Minahasa, and I collected local materials in the university library. Since my local sponsor was the Professor of Anthropology in the local university, I had an opportunity to present a paper on my research methodology there. I found the presentation very useful in the sense that I could test the methodology and then try to fill the yawning gaps between my amateur ways of getting to know the locale, and the mastery of local knowledges.

During the field research, with the help of Maxi, I visited several sub-districts (*kecamatan*) and villages in search of a research site, identifying various socio-cultural features of these different locations. Eventually I decided on the sub-district, Tomohon (now municipality of Tomohon). There were several reasons for this choice. First, I wished to undertake research in a small village, in

---

[2] Names appearing in this paper are pseudonyms, thereby protecting the privacy of the informants.

line with my initial ethnographic commitments. Yet I then decided that it was 'unwise' to depend only on a single case whose findings might be inadequate in explicating multi-faceted instances of the empirical social world. I was thus tempted to carry out multiple case-studies in a wider unit, a sub-district rather than a single village. Second, Tomohon is a microcosm of Minahasan society in terms of socio-cultural and economic features. I thus assumed that the findings of case-studies in Tomohon might be applicable to Minahasan society as a whole. Third, my local friend Maxi was from Tomohon. He had family in a Tomohon village, Tinoor I. Fortunately, his father was the village-head of Tinoor I, where I later carried out research. It meant that I had already gained access to at least one village before moving into Tomohon.
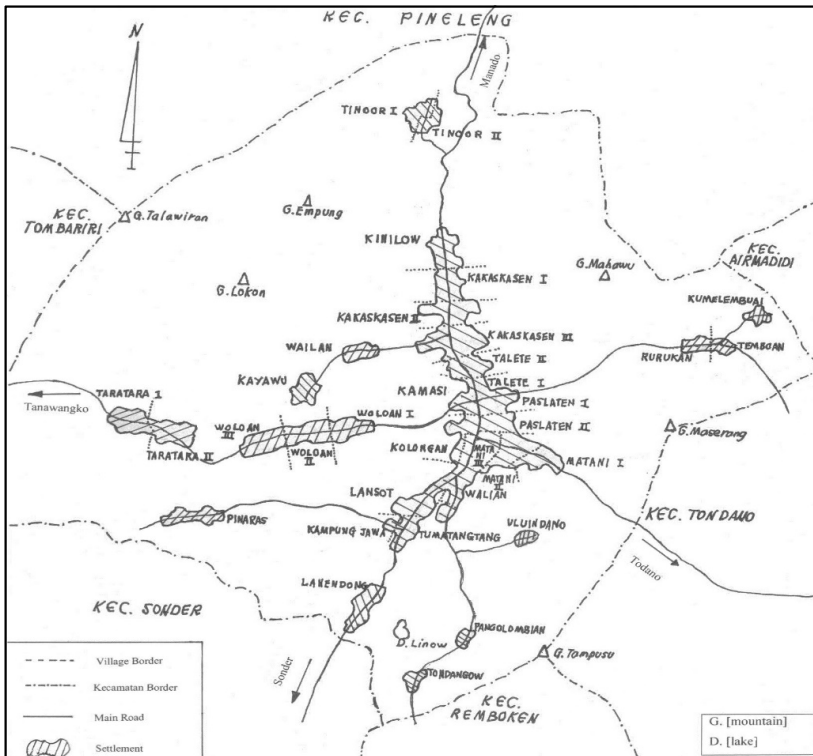
<Figure 2> Sub-District of Tomohon Until 2003
(Source: Kim 2014: 177)

In Tomohon, I initially base-camped in Talete II. I lived with a poor local family until I finished my research: om Marten, tante Anni, their son (Agus), and their married daughter (Dortje) and her daughters (Jenny and Lenny). My first task was to select sample villages, and after selecting four villages in Tomohon (Tinoor I, Taratara I, Rurukan and Talete II), I went through them one by one. I lived in each village for about one-and-a-half months. After finishing research in a village, I came back to the base-camp Talete II and arranged materials for a week, then moved again to another village. This practice continued for about six months. Before moving into a village, I always had to contact the village-head in advance of any research, according to official regulations for every foreign researcher. At the first meeting with the village-head, I usually asked for a local family with whom I could live. I still remember I was very warmly welcomed to each host family. I was usually recognized as their '*anak angkat* (adopted son)', which helped make me naturally acceptable to their communities.

In Tinoor I, I lived with the family of a female petty trader. Her 'business' was catering (food trading): she made pork sate and leaf-packed rice and sold them in offices in Manado. Her husband was a farmer but mostly helped her to prepare the food rather than going to the farm. One of my interests in Tinoor I was petty trading, and on several occasions I followed her selling routines to Manado and sometimes even sold food with her, as an adopted son. The news rapidly went through the whole village and even to other villages through the local market: '*Tu bulé, Olke pe anak angkat, dia bajual sate deng Olke di Manado*' (The foreigner, Olke's adopted son, he sold pork sate together with Olkein Manado). After that I gained much more open confidence from other people.

In Taratara I, I stayed with the head of the village. His wife was the head of the women's organization (*PKK*) in the village, so I could obtain some official information on women's activities. But my concern in the villages was primarily women's activities in traditional reciprocal organizations and in agricultural sectors. My research was made more difficult in Taratara I than in Tinoor I. There were several reasons for this. First, unlike Tinoor I, in Taratara I, I did not have privileged access to the society. Second,

the head of the village and his wife were rather formal and official: I guessed they were too cautious about government warnings regarding suspicious foreigners. I found it rather hard to get close to them. This situation unfortunately generated a dilemma in that I was recognized as a foreigner carrying out research and staying with the head of the village for this purpose. Instead of the head of the village, the secretary of the village helped my research, even when the head was reluctant to give any information. But even though it was partly true that this awkward situation made it hard to get closely engaged in the community, my research did not go too badly because I eventually gained the confidence of the people, mostly through active participation with them in agricultural activities. But, to solve the problem, I had to spend much more time getting acquainted with the local people in Taratara I than in Tinoor I.

In Rurukan, I lived with the family of an ordinary housewife. Her husband was a carpenter. I was also called their adopted son in the village. Because of this I once had to introduce myself formally to a meeting of the kin group of my host family. After that, I was 'officially' accepted as a member of the kin group. This atmosphere gave me immediate acceptance to the community. The family also had a daughter who was a final-year student in a high school. With the girl's help, I was able to gain access to the world of adolescent girls, which I did not expect. So I usually focused on the domestic activities of women and the young girls' worlds. At the same time, I was mainly working with petty traders called '*tibo*' who mostly traded vegetables from their farms to the markets. I often followed their marketing routines intensively from morning through to late night, from their farms to the market places. Because of this, from time to time, I stayed at the market all day long.

In Talete II, I was interested in the transitory professions of Tomohonese women from the traditional to modern sectors. Because my assistant Agus was living in Talete II and my base-camp was also there, I already had wide access to the society. In Talete II, as in other villages, I usually attended church on Sunday and tried to participate in all socio-cultural ceremonies like funerals and weddings. This socializing helped me to get to know more people. I found attending socio-cultural events, not only as a researcher but

also as a village member, very 'productive' in terms of getting known by the local people. While doing research in Talete II, I also carried out surveys in various schools and also in shops in my attempt to understand the socio-economic constellation of young Tomohonese women. In addition, in each village I undertook an initial census. For this, I usually employed four to five local people in each village. The reason, as I have already explained in relation to Agus's reluctance to come along with me to each village, was because each Minahasan community is relatively exclusive in relation to outsiders. Thus, I thought it would be best to get help from 'amateur insiders' rather than 'trouble-making professional outsiders'. I had a format for the census, and always gave my assistants a thorough orientation. But, in some cases I had to double-check personally the results because some were inadequate. This was not surprising, given that my assistants were not trained researchers. However, most of them already had some census experience from the regional government and results overall were good.

Following my research in the four villages in Tomohon, I then undertook research in four other research sites: Manado; a resettlement site, Ikarad; a Minahasan harbor city, Bitung; and Sorong in West Papua (then Irian Jaya). For research activities in Manado, I did not stay there because it was only a 35-minute bus-ride to Manado and there was relatively frequent transport between there and Tomohon. Towards the end of the field research I stayed in Maxi's house complex in Manado for a month. During that time, I concentrated on collecting statistical data in regional offices and arranging the findings gathered from the field. After my stay in Tomohon, I went to the resettlement site Ikaradin Bolaang Mongondow, North Sulawesi. It took about eight hours or so on a bus to the site, but there was no direct transportation. The reason I chose Ikarad was that around 400 Tomohonese households moved there when the volcanic mountain Lokon erupted in 1991 and the ash and debris covered most of the Tomohonese villages. I wanted to see how women had made out in this transitory environment. I went there on my own and stayed there around three weeks. Fortunately, I had already met some resettlers in Tinoor I as they

visited their home village while I was doing research there. I had also once visited the resettlement site for a *pengucapan* (thanksgiving feast). In Ikarad, I followed women's economic activities and men's logging work in the mountains. During this period, I often found that it was practically impossible to avoid any involvement in the issues affecting the regional resettlement scheme. For instance, I faced an ethical dilemma while I was gathering data on logging activities, hygiene and health conditions, water supply management and road management. In response to the people's appeals, for example, I had a talk with the regional officials about the poor conditions of the access road to the site and about health conditions, but they seemed to be unimpressed with my concerns.

After Ikarad, I crossed over to Sorong, West Papua. It took me two days on a shanty ocean liner. I had planned to go there earlier than this, but because of the unstable situation in Sorong, my departure was delayed: there was a movement for the independence of Papua. I went there with my assistant, Agus, who had been a seaman for about three years in Sorong. So before I went I already had some knowledge of the place from what I had heard from Agus. Agus contacted his brother in Sorong and arranged our activities with him. In Sorong I concentrated on Tomohonese women working there and the possible influences on their lives from the changing and unstable situation. Because Agus's brother was a head of the Tomohonese sub-ethnic group (Tombulu) in Sorong, I easily made friends and carried out the planned research even though the independence movement rendered the political situation unstable. Following Sorong, I carried out research in Bitung, focusing on Tomohonese women working in factories. I went there without my assistant, but I already had some people in mind whom I wished to contact; during my stay in Tomohon, I had already made a list of Tomohonese women working in Bitung and asked their families to inform them that I would contact them in due course. I also made visits to selected factories and completed a general survey on working conditions.

3.2. Notes on reflexive methodology

My field research in Tomohon attempted to resolve the methodological

dilemmas generated by an emphasis on 'spatio-temporal elements' and 'phenomenological reduction' embedded in the realist and interpretive-actor paradigms. I therefore advocate: 'itinerant' research and 'diachronic' research to address the epistemological limitations of a concentration on 'spatio-temporal elements'; and 'multiple-case' studies for the epistemological shortcomings posed by 'phenomenological reduction'.

Bearing these points in mind, my research was based on one-year of ethnographic research between June 1999 and July 2000 in different locations, using multiple methods of data collection and multiple case-studies. The major motivation for undertaking this kind of research was to scrutinize the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese which was spatially spread over different places with independent instances. The research centered primarily on the sub-district Tomohon. In Tomohon I chose four villages as cases (Tinoor I, Taratara I, Rurukan, and Talete II). The research then continued to follow the socio-economic life-patterns of the Tomohonese in other research sites as well:

<Table 1> Secondary and Other Research Sites

Secondary Research Sites	• A resettlement site (Ikarad), Bolaang Mongondow, North Sulawesi
	• An industrial harbor city (Bitung), North Sulawesi
	• The provincial capital Manado, North Sulawesi
	• Sorong, West Papua
	• Jakarta
Other Research Sites (Not Visited)	• Malaysia / Hong Kong / Singapore (but about which ex-workers were intensively interviewed)

The methods I employed in this 'itinerant' research comprised: 'documentary data collection', 'multiple case-studies', 'participant observation', 'censuses and surveys', 'interviewing and questionnaires', 'drawing life-histories' and 'collecting local stories'.

Firstly, documentary data collecting was carried out mainly in libraries in the preparatory stage of the research: in the UK (Hull University, the British Library and SOAS Library); in the Netherlands

(KITLV Library at Leiden); and in Indonesia (LIPI Library in Jakarta, *Universitas Sam Ratulangi* in Manado and *Universitas Kristen Indonesia Tomohon*). During the fieldwork, I also regularly collected statistical materials and government documents in the regional government offices in Manado and Tondano (*Kantor BPS*, *Kantor Bappeda*, *Kantor Transmigrasi* and *Kantor Gubernur Sulut*).

Second, I incorporated 'multiple case-studies' in my research, rather than single case-studies (see Yin 1989: 27-60). The major reason for doing this was because the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese were intertwined with various cases and independent instances that occurred in and at different places. For instance, the sampled research sites inside and outside Tomohon, each has unique socio-economic features that have profound effects on the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese in different ways. However, this application of multiple case-studies was not aimed primarily at comparing one case with another, but at avoiding the possible reduction [*epoché*] of the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese to a single theme or topic.

Third, participant observation was utilized mainly in observing religious and agricultural ceremonies, traditional feasts, and women in workplaces such as markets and rice-fields. Where necessary, I was often actively involved in the activities. My field-role can thus be said to be that of 'participant-as-observer' (see Burgess 1984: 80-82).

Fourth, in providing empirical material on the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese, I also focused heavily on recording verbatim people's responses to my questions and drawing individual life-histories by interviewing. In so doing, I employed unstructured questions (open questions), rather than structured ones (closed questions), and attempted to describe individual cases in a manner that is as faithful as possible to the way the Tomohonese experience and feel them, and let them speak through and about their experiences from their standpoints. In this regard, collecting local stories was also a significant part of my ethnographic research, in order to sketch out the intrinsic and symbolic images of the Tomohonese. The local stories include myths, legends, folktales,

songs and sayings.

Fifth, in research sites outside Tomohon (Bitung, Manado, Sorong and Jakarta), I employed face-to-face interviewing and the following of everyday routines in describing the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese. However, in the four villages in Tomohon and in Ikarad, I generally went through three research phases: (1) 'census' to grasp the grand picture of the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese and then select 'appropriate' informants (see Appendices I – V); (2) 'semi-structured interviews' with key-informants; (3) 'in-depth interviews and following their daily routines' to draw the more detailed picture of the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese in particular cases. To complement the primary findings, I often employed three types of techniques: structured questionnaires, focus groups and private diaries. I utilized structured questionnaires in order to expand the primary findings to larger and more diverse social locations (e.g. different age groups or gender categories). In the search for more dynamic discussion, focus groups, consisting of 12 or so participants, were used where necessary. I also encouraged some key-informants to keep their private diaries so as to see their daily lives from their own perspectives. This complementary research generally helped me to develop my primary interests and to enrich my primary findings. Given the research phases mentioned above, therefore, it is wise to hold to the view that employing some objective quantification in Southeast Asian Studies is essential for understanding the intersubjective social world of people. But this is only to the extent to which it can provide background material for qualitative findings and to which it connects fruitfully with empirical data. In this regard, in Southeast Asian Studies qualitative and quantitative methods need to be treated as complementary, rather than antagonistic (also see Alvesson et al. 2000: 4; Giddens 1984: 327-334; Hammersley 1992: 159-173; Kim 2019: 25; Maynard 1994: 14).

Ⅳ. Conclusion

In my view from ethnographic experiences of the field research in Tomohon, the 'interpretive capacity' and 'reflexive interaction with

social systems' of the Tomohonese were more dynamic and heterogeneous than the 'realist' (functional and structural) and 'interpretive-actor' paradigms would suggest. In contrast to the ontological perspective of the 'realist' paradigm on human agency, the Tomohonese did not simply internalize social norms and values and performed functions to meet the requirements of those norms and values, but instead they were capable of interpreting social systems and their individual circumstances of the life course and exploiting social norms and values for their own individual life-strategies and choices. Moreover, 'reflexive interaction of the Tomohonese with social systems' across time and space cannot be adequately mapped out in terms of the ontological standpoint of the 'interpretive-actor paradigm'. In many cases, the Tomohonese continued to interpret their circumstances of the life course and the opportunities available to them and constructed their subjectively-grounded aspects of the lifeworld according to their individual choices and life-strategies. However, the interpretive capacity of the Tomohonese was often constrained by certain objective realities of the lifeworld, which in turn conditioned the Tomohonese to reflect on the constraints on their life-dynamics and to produce alternative socio-cultural practices to cope with them.

A number of scholars such as Anthony Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu and Jürgen Habermas attempted to search for an alternative paradigm to both the 'realist' and 'interpretive-actor' paradigms (Kim 2019: 20-24). These scholars emphasized that social structures are also 'regenerative' out of action across time and space (Giddens 1979; 1984); 'constituted' by social practices resulting from the so-called '*habitus*' as a generative scheme of enduring social disposition (Bourdieu 1977; 1990; 1998); and society is characterized by 'communicative' and 'intersubjective' features of both 'social systems' objectively external to human agents and lifeworld subjectively internal to human agents (Habermas 1987; 1990; 1994). Overall the premises of the alternative paradigm seem to me to provide an epistemic means of tackling the ontological dilemmas in the 'realist' and 'interpretive-actor' paradigms by paying balanced attention to both the 'interpretive capacity' of the Tomohonese and their 'reflexive interaction with objective realities of the lifeworld'. It

emerges as an incisive 'sensitizing' framework relevant to the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese, which are communicative with social structures in the continuous process of social interaction.

Nevertheless, the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese still demand a more 'actor-centered' epistemic account of reflexive interaction between actors and social structures. The social practices of the Tomohonese are interlinked not only with the reproduction of social systems but also, to a greater extent, with individual circumstances of the life course, individual choices and life-strategies. Moreover, the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese are not always the product of the logic of social systems such as *habitus* (Pierre Bourdieu) and structuration (Anthony Giddens). In other words, the choices and life-strategies of the Tomohonese are not always in response to the demands of the particular objective conditions of the lifeworld. Consequently, in approaching the life-dynamics of the Tomohonese, in addition to the sensitizing ontological properties of 'reflexive approaches', I argue that we need a 'more actor-centered' epistemic framework to compensate for the epistemological and methodological dilemmas of the alternative paradigm: a framework which regards people as 'acting subjects' and positions them in the center of its premise, and aims to emphasize and to respect indigenous people's own view of their lifeworld, their worldview and their own images of the future (see Chambers 1985: 3-4; King 1999: 33; Long 1977: 187-188; Mair 1984: 10-14; Rhoades 1986: 49-55). The 'more actor-centered' epistemic framework will equip Southeast Asian Studies with a reflexive methodology relevant to the life-dynamics of the social world in the process of developing its inquiries, methodological technics, analysis, and validation.

References

Alvesson, Mats and Kaj Sköldberg. 2000. *Reflexive Methodology: new vistas for qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.
Bell, Diane. 1993. Introduction 1: the context & Yes Virginia, there is a feminist ethnography: reflections from three Australian fields. *Gendered Fields: Women, Men and Ethnography*.

Diane Bell, Pat Caplan and Wazir J. Karim, eds. 1-18 & 28-43. London and New York: Routledge.

Blumer, Herbert. 1954. What is Wrong with Social Theory. *American Sociological Review,* 19(1): 3-10.

_____. 1969. *Symbolic Interactionism: perspective and method.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____. 1990. *The Logic of Practice.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

_____. 1992. The Practice of Reflexive Sociology'. *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology.* Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, eds. 218-260. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

_____. 1993. *Sociology in Question.* London: Sage Publications.

_____. 1998. *Practical Reason.* Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, Pierre, Jean-Claude Chamboredon, and Jean-Claude Passeron. 1973. *Le métier de sociologue: Préalabes épistémologiques* [deuxiéme édition]. Paris: Mouton Éditeur.

Burgess, Robert G. 1984. *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research.* London: George Allen & Unwin.

Chambers, Erve. 1985. *Applied Anthropology.* Illinois: Waveland Press.

Cohen, Anthony P. 1992. Self-conscious anthropology. *Anthropology and Autobiography.* Judith Okely and Helen Callaway, eds. 221-141. London: Routledge.

Comte, Auguste. 1853. *The Positive Philosophy* (Volume II). Harriet Martineau, trans. London: John Champman.

_____. 1968-1970. *Oeuvres d'Auguste Comte.* Paris: Anthropos, 11 vols.

Davies, Charlotte A. 1999. *Reflexive Ethnography: a guide to researching selves and others.* London: Routledge.

Dilthey, Wilhelm. [1910]1976. Construction of the Historical World. *Dilthey Selected Writings.* Hans Peter Rickman, ed. & trans. 168-245. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dodgson, Joan E. 2019. Reflexivity in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Human Lactation,* 35(2): 220-222.

Garfinkel, Harold. 1967. *Studies in Ethnomethodology.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Garfinkel, Harold and Harvey Sacks. 1986. On Formal Structures of

Practical Actions. *Ethnomethodological Studies of Work*. Harold Garfinkel, ed. 338-366. London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.

_____. 1983. *Local Knowledge*. London: FontanaPress.

Giddens, Anthony. 1979. *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis*. London: Macmillan.

_____. 1984. *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action* [Volume 2]. Cambridge: Polity Press.

_____. 1990. *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

_____. 1994. *The Past as Future: Jürgen Habermas, interviewed by Michael Haller*. Max Pensky, trans. & ed. Cambridge: Polity.

Hammersley, Martyn. 1990. *What's Wrong with Ethnography?: methodological explorations*. London: Routledge.

Hervik, Peter. 1994. Shared reasoning in the field: reflexivity beyond the author. *Social Experience and Anthropological Knowledge*. Kirsten Hastrup and Peter Hervik, eds. 78-100. London: Routledge.

Husserl, Edmund. [1931]1958. *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Kim, Yekyoum. 2004. *Living from hand to mouth provided there is happiness: Life-dynamics of Tomohonese Women, Minahasa, North Sulawesi, Indonesia*. Ph.D. Thesis. Centre for South-East Asian Studies, Hull University.

_____. 2006. Re-localization of the Culture. *SeonGyoSinHak* [Journal of Mission and Theology], 13(2): 177-201.

_____. 2014. Socio-cultural identities in multilayered contexts: An ethnographic study of Tomohon, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. *DongNam Asia YeonGu* [Southeast Asian Studies], 24(3): 159-206.

_____. 2019. Ontological Reflexivity in Southeast Asian Cultural Studies. *Asia YeonGu* [Asian Studies], 22(2): 179-214.

King, Victor T. 1999. *Anthropology and Development in South-East*

Asia: theory and practice. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

_____. 2015a. [Introduction to the Issue] Southeast Asian Studies: Areas, Method and Comparison. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 7(1): 7-11.

_____. 2015b. Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies: Issues in Multidisciplinary Studies and Methodology. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 7(1): 13-57.

_____. 2016a. [Introduction to the Issue] Revisiting and Reconstructing Southeast Asian Characteristics. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 8(1): 7-13.

_____. 2016b. Southeast Asian Studies: Insiders and Outsiders, or is Culture and Identity a Way Forward?. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 8(1): 17-53.

_____. 2016c. [Introduction to the Issue] Identities in Maritime Southeast Asia: Ethnicity and Nation-state. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 8(2): 7-11.

_____. 2018a. [Introduction to the Special Issue] Alternative Approaches in Southeast Asian Studies: Compounding Area Studies and Cultural Studies. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 10(2): 7-27.

_____. 2018b. Other Southeast Asias? Beyond and Within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 10(2): 57-85.

_____. 2020a. [Introduction to the Special Issue] Debating Southeast Asia. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 12(2): 7-15.

_____. 2020b. Who Made Southeast Asia? Personages, Programs and Problems in the Pursuit of a Region. *SUVANNABHUMI,* 12(2): 157-200.

_____. 2021 (*Forthcoming*). Chapter 1 (Fieldwork and the Self: Perspectives and Debates), Chapter 2 (Prologue: Rehearsing the Self and Reflexivity), Chapter 4 (A Sociological-Anthropological Gaze on Changing Perspectives on Southeast Asia). *Fieldwork and the Self: Changing Research Styles and Methodologies in Southeast Asia*. Jeremy Jammes and Victor T. King, eds. Singapore: IAS-UBD-Springer.

Long, Norman. 1977. *An Introduction to the Sociology of Rural*

Development. London: Tavistock.

_____. 1996. Globalization and localization: new challenges to rural research. *Future of Anthropological Knowledge*. Henrietta L. Moore, ed. 37-59. London: Routledge.

Mair, Lucy. 1984. *Anthropology and Development*. London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Maynard, Mary. 1994. Methods, Practice and Epistemology: the Debate about Feminism and Research. *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*. Mary Maynard and June Purvis, eds. 10-26. London: Taylor and Francis.

Palaganas, Erlinda C., Marian C. Sanchez, Ma. Visitacion P. Molintas and Ruel D. Caricativo. 2017. Reflexivity in Qualitative Research: A Journey of Learning. *The Qualitative Report,* 22(2): 426-438.

Rabinow, Paul. 1977. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Rhoades, Robert E. 1986. Breaking new ground: agricultural anthropology. *Practicing Development Anthropology*. Edward C. Green, ed. 22-66. Boulder and London: Westview Press.

Robertson, Roland. 1995. Glocalization: time-space and homogeneity-heterogeneity. *Global Modernities*. Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson, eds. 24-44. London: Sage Publications.

Schouten, Maria J. 1998. *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society: Minahasa, 1677-1983*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

Schutz, Alfred. 1964. *Collected Papers* (Volume 2: Studies in Social Theory). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

_____. 1970. *Collected Papers* (Volume 3: Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

_____. 1971. *Collected Papers* (Volume 1: The Problem of Social Reality). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Steedman, Peter H. 1991. On the Relations between Seeing, Interpreting and Knowing. *Research and Reflexivity*. Frederick Steier, ed. 53-62. London: Sage Publications.

Wacquant, Loïc J. D. 1992. Toward a Social Praxeology: the structure and logic of Bourdieu's Sociology. *An Invitation to*

Reflexive Sociology. Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, eds. 2-59. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Weber, Max. [1924]1968. *Economy and Society: an outline of interpretative society*. New York: Bedminster Press.

Wilken, George A. 1883. Overde verwantschap en het huwelijks- en erfrecht bij de volken van het Maleische ras. *Indische Gids*. 5(I): 656-764.

Yin, Robert K. 1989. *Case Study Research: design and methods*. Newbury Park, London and New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Language Choice in Philippine Government Websites:
Sociolinguistic Issues and Implications

Gerard P. Concepcion*

[*Abstract*]

Government websites provide useful and timely information to the public such as government's history, organizational values, codes of ethics, public services, facts about public official, among others. Using *language choice* as framework, the study seeks to examine what language is used, in what contents, and in what kind of website. The study employed online observation in 235 Philippine government websites (.gov.ph) via content analysis. As a result, English is overwhelmingly used; while Filipino, the Philippines' national language, and only a handful of regional languages, are minimally used in the contents. Discussion will follow how multilingualism can improve the dissemination of information and communication more conveniently and efficiently from the government to its citizens.

Keywords: language, Internet, language choice, Philippine government websites, multilingualism

* Associate Professor, University of the Philippines, Diliman. The Philippines. gerardconcepcion@gmail.com.

Ⅰ. Languages in websites: Global issues

With the conception of the world wide web (hereafter, the Web) in 1989, emerging internet technologies and applications brought huge changes how personal, organizational, institutional, national, and transnational interactions are processed and made (Fawkes and Gregory 2001; Okin 2005). To date, almost all internet activities are done using the Web. Some of these are communicating via the use of electronic mail, chat, blog, vlog, personal/direct message, forum, video conference, online streaming, social networking; file sharing; surfing and browsing, and doing online transactions (e.g., electronic banking, electronic shopping, electronic government, electronic learning; electronic commerce) (Herring 2013).

In its basic sense, a website is a collection of publicly accessible, interlinked web pages that share a single domain name. These publicly accessible websites then, make up the Web. Created and maintained by an individual, group, business, institution, or organization, websites serve a variety of purpose such as personal, commercial, government, information, organization, social networking, and entertainment.

While a website uses different creative multimedia such as pictures, audios, and videos, written language still comprises most of the website's contents. In fact, the whole purpose of the Web was meant to be read; via scanning/skimming information through texts and hyperlinks (3). With the emergence of newer technologies and applications, websites are becoming more creative and "more appealing" to internet users. Typically, a website consists of 1) Masthead/header, the uppermost part where logo(s), search box, social media links, pictures, and other important multimedia files are found. 2) Navigation, a collection of links for the many different sections of the website. 3) Content Slider or Content Area, where the main contents are efficiently shown/deposited; and where an internet user can click thumbnails, links, blurbs, or topic headers to read a specific content. 4) Sidebar, the collection of links leading more contents that were not included in the content area. 5) Contact Section/Footer, includes all contact details about the website's owner (e.g., telephone, mobile, email, physical address,

other online accounts), Frequently Asked Questions, terms of use, privacy settings, etc.

In all these sections, particularly in the content area, language plays a vital role in transferring/sending the message across all borders. The fact that the website can be visited by any internet user coming from any country, the language(s) used in these contents should be familiar to them. Otherwise, the internet users will not read and understand the contents, thus leaving the website completely.

To date, while any language (with available and appropriate computer coding) can be used in websites, not all 7,177 living languages as reported by Ethnologue (Summer Institute of Linguistics 2020) are used in the Web. In fact, only 12 of these living languages are used in 98% of all the websites (Tremino 2020). In Facebook, which is tagged as a "multilingual" social networking site for example, only 111 languages are supported and can be used. Moreover, longitudinal research show that English dominates the language of websites (Bokor 2018; Lavoie and O'Neill 2000).

Consequently, there is a growing gap between the languages of First World countries vis-à-vis languages of Third World countries particularly in their representation and function on the Internet (Canazza 2009; Cullen 2001; Warschauer 2003). Also, English as the mostly used language in websites and on the internet in general, is tagged as "minor languages killer," "imperialist," "predatory" (Fishman 1991; Greiffenstern 2010; Phillipson 1992). This language situation in websites pose a concern to countries/speech communities who are not using English/international language as their primary language: 1) there is a growing language shift from their primary language to an international language; 2) there is a need to justify in creating softwares and applications in their primary language; 3) there is a practical decline in using their primary language in website contents (Concepcion 2016). Thus, there is a need to secure all languages and promote language diversity on the internet (UNESCO 2015).

The status quo of languages in websites and the internet in general attracted a legitimate point of discussion particularly in the

contexts of multilingualism/language diversity and language rights (2015). While the language(s) or choice of languages used to communicate in international online forums has received considerable scholarly attention (Crystal 2001; Danet and Herring 2007; Durham 2003; Wodak and Wright, 2007; Wright 2004), languages used in websites has received less empirical attention. To date, research have examined the degree to which institutional websites provide "localized" versions in the native languages of their intended audiences (Kelly-Holmes 2006; Singh and Boughton 2005; Singh et al. 2007); and, to a minimal extent, whether websites using other languages provide versions in English (Mateos et al. 2001); and what languages are used in university websites based on different countries around the world (Callahan and Herring 2012).

There is an emerging focus on websites coming from the perspective of public administration and governance. Studies suggest that most national and local governments are adapting to the Internet in much the same way that they have adapted to traditional media. That is, these governments are utilizing the Internet's potential as a storehouse, distributor, and processor of information, and as a one-way communication channel, eventually going beyond the static stage of information provision and dissemination (Ilago 2001). Unfortunately, while the concepts of "information" and "communication" are related and intertwined to government websites, there has been lacking empirical studies on what and how languages are used in these websites (Tannen and Trester 2013).

Government websites are committed in principle, in conveying the significant messages for the betterment of the citizens. From this context, it can be argued that government websites are powerful tools for disseminating information and communication from the government to the people (Caldrow 1999). Thus, there is a need to analyze how language play a critical role as a medium in the contents of the websites. By addressing 1) what language is used in the contents of the government websites, and 2) how this trend/pattern contributes to larger sociolinguistic issues and implications, a snippet on the role of language choice in government websites can be discoursed.

Ⅱ. Language choice as framework

Looking at a day-to-day situation, language choice means the careful selection of word, phrase, clause, sentence, or whole language within a speaker's linguistic repertoire. While the occurrence of language choice seems natural and unplanned, speakers choose an appropriate register, genre, style, medium, or tone of voice in relation to the interlocutor (who), topic (what), context (where) and medium (how) in every conversation (Dweik and Qawar 2015: 4).

Language choice is contextualized in communities where there are 2 or more languages used (i.e., any language used in spoken and/or written communication). In a multilingual setting, the functions of these languages require a special norm for the speakers, and a functional specialization of the languages involved. This means that one language may normally be used at home or with close friends, whereas another language may be used for commerce and trade, and even a third one for dealing with government agencies (Fasold 1990). As a crucial endeavor in sociolinguistic research, analysis of language choice using deterministic, person-oriented, and functional considerations is proposed (Appel and Muysken 2005: 22-23).

2.1 Deterministic considerations

Language choice depends on the speaker's experiences situated in different settings, different language repertoires that are available to the speaker, different interlocutors, and different topics. Fishman (1965) proposed a basic question, *who speaks what language to whom and when?* as point of departure. Here, knowing the various language factors involved is crucial in determining what language to be used, such as group membership or identity, situation, topic, among others. While language choice is dependent on same factors for all language behaviors, the many interconnected factors may lead to many possibilities. To avoid this excessive fragmentation, the notion of *domain* (1965; Spolsky 2009), a clustering of characteristic situations or settings around a prototypical theme that structures the speakers' perceptions of these situations is suggested (Appel and Muysken 2005: 24). Thus, it is significant to determine what are the

relevant domains, which can differ from community to community.

On the other hand, apart from the community's behavior, it is also possible to look at the characteristics of languages involved. Ferguson (1959) proposed the notion of *diglossia*, a situation where two variety of a language system are used simultaneously in a speech community. There is a formal (high/prestigious) and a vernacular (popular) variety, having its own function (i.e., political speeches versus everyday informal conversations).
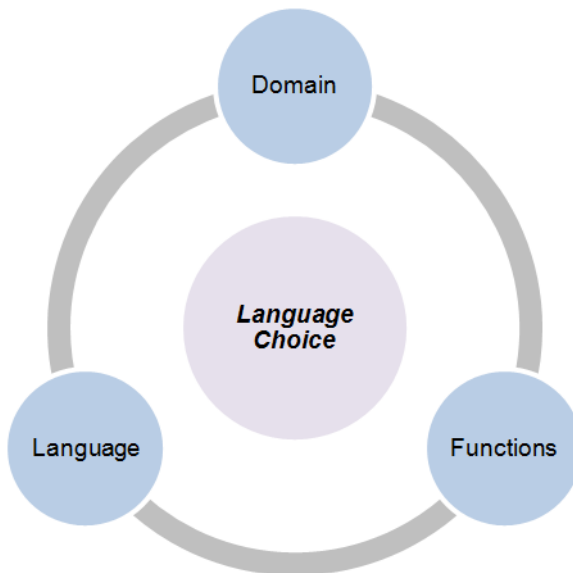
2.2 Person-oriented considerations

Apart from social norms, another way of looking how a speaker chooses a language is understanding a speaker's series of decisions. Considering the hierarchical set of binary choices seen as a "decision tree," related to factors such as ethnicity of the interlocutor, the style, and the topic of conversation determine which language is finally chosen. To accommodate unexpected responses not included in the descriptive tree, interpretations are done to indicate a special intention, an irony, change of style, among others. As a response, Giles et. al (1973) developed the Interpersonal speech accommodation theory, which highlights that language choice can be further explained by referring to situational factors; and aspects of the interpersonal relations should also be taken to account. In this view, an individual can induce someone else to evaluate him or her more favorably by reducing the number of dissimilarities between him/her and the other. As such, speakers will automatically adjust themselves to each other. The social meaning of language is negotiated between the speaker and the hearer, an ongoing process of interpretation in context. (Appel and Muysken 2005: 24).

2.3 Functional considerations

Drawing from the research of Jakobson (1960), Halliday (1975), and Muhlhausler (1981) on the functions of language, different/specific language may fulfill functions in the lives of speakers. On the other hand, Ferguson (1996) looks at language choice in its "official" function in terms of language planning and policy. The question of "what" language and its official function(s) in the country is a

matter of national concern: What language(s) should be the official language(s) of the government (i.e., used in laws, administration, and the armed forces); what should be used as medium of instruction at the various levels of the educational system; and what language(s) will be accepted for use on the television, radio, print, Internet, etc. Decisions on language questions are notoriously influenced by emotional issues such as tribal, regional, and religious identification, national rivalries, preservation of elites, and so on. (272-273).

Clearly, language choice revolves around 1) the speakers/society/domain, 2) the language per se, and 3) the functions/purposes of (using) that language. For the context of the study, government website(s) clearly is the domain where a definitive social context of language or communication can be observed. Language in turn, is seen as body of words and the systems for its use common to a people who are of the same community or nation, the same geographical area, or the same cultural tradition. While functions refer to the specific purpose why a language is used.

<Figure 1> Language choice as framework.

Ⅲ. Philippine government websites: A situation

Due to the internet's versatile and popular use, the Philippine government under President Joseph Ejercito Estrada on June 14, 2000 enacted the Electronic Commerce Act or Republic Act 8792, which mandates its departments and agencies to have a website in the Web. By 2004, only three years after the implementation of the E-commerce Act, almost all local governments (97.5% of provinces [77 out of 79], 99% of cities [114 out of 115], and 99.7% percent of municipalities [1,496 out of 1,500]) had websites. A major part of this development could be attributed to the enactment of the E-commerce Act and the implementation of subsequent programs to support the law's adoption by government agencies and local government units (Siar 2005).

Philippine government websites officially use the domain name[1] "dot gov dot ph" (.gov.ph), allowing the public to access information as well to communicate with their duly elected politicians. To further develop the electronic governance[2] infrastructure in the Philippines, the E-Governance Master Plan (EGMP) was created in 2012. This plan basically stipulates the framework to fully develop electronic governance in the country by accomplishing three processes: 1) An ICT assessment must be conducted in different agencies of the government to prepare not only the ICT infrastructure, but also the tools, equipment, application systems and content, and employees; 2) The building blocks of E-governance, which include citizens and business sectors should also be prepared and informed; 3) The details, scope and limitations of the E-governance of the country as well as its policies and objectives must be finalized.

One notable section in EGMP maps the levels of government websites vis-à-vis the level of transactions, thus making end results easy and "user friendly." These levels are categorized as: 1)

---

[1] A domain name is the address where Internet users access a website.

[2] Electronic Governance or E-Governance in this paper is understood as the utilization of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for providing government services to the citizens. Through the means of e-governance, public information and government services are made available to citizens in a suitable, systematic, transparent, and accessible way.

Emerging, a simple static website showing basic information on the department or agency; 2) *Enhanced*, includes regularly updated data, a portal or links to other departments or agencies, and a section where internet users can download documents; 3) *Interactive*, means more dynamic websites with search features. Information is updated on a daily or weekly basis. 4) *Transactional*, the user can perform secure transactions electronically; 5) Fully *Integrated*, able to provide all requirements, documents, forms from the website, interaction from the user and the agency through two-way communication (e.g., email or instant messaging); thus, giving the public a direct means of sending and receiving responses to and from the agency.

On the other hand, based on the data of previous studies (Ilago 2001; Siar 2005; Olaño 2014; Khalid and Lavilles 2019), Philippine government websites can be categorized into three: national, local, and government-owned and controlled corporations (hereafter, GOCCs). Websites of department/institutional offices and national agencies belong to the national, while websites of cities, provinces, and municipalities belong to local; and websites of GOCCs that conduct both commercial and non-commercial activities belong to GOOCs. Administration and maintenance of each category come from corresponding offices of the national government (i.e., Office of the President, Office of the Vice President, etc.), local governments (i.e., cities, provinces, and municipalities), and organizational/institutional offices, respectively. In response to Electronic Commerce Act or Republic Act 8792, these websites serve as an avenue where internet users can learn about the government's history, government information, organizational values, codes of ethics, information about elected official, etc.; and where internet users can easily apply for government services online (Concepcion 2016).

Although the contents in government websites change from time to time, there are general contents common to each category. Government websites in the national category for example, contain information about the specific office or agency, vision-mission statements, monthly or annual reports, projects, downloadable public documents. Government websites in the local category on the other hand, has history and demographics, profile of their officials,

vision and goals, achievements and accomplishments, facts and figures, policies, memoranda, regulations, local legislations, investment opportunities, and tourism information about a particular city or province. The extent of these contents varies from each local government. GOOCs websites on the other hand contain a description/ explanation of the specific GOOC, news, advisories, and a dedicated section where an internet user can transact public services. While few websites offer news and current information on national and local events, most of the websites are not updated on a regular basis, making some contents "bits" of history. Moreover, all websites have email addresses, telephone numbers, and physical addresses through which the administration office could be contacted.

From the discussion, since government websites are usually used for information dissemination through its contents, a growing number of these websites can now be used for processing public documents, (e.g., applying/downloading of needed forms, applying for loans, updating public service benefits, updating orders and queries, etc.). In this context, the Philippine government is still adjusting to improve the level 3 (*Interactive*) status of its websites (Olaño 2014).

<Table 1> Categories and Contents of Philippine Government Websites.

	Philippine government websites		
	national	**local**	**GOCCs**
composition	national offices and agencies	cities, provinces, municipalities	government-owned and/or controlled corporations
typical contents	information about the specific office or agency, vision-mission statements, monthly or annual reports, projects, and public documents	history and demographics, profile of their officials, vision and goals, achievements and accomplishments, facts and figures, policies, memoranda, regulations and local legislations, investment opportunities, tourism information	description/explanation of the specific GOOC, news, advisories, dedicated section for public service transaction

Ⅳ. Methodology

To assess the language choice in Philippine government websites, this study applied a two-step approach. First, a database of all possible ".gov.ph" websites was created. The list was based on Concepcion's study (2016), *The Official Philippines Gazette* (The Official Journal of the Republic of the Philippines), United Nation (UN) Electronic Government Maturity Model (2012), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) website, and Office of the Government Corporate Counsel website. Only those websites that contain a domain of ".gov.ph" were considered for the study. The list has a total of 265 websites (see Appendix 1).

Next, each website was visited once within the evaluation period from May 2018 to June 2019. Out of the total 265 websites, 23 were found inaccessible and 7 were under construction; thus, this study covered 235 websites. For ease, only the homepage (or the default/primary welcome page) of each website was observed, comprising the convenience sample for the study. The language of contents, and kind of contents found therein were recorded and categorized based on a scheme. The language used in the user interface (a collection of "clickable" words or parts of the website needed by the internet user to navigate it) was also observed and recorded. Contents of links/hyperlinks in each website were not considered part of the content (e.g., a "clickable" content or a downloadable form/document). The results were fed to a spreadsheet, and the data were then analyzed using descriptive statistical methods.

Ⅴ. Findings and discussion: Language choice in Philippine government websites

English language remains the primary language used in almost all the contents. Filipino language on the other hand, is used minimally in some contents of the websites observed in the study, while a few major regional languages are used in minimal contents particularly in municipality/province websites. In the national websites' category, only 7 websites have minimal contents using Filipino; and only one

website, www.kwf.gov.ph (the official website of Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino [Filipino Language Commission]) uses Filipino in all its contents. Also noted, www.gov.ph being the primary portal of all Philippine government websites, uses English in all its contents. Moreover, in the local websites' category, city websites predominantly use English. Filipino is minimally used, or none in the contents. Same observation was found in province and municipality websites. It was also noted that 15 from the total number of websites observed have minimal contents using a particular regional language.

As observed, there are common types of contents in the national, local, and GOOCs websites where a certain language is used. First, English is commonly used in 1) vision-mission-goals-statements, 2) information about the office, city/municipality, or organization/corporation, 3) annual reports, 4) projects, 5) history and demographics, 6) profile of officials, 7) achievements and accomplishments, 8) facts and figures, 9) policies, 10) memoranda, 11) regulations and local legislations, 12) investment opportunities, 13) tourism information, and 14) processes for public service transactions. Second, Filipino is commonly used in 1) local news, 2) trivia on local culture and tourism, 3) digital posters, 4) greetings, 5) tag lines of municipalities, 6) titles of links, and 7) side stories. Third, regional languages are used in 1) local news, 2) features, 3) digital posters, 4) greetings, and 5) tag lines of municipalities, and 6) side stories.

On the other hand, aside for www.kwf.gov.ph, all websites use English in the user interface. In the case of the KWF website's user interface, Filipino words are used like: "misyon at bisyon," (mission and vision) "mandato," (mandate) "organisasyon," (organization) "tungkulin," (function) "kasaysayan," (history) "mga balita," (news) "tungkol sa KWF," (about KWF) "makipag-ugnay," (contact us) "mga timpalak at gawad ng KWF," (KWF contests and grants) "kulo at kolorum," (title of lecture series) "aklat ng bayan," (title of book project), "mga download" (downloads).

Certain generalizations can be posited from the observed websites, as responses to the study's research questions. First, on

what language is used in Philippine government websites. There are four main patterns in such context: 1) English, 2) English and Filipino, 3) English, Filipino, and regional language, and 4) English and regional language. The extensive use of English as a primary language proves the many motivations that support its continued global dominance, as identified by Fishman (1991) and Phillipson (1992). In the context of the Internet and the Web, English is seen as a well-established and a practical language to be used in cross-cultural/international communication. Filipino and regional languages on the other hand, are intended to a narrower scope of audience (Concepcion 2016). In the case of the Philippine government websites, Filipino and regional languages mostly remain the secondary and tertiary languages respectively in the contents. In fact, this observation of language choice is evident vis-à-vis the kind of websites. Languages used in the contents tend to become monolingual (English) and bilingual (English, Filipino) in national, city, and GCOOs websites; and tend to become trilingual (English, Filipino, regional language) in municipality/province websites.

Second, on what language is used in what contents. As observed, contents that are used for the main information and public service application/transaction tend to use English; while contents that are used for mundane communication and cultural discussion tend to use Filipino and/or regional language(s) (Concepcion 2016: 166; Khalid and Labilles 2019: 104).

Third, on what language is used in what kind of website. As proposed in the study, Philippine government websites are categorized in the context of its administration and scope (e.g., national, local, GOOCs). In the scope of possible internet users who "could" view these websites, national and GOOCs websites have a larger audience scope compared to local websites. It can be deduced that it is a matter of practical choice on what language to be used. International or official language (e.g., English) for both international and national users, national or official language (e.g., Filipino) for national users; and regional lingua franca or regional official language for national and specific regional users.

<Table 2> Summary of findings.

	Philippine government websites		
	national	**local**	**GOCCs**
English	(i) vision-mission-goals-statements (ii) information about the office, city/municipality, or organization/corporation, (iii) annual reports (iv) projects (v) history and demographics (vi) profile of officials (vii) achievements and accomplishments (viii) facts and figures (ix) policies (x) memoranda (xi) regulations and local legislations (xii) investment opportunities (xiii) tourism information (xiv) processes for public service transactions		
Filipino	*(minimal, mostly none)* (i) digital posters (ii) greetings	(i) local news, (ii) trivia on local culture and tourism (iii) digital posters (iv) greetings (v) tag lines of municipalities (vi) titles of links (vii) side stories	*(minimal)* (i) digital posters (ii) greetings
Regional language(s)	*(none)*	(i) local news, (ii) trivia on local culture and tourism (iii) digital posters (iv) greetings (v) tag lines of municipalities (vi) titles of links (vii) side stories	*(minimal, mostly none)* (i) digital posters

Going beyond these empirical findings, language choice in Philippine government websites can still be discoursed by understanding specific sociolinguistic situations and conditions. Drawing from the proposed tripartite language choice framework used in this study, deterministic, person-oriented, and functional considerations are points-of-discussion as to *how* language choice is manifested in these websites. First, it is assumed that Filipinos are the intended users of these government websites. Electronic governance as the rationale of the creation of these websites, Filipinos can therefore easily engage in the government's endeavors.

For this reason, the choice on what language should be used in these websites basically remain deterministic in nature. Aside
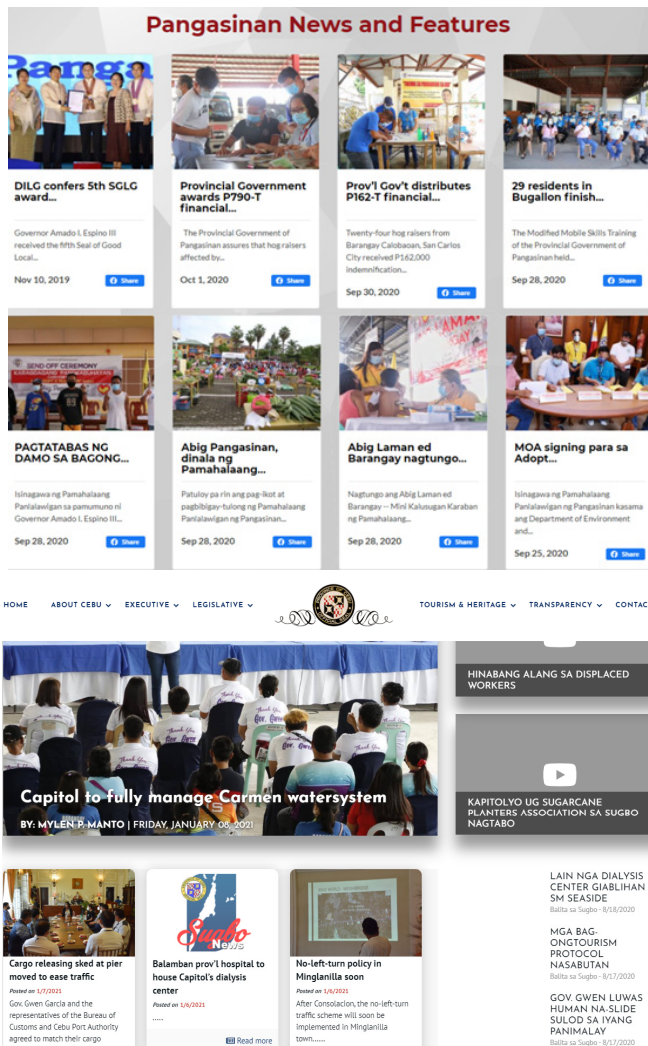
from the primary requirement that the language to be used should be understood by the target internet users, this should also convey the information or message in the most appropriate and best way possible. Second, since these websites are created by the government's (national, local) initiatives and maintained by webmasters[3], attitudes on language are manifested in their communicative and linguistic repertoires. This means, a particular language is chosen due to its viable and practical facets by its user. For instance, many webmasters are more adept using English in the construction and interface of their websites. Moreover, there are more government web content writers using English compared to other local languages (Concepcion 2016). This person-oriented consideration is evident particularly in a one-way mode of communication in the websites' contents. These webmasters are the one sharing the information and messages to the internet users[4], thus, the latter just consume these as they are posted in the websites. Third, it can be noted that the Philippine government websites has three main functions: give public information to the internet user, provide a platform for the internet user to communicate to government officials, and provide a platform for the internet user to transact government services. Since the websites' contents and transactional applications are made by the webmasters, language options and their choice of language(s) are non-negotiable. The internet user is the one to adjust in comprehending these considerations. In other words, the webmasters are assuming that the internet user is fluent in the same language they are using. On the other hand, the communicative function is rather more personal in nature, that is why the internet user has the choice what language to use. In this sense, a lingua franca is usually used, which the internet user assumes that the same language is understood by the end receiver (webmasters, public official, public personnel, etc.). Fourth, the idea of sentimental and instrumental value of language is very evident in these websites. Sentimental value is linked to a particular language to better internalize one's

---

[3] A webmaster is a person responsible for maintaining one or more websites. The title may refer to web architects, web developers, site authors, website administrators, website owners, website coordinators, or website publishers.

[4] Unlike in a two-way mode of communication, language use and language choice are negotiated between the speakers.

history, culture, and identity, while instrumental value is linked to a particular language to acquire end products and services. Although both values can be linked to a language, it still depends on the communicative competence and linguistic repertoire of the speakers involved.

<Figure 2> Manifestations of language choice in local government websites. Pangasinan (top) and Cebu City (bottom).

Government websites of Pangasinan and Cebu City for example, use different languages in their contents. Having different linguistic repertoires, the former uses three languages (English, Filipino, Pangasinan), while the latter, two languages (English, Cebuano). It can be underscored that this status quo reflects the deterministic and person-oriented considerations of both the internet users and the webmasters. Pangasinan, English, and Filipino are widely spoken in Pangasinan. As such, most educated people in the province are trilingual (Cortez 1991). Cebu city on the other hand, has a long "grudge" on Filipino, tagging it as the manila-centric national language. In fact, most Cebuano can understand Filipino when asked, but politely answer using either English or Cebuano.[5] In the case of Cebu city, attitudes on languages also play a significant aspect how languages are used.

Aside from identity, attitudes on language, and imagined audience, topic is also a factor for language choice. As observed, English tends to be the language of choice in technical, academic, or specialized in nature, while Filipino and regional languages tend to be the language of choice in common, mundane, and public topics. Although the KWF website demonstrated that the national language can be used in all the website's contents and interface,
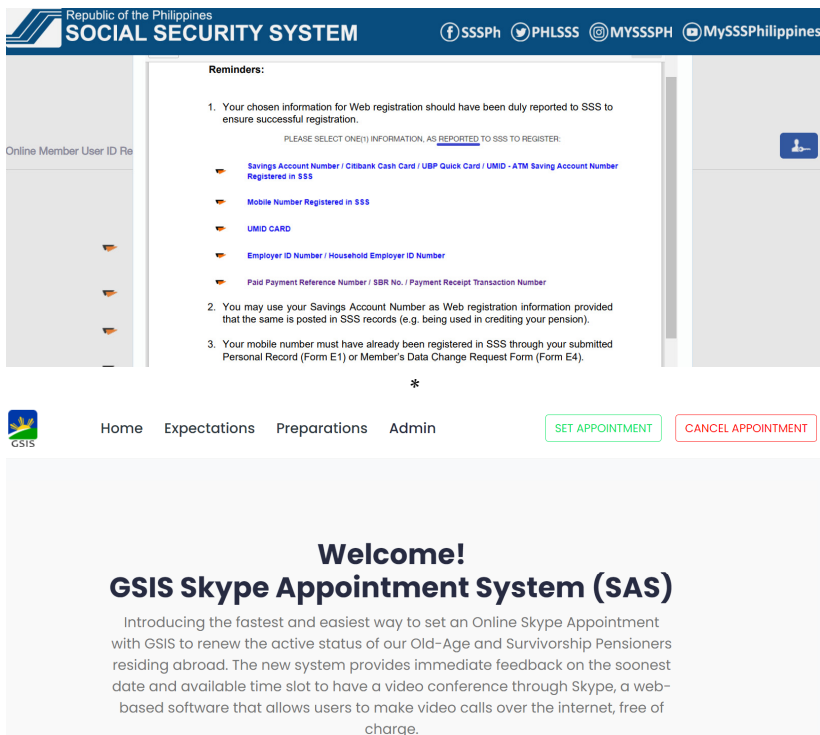

<Figure 3> A snippet of Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino's website.

---

[5] Cebuanos are very proud of their language and were very displeased when the Philippine governments of 1897 and 1940, chose Tagalog as the basis in the creation of the national language.

intellectualization of Filipino has yet to be realized.[6] There may be a bias to the exclusivity of the website's language choice due to the commission's mandate, but it can also be assumed that any language can be used in both technical and mundane topics. This will be possible, provided, that the webmasters are fluent and experts in such language, and are definite to use that language.

Shifting the discussion to some GOCCs websites, why is English the language of choice in transaction applications? This situation can be linked to two reasons. First, English as one of the official languages in the government has been legitimized not only

<Figure 4> Language choice in GOCCs websites. Social Security System (top) and Government Service Insurance System (bottom).

---

[6] In the Philippines, topics such as business, law, and the hard sciences are still mostly discoursed using English. To date, translations, and localizations of concepts to Filipino (and other regional languages) still pose a challenge in the Academe.

as the default language in public forms and documents, but also as the more prestigious and standard choice (Concepcion 2016; Gonzales, 2003). Second, English remains the practical language of choice for online applications and interface. Forms and templates using the language can be easily retrieved from the Internet, thus making it easier for the webmasters to copy and create. Also, because Filipino and regional languages are deficit in standardized terms, it will be burdensome to webmasters to translate. Although machine translations are available, the suggested words are too artificial and are not usually appropriate for conversational use.

Ⅵ. Concluding remarks: sociolinguistic issues and implications

Although the context of this study is very limited to the content of the homepages in Philippine government websites, several conclusions can be made. First, English remains the primary language of contents. The motivations for this are functional and practical in the context of the Internet. When English is used, a larger scope (i.e., international audience) of possible internet users can view these websites; at the same time, be able to comprehend more kinds of contents. On the other hand, mundane communication like greetings and side stories posted from the website "targeting" the local internet users usually use the common language, in this case Filipino and/or regional languages. While the 1987 Philippine Constitution, clearly identifies Filipino and English as official languages in Government and Education institutions, this situation remains one-sided (i.e., *subtractive bilingualism*, where unequal use/functions of two languages are observed) due to the fact English is massively used as the primary language of the websites' contents. This status quo leads to an unequal perspective about the functions of each language: English is attributed to what is "urban/ cosmopolitan," "formal information," and "transaction of public service" in the context of the Internet. On the other hand, Filipino and the regional languages are attributed to what is "provincial/ rudimentary," "cultural information," and "ease of communication." While these primary, secondary, and tertiary languages have specific "functions" in the Philippine government websites, this image may

just have been reflections of offline realities. For example, English for so many years have remained the working language in printed forms needed for public service application (e.g., loans, housing, passport, police clearance, etc.) in the Philippines. It is only in the recent years when Filipino was used as a second/helping language in the forms.

Second, Filipino as the national language of the Philippines and the national lingua franca of Filipinos remain as the secondary or the "other" language in Philippine government website contents. No doubt as manifested in the KWF website, Filipino *can* be the language of content and user interface in websites. Although this reality may be an "advantage" of Filipino compared to other local languages that are yet to be working languages of website contents, the national language's instrumental use beyond contents about local culture and history, to fully becoming the language of information and Web transaction has yet to be realized. In fact, having a "dot ph" (.ph) as official domain name registry of the Philippines in the address of a government website, does not guarantee the maximum use of Filipino in its contents.

Third, regional languages remain in the periphery. As the tertiary language in the website contents, these languages are the least used as observed in just a handful of provincial websites. As official languages and lingua franca(s) of/from the regions, they are used as supplementary alongside English and Filipino. While rarely used in the contents of the websites, regional languages still tend to deliver the "localness," and "grassroots-ness" of information and communication to regional internet users. In the simplest motivation, internet users can be more comfortable surfing the website in their native language.

The language choice in the contents of Philippine government websites manifests how inclusion on politics and law is practiced in the context of language policies in the Philippines. For instance, policymakers of the country communicate using English among their colleagues. In fact, this observation can be seen in special televised sessions of congress and senate.[7] Most Filipinos who are not fluent

---

[7] Recently, live televised sessions of the senate on PhilHealth corruption and sessions

in the language do not understand the discourse at hand, thus, remain clueless how officials in the government "formally" discuss and solve national issues (David 2003). Furthermore, because most laws in the country are written in English, law professionals (e.g., lawyers, fiscals, prosecutors, judges, stenographers, etc.) choose this language and remain "comfortable" in using it (Dio 2015; Peralejo 2013). This can be problematic in the plain understanding of basic laws and particularly in the overall litigation process. If the defendant for example, is not proficient in the language used by the court, then it will cause misunderstanding.[8]

In contrast, although the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) mandates the use of regional languages from pre-school to grade 3, these languages remain as medium of instruction and are not elevated as working languages for knowledge production. Even Filipino subjects in the tertiary were abolished under the K-12 scheme to make room for "world class" English language competence. Overt and covert language policies in the Philippines, therefore, are framed within neo-liberal tendencies pushing for internationalization and global competitiveness (San Juan 2016). As a result, common uneducated Filipinos are disenfranchised. In the context of language choice in the government, how will the common, uneducated Filipinos understand the policies and programs of the government if a foreign language (i.e., English) will be used to mediate information and communication from the government to the people? Moreover, how can a foreign language expedite government services intended to the public's wellness?[9]

---

of the congress on the change of speakership and ABS-CBN franchise renewal were discussed in English.

[8] Zosimo Buco, 27, a balut vendor from Leyte was wrongfully accused of murdering a civilian in Quezon City. He disclosed that he had a difficult time understanding the court process since he cannot speak and understand English. The report can be read here: https://varsitarian.net/news/20080803/paggamit_ng_wikang_filipino_sa_loob _ ng_korte. Although there was a move to use Filipino in the court proceedings (e.g., Bulacan Pilot Project) in the Philippines, lack of support from the government and the law professionals halted this endeavor.

[9] Floro Morales Herilla confided and asked help in a Facebook public group, SSS Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino about his calamity loan from the agency. Using the online process, he was not able to transact because of the English instructions. The conversation can be read here: https://www.facebook.com/groups/2754172 26488471/permalink/710246943005495.

Using English as the primary language in the contents of the national, local, and GOOCs websites might send a wrong signal to the public. The fact that only a portion of the Philippine population speak the language, it is an implication that not all information is intended for everybody's consumption. While the Philippines has a significant E-Governance Master Plan focused on technological aspects, an appropriate inclusion of a language policy or mandate must detail the optimal use of Filipino and other regional languages. The contribution of these languages in delivering information and public service to the Filipino people via government websites should be understood as significant.

Taking into consideration these sociolinguistic issues and implications, a tripartite multilingualism can improve, if not realize the "inclusive-for-all" contents in the Philippine government websites. Using this proposition, Filipino being the national language, national lingua franca, and official language can be the language used to communicate with most of the country's population. English, the "other" official language, can be the language aimed directly or indirectly at an international audience, or to the rest of the English-speaking population of the country. While official regional

National language
National lingua franca
Official language

International language
Official language

Regional lingua francas
Regional official languages
Regional languages

<Figure 5> Proposed tripartite multilingualism in Philippine government websites.

languages and/or the regional lingua francas (e.g., Tagalog and Ilokano for the North, Bisaya or Cebuano for the south) can be the language(s) used to target specific ethnolinguistic groups and/or mediate local and grassroot identities. Provided with much technological and sociolinguistic support, this multilingual proposal can be realized in two ways: 1) provide all contents available in these languages, or 2) provide equal language options for the comfort of the internet user.

Due to the limited scope of this paper, it is underscored that the issue of multilingualism on the Internet is not confined in language(s)-in-websites alone. The use of language in the many applications and platforms the Internet has to offer, remains a sociolinguistic discourse. In the Philippines for example, while the number of local languages has undoubtedly increased on the Internet, their use remains restricted. Concepcion's (2016) study revealed that alongside with Filipino, almost all Philippine major local languages are used in communicative platforms. With the emergence of YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and other Social Networking Sites, Filipinos can be observed sharing videos and posts in their mother tongue.[10] Considering the audience in mind, a bilingual/multilingual internet user chooses a language that will best convey the message in the greatest number of people. Regional languages and Filipino are mostly used in private messages, chatrooms, and local forums; while English, is mostly used for foreigners and in international platforms. Reflecting on Dumanig and David's (2011) study on the other hand, demonstrates how the emergence of major languages like Filipino, Cebuano, and English in Surigao has reduced the functions of Surigaonon in various domains of communication, particularly on the Internet. Clearly, attitudes and perceptions on languages are primarily formed outside the Internet setting. In essence, although a language *can* be used, internet users *may* not opt to because of its limited use and value.

Furthermore, the slow proliferation and inactive use of the many local languages of the Philippines on the Internet depend to

---

[10] Videos or oral messages has no restrictions, while written messages should be supported by ASCII codes and fonts.

a large extent on the existence of language policies. Aside from the Philippine Constitution's mandate regarding the official status and official use of Filipino and English in the Government and Education, there is no statement whatsoever how regional languages should be maintained and strengthened. In other words, language policy in the Philippines has yet to adhere to the status quo of multilingualism in the country. Although the Internet is not as easily controlled by such language policies, developing policy parameters and objectives should still be realized.[11]

At present, multilingualism particularly in the context of Internet in the Philippines does not reflect a "multilingual country" mindset. The concept of language choice when presenting information on the Internet, lists the options in terms of the audience: *local* (who has access and can use it) and *global* (who in the world wants to know) (Ellis 2005). As what the paper has observed in the Philippine context, the local audience may opt to choose Filipino, English, or from the many regional languages spoken in the country. Due to the utmost significance of contents, the Philippine government websites should be proactive in facilitating the integration of all Filipinos coming from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. The fact that the language options reflect the minute-to-insignificant place of Filipino and regional languages in the websites further solidifies the low profile they are given, compared to the emphasis on English as the language of choice.

What then can be deduced from this situation of language choice in Philippine government websites? Will Filipinos accommodate by learning English, for them to use these websites? Or will they selectively choose what information to consume? The Philippine government may rethink of proactive uses of the websites from institutional and official communication, which favor only national and international languages, toward a more personal kind

---

[11] Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino and National Commission for Culture and the Arts are mandated to strengthen the national language and cultural diversity, respectively; while the Department of Information and Communications Technology, is mandated to improve the ICT infrastructure in the country. The responsibility of creating a language policy on the Internet remains an averted responsibility.

of communication, where regional languages have an expressive advantage. Also, multilingual contents and applications in the government websites should be fully realized so that information and transaction flows can be maximized.

Language plays a critical role in sending information and communication from the Philippine government to its citizens via its official websites. Access to and understanding of any information shared in the websites' contents should not be limited to only a select few. By providing, choosing, and using the appropriate language in the contents and applications, citizens can engage more in the government's endeavors.

References

Caldrow, Janet. 1999. *The Quest for Electronic Government: A Defining Vision*. USA: Institute for Electronic Government, IBM Corporation.

Callahan, Ewa and Susan Herring. 2012. Language Choice on University Websites: Longitudinal Trends. *International Journal of Communication,* 6: 322-355.

Canazza, Mario. 2009. Global Effort on Bridging the Digital Divide and the Role of ICT Standardization. *Proceedings IEEE Conference on Innovations for Digital Inclusions*, (August 31 – September 1, 2009): 1-7.

Concepcion, Gerard. 2016. e-FilNet: Pagsusuri Tungo sa Pangangasiwang Pangwika sa Gamit ng Wikang Filipino sa Internet. PhD Dissertation. University of the Philippines Diliman.

Cortes, Rosario. 1991. *Pangasinan, 1901–1986: A Political, Socioeconomic, and Cultural History*. Manila: Cellar Book Shop.

Cullen, Rowena. 2001. Addressing the Digital Divide. *Online Information Review*, 25 (5): 311-320.

David, Randolf. 2003. Politika ng Wika, Wika ng Politika. *Wikang Filipino sa Loob at Labas ng Akademya't Bansa*. Benilda Santos, ed. 15-22. Quezon City: Sanggunian sa Filipino.

Dio, Marianito. 2015. Mga Kailangan Pang Maganap upang maging

Handa at Sapat Ang Wikang Filipino bilang Lingua Franca sa mga Hukuman ng Batas. Master's thesis. De La Salle Lipa.

Dumanig Francisco and Maya Khemlani David. 2011. The Maintenance and Preservation of the Surigaonon Language in Cyberspace. https://www.academia.edu/29660596/THE_MAINTENANCE_ AND_PRESERVATION_OF_THE_SURIGAONON_LANGUAGE_ IN_CYBERSPACE (Accessed November 24, 2020).

Dweik, Bader Sa'id and Hanadi Qawar. 2015. Language Choice and Language Attitudes in a Multilingual Arab Canadian Community: Quebec-Canada: A Sociolinguistic Study. *British Journal of English Linguistics*, 3 (1): 1-12.

Ellis, Simon. 2005. Monitoring Language Diversity. *UNESCO.* http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.phpURL_ID=19199&URL_D O=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (Accessed January 4, 2021).

Fasold, Ralph. 1990. *The Sociolinguistics of Language.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Fawkes, Johanna and Anne Gregory. 2001. Applying Communication Theories to the Internet. *Journal of Communication Management*, 5(2): 109-125.

Ferguson, Charles. 1996. On Sociolinguistically Oriented Language Surveys. *Sociolinguistic Perspectives: Papers on Language in Society, 1959-1994*. Thom Huebner, ed. 272-276. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fishman, Joshua. 1965. Who Speaks What Language to Whom and When? *La Linguistique*, 1 (2): 67-88.

Fishman, Joshua. 1991. *Reversing Language Shift.* Clevendon: Multilingual Matters.

Gonzales, Andrew. 2003. Language planning in multilingual countries: The case of the Philippines. *Summer Institute of Linguistics.* https://www.sil.org/system/files/reapdata/62/63/26/62632677 9060738341974004546831359964969/andrew_gonzales.pdf#:~:te xt=The%20national%20language%2C%20based%20on%20Taga log%2C%20was%20renamed,education%20system%20remain s%20in%20operation.%20Andrew%20Gonzalez%20 (Accessed January 3, 2021).

Greiffenstern, Sandra. 2010. The Influence of Computers, the

Internet, and Computer-Mediated Communication on Everyday English. *English and American Studies in German*, 1 (1): 16-18.

Halliday, Michael. 1975. *Learning How to Mean*. London: Edward Arnold.

Herring, Susan. 2013. Discourse in Web 2.0: Familiar, Reconfigured, and Emergent. *Discourse 2.0: Language and New Media.* Deborah Tannen and Anna Marie Trester, eds. 1-25. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Ilago, Simeon. 2001. Participation, the Internet, and Local Governance: A Review of Philippine Local Government Websites. *Asian Review of Public Administration*, 8 (2): 1-17.

Jakobson, Roman. 1960. Linguistics and Poetics. *Style in Language*. Thomas Sebeok, ed. 350-377. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press.

Khalid, Suhaina and Rabby Labilles. 2019. Maturity Assessment of Local E-Government Websites in the Philippines. *Procedia Computer Science*, 161 (2019): 99-106.

Muhlhausler, Peter. 1981. Structural Expansion and the Process of Creolization. *Theoretical Issues in Pidgins and Creole Studies*. Albert Valdman and Arnold Highfield, eds. 19-56. New York: Academic.

Okin, J. 2005. *The Technology Revolution: The Not-for-Dummies Guide to the Impact, Perils, and Promise of The Internet*. Maine, USA: Ironbound Press.

Olaño, Karmela. 2014. e-Gov.ph: Examining E-Governance in the Philippines Through the Websites and Social Media Sites of Selected National Government Agencies. Bachelor's thesis. University of the Philippines Diliman.

Peralejo, Cezar. 2003. Mga Saliksik sa Batas at Politika. *Wikang Filipino sa Loob at Labas ng Akademya't Bansa*. Benilda Santos, ed. 50-64. Quezon City: Sanggunian sa Filipino.

Phillipson, Robert. 1992. *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

San Juan, David. 2016. Neoliberal Restructuring of Education in the Philippines: Dependency, Labor, Privatization, Critical Pedagogy, and the K to 12 System. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review,* 16 (1):80-110.

Siar, Sheila. 2005. E-governance at the Local Government Level in

the Philippines: An Assessment of City Government Websites. *Philippine Journal of Development*, 32 (2): 135-168.

Spolsky, Bernard. 2009. *Language Management*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Summer Institute of Linguistics. 2020. *Ethnologue*. United States: SIL International.

Tannen, Deborah and Anna Marie Trester, eds. 2013. *Discourse 2.0: Language and New Media*. USA: Georgetown University Press.

Tremino, Miguel. 2020. The Many Languages Missing from the Internet. *BBC.* April 15. https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200414-the-many-lanuages-still-missing-from-the-internet (Accessed September 3, 2020).

UNESCO. 2015. *3rd Report: Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace*. Paris, France: UNESCO.

Warschauer, Mark. 1998. Technology and Indigenous Language Revitalization: Analyzing the experience of Hawaii. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 55 (1): 140-61.

Appendix 1. List of Government websites

www.aklan.gov.ph	www.bayawancity.gov.ph	www.calbayog.gov.ph
www.alaminoscity.gov.ph	www.bcda.gov.ph	www.camarinessur.gov.ph
www.amlan.gov.ph	www.bjmp.gov.ph	www.candoncity.gov.ph
www.angelescity.gov.ph	www.blgs.gov.ph	www.capiz.gov.ph
www.antique.gov.ph	www.bohol.gov.ph	www.carrascal.gov.ph
www.armm.gov.ph	www.booksphilippines.gov.ph	www.cavite.gov.ph
www.aurora.gov.ph	www.botcenter.gov.ph	www.cda.gov.ph
www.bacarra.gov.ph	www.bucor.gov.ph	www.cebu.gov.ph
www.baciwa.gov.ph	www.bukidnon.gov.ph	www.cebucity.gov.ph
www.bacolodcity.gov.ph	www.bulacan.gov.ph	www.census.gov.ph
www.bacoor.gov.ph	www.business.gov.ph	www.cervantes.gov.ph
www.badiangan.gov.ph	www.caap.gov.ph	www.ceza.gov.ph
www.bani.gov.ph	www.cabatuan.gov.ph	www.cfo.gov.ph
www.barangay.gov.ph	www.cabuyao.gov.ph	www.ched.gov.ph
www.bas.gov.ph	www.cadizcity.gov.ph	www.chr.gov.ph
www.basey.gov.ph	www.cagayan.gov.ph	www.citem.gov.ph
www.bataan.gov.ph	www.cagayandeoro.gov.ph	www.cityofbalanga.gov.ph
www.batac.gov.ph	www.cainta.gov.ph	www.cityofsanfernando.gov.ph
www.batangascity.gov.ph	www.calaca.gov.ph	www.coa.gov.ph
www.bayanihan.gov.ph	www.calambamisocc.gov.ph	www.coastguard.gov.ph

www.concepcion.gov.ph
www.congress.gov.ph
www.cordova.gov.ph
www.cotabatoprov.gov.ph
www.cpa.gov.ph
www.csc.gov.ph
www.culturalcenter.gov.ph
www.customs.gov.ph
www.da.gov.ph
www.daanbantayan.gov.ph
www.dalaguete.gov.ph
www.dap.edu.ph
www.dapitancity.gov.ph
www.dar.gov.ph
www.daraga.gov.ph
www.davaocity.gov.ph
www.dbm.gov.ph
www.denr.gov.ph
www.deped.gov.ph
www.dfa.gov.ph
www.dfa.gov.ph
www.didp.gov.ph
www.dilg.gov.ph
www.dinagatislands.gov.ph
www.dingle.gov.ph
www.dnd.gov.ph
www.doe.gov.ph
www.dof.gov.ph
www.doh.gov.ph
www.doj.gov.ph
www.dole.gov.ph
www.doncarlos.gov.ph
www.dost.gov.ph
www.dotc.gov.ph
www.dotpcvc.gov.ph
www.dpwh.gov.ph
www.dswd.gov.ph
www.dti.gov.ph
www.duenas.gov.ph
www.dumangas.gov.ph
www.easternsamar.gov.ph
www.ecomval.gov.ph
www.emb.gov.ph
www.escalantecity.gov.ph
www.fda.gov.ph
www.fti.gov.ph
www.gcg.gov.ph

www.generaltinio.gov.ph
www.generaltrias.gov.ph
www.gensantos.gov.ph
www.gingoog.gov.ph
www.glan.gov.ph
www.gloria.gov.ph
www.gppb.gov.ph
www.gsis.gov.ph
www.guiguinto.gov.ph
www.hagonoybulacan.gov.ph
www.hinatuan.gov.ph
www.hlurb.gov.ph
www.hudcc.gov.ph
www.kwf.gov.ph
www.lcp.gov.ph
www.llda.gov.ph
www.lwua.gov.ph
www.lrta.gov.ph
www.maps.napc.gov.ph
www.mciaa.gov.ph
www.miaa.gov.ph
www.minda.gov.ph
www.mmda.gov.ph
www.mwss.gov.ph
www.nbi.gov.ph
www.ncc.gov.ph
www.ncip.gov.ph
www.ncmh.gov.ph
www.ncrfw.gov.ph
www.ndc.gov.ph
www.nea.gov.ph
www.neda.gov.ph
www.negor.gov.ph
www.negros-occ.gov.ph
www.newlucena.gov.ph
www.nfa.gov.ph
www.nha.gov.ph
www.nhi.gov.ph
www.nhmfc.gov.ph
www.nkti.gov.ph
www.nldc.gov.ph
www.nsc.gov.ph
www.nscb.gov.ph
www.ntc.gov.ph
www.officialgazette.gov.ph
www.omb.gov.ph
www.op.gov.ph

www.opapp.gov.ph
www.ops.gov.ph
www.ormoc.gov.ph
www.oroquietacity.gov.ph
www.osetc.gov.ph
www.osg.gov.ph
www.ots.gov.ph
www.ovp.gov.ph
www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph
www.pagc.gov.ph
www.pagibigfund.gov.ph
www.palawan.gov.ph
www.panay.gov.ph
www.pandan.gov.ph
www.pangasinan.gov.ph
www.pasay.gov.ph
www.pateros.gov.ph
www.pawb.gov.ph
www.pbs.gov.ph
www.pca.da.gov.ph
www.pcc.gov.ph
www.pcdspo.gov.ph
www.pcfc.gov.ph
www.pcic.gov.ph
www.pcoo.gov.ph
www.pcso.gov.ph
www.pctc.gov.ph
www.pdic.gov.ph
www.pea.gov.ph
www.peza.gov.ph
www.pfda.da.gov.ph
www.pgh.gov.ph
www.phc.gov.ph
www.philexim.gov.ph
www.philhealth.gov.ph
www.philpost.gov.ph
www.philracom.gov.ph
www.phirice.gov.ph
www.pinamalayan.gov.ph
www.pids.gov.ph
www.pitc.gov.ph
www.pllo.gov.ph
www.pms.gov.ph
www.pnp.gov.ph
www.pnri.gov.ph
www.pnr.gov.ph
www.pnvsca.gov.ph

www.poea.gov.ph	www.sjdmcity.gov.ph
www.polomolok.gov.ph	www.socorro.gov.ph
www.popcom.gov.ph	www.solsona.gov.ph
www.postalbank.gov.ph	spda.gov.ph
www.ppsc.gov.ph	www.src.gov.ph
www.pra.gov.ph	www.sss.gov.ph
www.prc.gov.ph	www.sultankudaratprovince.gov.ph
www.psa.gov.ph	www.sulu.gov.ph
www.psalm.gov.ph	www.surigaocity.gov.ph
www.pscigrid.gov.ph	www.tabuk.gov.ph
www.pttc.gov.ph	www.tacurong.gov.ph
www.quedancoe.gov.ph	www.tagbilaran.gov.ph
www.quezon.gov.ph	www.tagudin.gov.ph
www.quezoncity.gov.ph	www.talisaycitycebu.gov.ph
www.rips.gov.ph	www.tariffcommission.gov.ph
www.ritm.gov.ph	www.telof.gov.ph
www.roxascity.gov.ph	www.tesda.gov.ph
www.rtvm.gov.ph	www.tigbauan.gov.ph
www.saintbernard.gov.ph	www.tiwi.gov.ph
www.samalcity.gov.ph	www.toledocity.gov.ph
www.sanantonio.gov.ph	www.tourism.gov.ph
www.sancarloscity.gov.ph	www.tourism.gov.ph
www.sanisidro.gov.ph	www.trc.dost.gov.ph
www.sanpablo.gov.ph	www.treasury.gov.ph
www.sanrafael.gov.ph	www.trinidad-bohol.gov.ph
www.sanremigio.gov.ph	www.tubigon.gov.ph
www.santa.gov.ph	www.tupi.gov.ph
www.santabarbara.gov.ph	www.vatreform.gov.ph
www.santamariabulacan.gov.ph	www.victoriatarlac.gov.ph
www.santamariailocossur.gov.ph	www.vigancity.gov.ph
www.sarangani.gov.ph	www.zamboanga.gov.ph
www.senate.gov.ph	www.zamboangadelsur.gov.ph

Culture, Leadership Practices and Organizational Commitment at Commercial Banks in Vietnam

DUONG Thi Thu*, NGUYEN Thi Thuy Hanh**, PHAM Hien***

[*Abstract*]

This study attempted to investigate the effects of collectivism as an individual cultural value and leadership practices on employees' organizational commitment of six commercial banks in Vietnam. The study used collectivism and the implementation of five leadership practices as the independent variables, the three components of organizational commitment as the dependent variables and employees' personal factors served as controlling variables. The study utilized a quantitative method of research with questionnaires as the main data collection instrument. The findings of the study have revealed that the individual cultural value of collectivism positively, but to a marginal degree, affected the level of employees' organizational commitment. Among five leadership practices, only the implementation of encourage the heart, positively, but to a marginal degree, influenced employees' affective and normative commitment. The leadership practice of challenge the process had a negative impact on the employees' affective commitment. The personal factors of employees did not have an impact on

---

  * Director, Institute for Strategic Leadership Development Research, Hanoi, Vietnam, thufla@gmail.com.

  ** Lecturer, Thuongmai University, nguyenthuyhanh79@tmu.edu.vn.

*** Researcher, Institute of Linguistics, VASS, phamhieniol@gmail.com, Corresponding author.

organizational commitment. The findings and conclusions of this study may be used by the leaders to create the favorable working environment, improve the relationship between leaders and followers and to increase organizational commitment.

Keywords: organizational commitment, commercial banks, culture, leadership practices

Ⅰ. Introduction

Organizational commitment is considered to be one of the most important work attitudes that gives direction to behavior and binds a person to a course of action. When employees are committed, they did not tempt to look for other opportunities (Lok, Wang, Westwood & Crawford, 2007). According to Mowday, Steers & Porter (1979) organizational commitment is gained when employees strongly believe in and accept the goals and values of an organization, when they are willing to do their utmost on behalf of the organization and to stay with the organization. Organizational commitment, serves as an important factor impacting several outcome variables including job satisfaction, work performance, turnover rate, leading to the higher level of achievement in many organizations. Organizations try to encourage commitment in their employees in order to achieve stability and improve the efficiency of its human capital. Thus, for organizations which want to retain the employees, it is important to recognize factors leading to higher organizational commitment. It can be seen that Vietnamese commercial banks are now facing the challenge of leaving of competent and experienced employees. In hard times, the banks want their skilled and talented staffs to stay on to share difficulties and exhibit strong commitment to serving customers for the business interest. A review conducted by PwC Vietnam in 2013 indicated that 38% of the banking workforce was 'rookies', or employees with less than two years' tenure, and that the resignation rate was at 14% (PwC Vietnam, 2013). In 2014, the turnover rate was still at a high level of 13.6% (Towers Watson, 2014).

In fact, the relationship between the cultural dimension of collectivism, leadership practices and organizational commitment have been studied by the researchers in various contexts over the years. However, there has been a limited amount of research in this field conducted in Vietnam. Furthermore, only few studies examining the collectivism and leadership practices in relation with employees' organizational commitment have been undertaken in the context of the banking system of Vietnam. This indicates the necessity to make a contribution to fill the research gap in this area. Therefore, this study was undertaken to determine dominant supervisors' leadership practices, the level of employees' collectivism and relate those factors to the employees' organizational commitment in the Vietnamese commercial banks.

Ⅱ. Literature review

2.1. Organizational Commitment

Although there are several conceptualizations of commitment, they seem to reflect one of three general themes: affective attachment, perceived costs and obligation (Meyer and Allen, 1987). The present study views commitment as "a force that binds an individual to a target and to a course of action of relevance to that target" (Meyer et al., 2006). According to (Acar, 2012) ensuring continuous and desirable work outcomes of employees lead to positive impact on organizational commitment of employees. In such circumstances, employees easily accept the organizational culture of the company. Le (2013) showed that dimensions of transformational leadership and employees' trust in managers have a significantly positive influence on organizational commitment.

In a model of commitment created by Meyer and Allen (1987) the three perspectives of organizational commitment were named 'affective', 'continuance' and 'normative' commitment, respectively. *Affective commitment* is a desire to take part in a particular organization, or an employee's emotional cohesion and enthusiastic feeling for the organization. *Continuance commitment* refers to awareness in employees about the loss they will suffer if they leave

an organization. Finally, *normative commitment* incorporates a sense of obligation to continue the work in an organization.

Consequences of Organizational Commitment.

The consequences that have been of particular interest to organizational behavior research, generally, are work performance and turnover.

Work performance. It is noteworthy that previous studies reported positive correlations between commitment and work performance. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), however, argued that since affective, calculative, and normative commitment reflected three different mind-sets, they would have distinguishable implications on the outcome behaviors. The desire to belong to the organization (affective commitment) might be the most likely to have a positive correlation with job performance.

Turnover. The underlying assumption regarding turnover and turnover intention behaviors is that committed employees are less likely to leave. A great deal of attention has been devoted to the relationship between commitment and turnover. Taken together, the studies have provided strong support that such a negative relationship exists (Blau and Boal, 1989). Low commitment is a danger sign for turnover. The studies conducted by Dunham et al. (1994), Hackett et al. (1994), and Meyer and Allen (1997) continued to support stronger relationship between turnover and affective commitment rather than continuance commitment.

2.2. Culture

Many definitions have been proposed to explain culture. According to Vincent and Candy (2014), culture is the shared way of life of a group of people. Culture is defined as learned beliefs, values, rules, norms, symbols and traditions that are common to a group of people. It is these shared qualities of a group that make them unique (Northouse, 2013). Hofstede (2010) identified four dimensions that he labeled power distance, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism-collectivism. Sharifian (2017) puts the cultural cognition at the heart of the theoretical

framework of cultural linguistics, in which language serves as a 'collective memory bank' of the cultural cognition of a speech community.

Individualism-collectivism: The nature of relationship between the individual and the group is broadly referred to individualism and collectivism. According to Hofstede (1984), individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose, people are expected to people look after themselves and their immediate families.

Collectivism: Collectivism is defined as the extent to which the members of a society see themselves as a part of a group rather than isolated individual entity (Triandis, 1995). In a collectivist culture, the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual. Collectivists are more likely to develop organizational commitment than individualists are. Group values, norms, and goals are important to collectivists. Therefore, collectivists are distinctly possible to develop affective commitment to the organization. Based on the above argument, we propose the hypothesis that collectivist orientation has a positive relationship with organizational commitment.

2.3. Leadership Practices

Kouzes and Posner (2012) considered leadership practices as personal leadership experiences that are absolutely essential for heads to lead others to get extraordinary things in organizations. In their studies, Kouzes and Posner discovered that there was a fundamental pattern of leadership behavior that emerges more than 70% of the time when people are accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations. The leadership practices are: challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart. Al-sharafi and Rajiani, (2013) found that most of the leadership practices have medium level of implementation in Yemeni Banks, except leadership practice of *challenge the process* which has low level of implementation. And at the same time employees reported a quiet high level organizational commitment and OCB. Meanwhile, Mitchell (2013) supported a positive relationship between five leadership and effective, continuance, and

normative commitment. However, the study revealed a weak correlation between all five leadership practices and continuance commitment, especially low for the practice of challenge the process. There are two behaviors commitments for each leadership practice. A manager may use one, two or even three of the practices and behaviors described by Kouzes and Posner (2012), but it is the star manager who utilizes all five practices and ten behaviors and becomes an extraordinary leader.

2.4. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1. The independent variable is the collectivism of employees and five leadership practices of supervisors whether they are utilizing model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart. It is believed that leadership practices are the key determinant of the leadership process in bank management. The dependent variable is employees' organizational commitment, which is reflected in three dimensions: affective, continuance and normative commitment. The employees' personal factors which included gender, length of service, organization and position served as the controlling variables.

<Figure 1> Conceptual Framework of The Study

2.5. Hypotheses of the Study

In line with the statement of the problem and the research paradigm, the following null hypotheses were tested in the study:

✓ H_01: are no significant effects of employees' collectivism on their affective, continuance and normative commitment, controlling for employees' personal factors.

✓ H_02: There are no significant effects of the leadership practice based on *model the way* on employees' affective, continuance, and normative commitment, controlling for employees' personal factors.

✓ H_03: There are no significant effects of the leadership practice based on *inspire a shared vision* on employees' affective, continuance, and normative commitment, controlling for employees' personal factors.

✓ H_04: There are no significant effects of the leadership practice based on *challenge the process* on employees' affective, continuance, and normative commitment, controlling for employees' personal factors.

✓ H_05: There are no significant effects the leadership practice based on of *enable others to act* on employees' affective, continuance and normative commitment, controlling for employees' personal factors.

✓ H_06: There are no significant effects of the leadership practice based on *encourage the heart* on employees' affective, continuance and normative commitment, controlling for employees' personal factors.

Ⅲ. Research methodology

3.1. Data collection

The study used a quantitative method which determines the quatity or extent of phenomenon in the form of number. To gather necessary data, questionnaires were used in this study. Three sets of

instruments were utilized: the Cultural Value Scale (CVSCALE) which is an adaption of cultural values (Hofstede, 1984), Leadership Practices Inventory - Observer (LPI-O) of (Kouzes and Posner, 2012) and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ).

Collectivism as a cultural value orientation was measured at the individual level using six items in CVSCALE. The cultural dimension of collectivism was evaluated using a five-point scale: '5' = '*strongly agree*'; '4' = '*agree*'; '3' = '*neutral*'; '2' = '*disagree*'; '1'= '*strongly disagree*'.

Leadership Practices were measured through LPI-O. The instrument consists of 30 descriptive statements related to various behaviors of effective leaders. Each response to the items ranged a five-point scale, with (1) being "*never*" and (5) being "*frequently, if not always*". There are five leadership practices, each of which contains two elements designed to define the actions the leaders takes in order to exemplify the leadership practice: (1) *model the way* by finding one's voice and setting the example; (2) *inspire a shared* vision by envisioning the future and enlisting others; (3) *challenge the process* by searching for opportunities and experimenting and taking risks; (4) *enable others to act* by fostering collaboration and strengthening others, and (5) *encourage the heart* by recognizing contributions and celebrating the values and victories.

OCQ which was developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) was utilized to measure the level of *commitment* that a banking employee feels towards his organization. The original questionnaire consists of 24 items which measured three components of organizational commitment: affective, continuance & normative. OCQ used a five-point Likert scale which includes the following options: '5' = '*strongly agree*'; '4' = '*agree*'; '3' = '*neutral*'; '2' = '*disagree*'; '1'= '*strongly disagree*'.

The data were gathered, computed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM Corp), version 26.0. The statistical treatment such as frequency, descriptive statistics, means, standard deviation, multiple regression analysis was applied in describing and analyzing the data of this study. The data were

organized and presented in tabular form and some pie charts for descriptive analysis.

Samples and Sampling

Participants in the research were employees working in different branches of six out of the largest and most popular banks in Vietnam, including three state-owned banks: *Joint Stock Commercial Bank for Foreign Trade of Vietnam (Vietcombank); Vietnam Joint Stock Commercial Bank for Industry and Trade (Vietinbank); Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam (BIDV)*; and three private joint-stock commercial banks: Military Commercial Joint Bank (MB); Vietnam Prosperity Joint Stock Commercial Bank (VP Bank); and Nam A Commercial Joint Stock Bank (Nam A Bank). The employees of these banks were purposively chosen because of some similarities among them. They held different positions in the banks' branches and were based in diverse teams and departments, such as customer care, business, IT, credit officers, and transaction staff. One-third of the subjects was heads of departments or divisions. The number of females was substantial (67%), with the number of male employees slight (33%). They were graduates, with university degrees in economics, finance, and banking, and had worked for the banks for 3 to 10 years. All participants answered the questionnaire in their free time, at home or in the office. Each participant was given an envelope with the postal address of the researcher and asked to give back the answers to the researcher in a sealed envelope or via email. The questionnaires (in both paper and electronic format) were given to 450 employees. Eventually, 390 responses were received, showing a response rate of 87%. Ultimately, there were 375 valid responses among received ones, on the basis of which the data analysis was conducted.

3.2. Measurement Test

Reliability Test

The validity and reliability of the study's data collection instruments were both tested. First, Cronbach's alpha was used to

check reliability of collectivism variable in CVSCALE, and other variables in LPI-O and OCQ. In the results, the Cronbach's alpha value of **collectivism** was 0.815, indicating a high level of reliability. In addition, the item-total correlation yielded values of more than 0.4 for all items, indicating a very good discrimination.

The Cronbach's alpha values for the five dimensions of **Leadership Practices** in the LPI-O ranged from 0.74 to 0.84. In addition, the item-total correlation for all the items in the LPI-O exceeded the values of 0.30, which is a criterion for acceptability. It can be concluded that values showed satisfactory reliability for the five leadership practices in the LPI-O. So, the questionnaire was considered to be reliable to measure leadership practices of managers.

The results for three components of **organizational commitment**: For the first data analysis, nine (9) items (out of 24) in the OCQ coding as O1, O2, O3, O7, O9, O16, O20, O22, O23 were eliminated because their item-total correlation did not achieve a satisfactory level of more than 0.03. After eliminating these variables, a total of 15 reliable items was remained to measure organizational commitment. After a series of item-selection procedures, high level of reliability, ranging from 0.787 to 0.818, was gained for three components of commitment. It can be noted that the measure instrument of organizational commitment in this study was considered to be reliable.

Validity Test

The validity of the scale was tested using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), which is a cluster of common methods used to explore the underlying pattern of relationships among multiple observed variables. The results show that the items have been placed in the same categories as presented in the original instruments. All items in collectivism dimension loaded over .50 on a single factor. This factor also had an Eigenvalue of 3.145 and explained 42, 41% of the total variance. After eliminating 9 items in the OCQ because of the weak item-total correlation (less than 0.3), factor analysis was conducted for 15 remaining items. All of the items, loading over .65 (except for O4 variable) on three factors

which explained 71,11% of total variance. a 30-item scale of five leadership practices factors highly loaded over .50 on the appropriate factors as in the original LPI-O of Kouzes and Posner (1988).

These five factors gained Eigenvalues of 2.693 and for *model the way,* 3.165 for *inspire a shared vision*, 2.802 for *challenge the process*, 2.994 for *enable others to act* and 3.385 for *encourage the heart*, exceeding a satisfactory level of 1. Five distinct factors emerged in the sample and cumulatively these five factors explained 59.33% of the total variance. To sum up, the reliability of the questionnaires was tested using Cronbach's values and their validity was tested using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The results of the test showed that the collectivism dimension in CVSCALE, LPI-O and OCQ exhibited appropriate reliability (high internal consistency) and validity (content, construct). This supported the decision to make use of three sets of questionnaires to measure collectivism at the individual level, leadership practices and organizational commitment in Vietnamese commercial banks.

Ⅳ. Results

Multiple regression is generally used to explain the relationship between multiple independent or predictor variables and one dependent or criterion variable. In this research, Stepwise Multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether the independent variables, including the employees' collectivism and five dimensions of leadership practices effect three components of organizational commitment. Regression analyses were used to determine whether the independent variables, including the employees' collectivism and five dimensions of leadership practices effect three components of organizational commitment. Following are the resulting equations as well as the discussions of the abovementioned multiple regression analyses.

4.1. The Effects of Collectivism and Five Leadership Practices on Affective Commitment

<Table 1> presents the standard multiple regression analysis of collectivism, five leadership practices and effective commitment. The regression equation appears to be significant as indicated by the F value of 3.544 at $p < 0.05$. The R^2 value of 0.381 indicates that 38.1 percent of the variance in the dependent variable can be jointly explained by the independent variables. Thus, the independent variables included in the regression equation can predict to a significant degree the variations in the dependent variable, which is the level of affective commitment. It can be realized from the data that collectivism as a cultural orientation value came out to be statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. The unstandardized regression coefficient, β of 0.188 and the standardized β coefficient of 0.237 of collectivism were both statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. The β coefficient of 0.188 means that when the collectivism changes by one unit, affective commitment changes by .188 units. In the same way that Beta coefficient of 0.237 means that when affective commitment changes by one standard deviation unit, collectivism changes by .237 standard deviation units. This result implies that employees' collectivism positively affects their affective commitment. A further look at the data would reveal that the leadership practice

<Table 1> Regression Analysis of Collectivism and Leadership Practices on Affective Commitment

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.013	0.186		10.797	0.000
Model the way	0.049	0.058	0.062	0.840	0.401
Inspire a shared vision	-0.084	0.052	-0.119	-1.626	0.105
Challenge the process	**-0.167**	**0.066**	**-0.202**	**-2.543**	**0.011**
Enable others to act	0.089	0.053	0.110	1.688	0.092
Encourage the heart	**0.285**	**0.063**	**0.363**	**4.508**	**0.000**
Collectivism	**0.188**	**0.043**	**0.237**	**4.359**	**0.000**
Gender	0.045	0.055	0.040	0.818	0.414
Organization	-0.053	0.056	-0.049	-0.948	0.344
Position	0.041	0.068	0.031	0.600	0.549
Length of service	0.019	0.058	0.017	0.321	0.748

R= 0.425   R Square= 0.381   F=3.544   Significance of F at 0.05

of *encourage the heart* and *challenge the process* came out to be statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. While the ß coefficient of 0.285 implies that *encourage the heart* positively affects the employees' affective commitment, the ß coefficient of -0.167 of *challenge the process* means employees' affective commitment would decrease given an increase in the extent of *challenge the process* implementation. With regards to the profile of employees, it can be seen that there was no personal factor that can predict organizational commitment of employees, because significance is more than 0.05.

4.2. The Effects of Collectivism and Five Leadership Practices on Continuance Commitment

The results in <Table 2> indicate the standard multiple regression analysis of collectivism, and five leadership practices and continuance commitment. The regression equation appears to be significant as indicated by the F value of 7.017 at $p < 0.05$. The R^2 value of 0.303 indicates that 30.3 percent of the variance in the dependent variable can be jointly explained by the independent variables.

<Table 2> Regression Analysis of Collectivism and Leadership Practices on Continuance Commitment

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	ß	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.424	0.203		11.945	0.000
Model the way	-0.077	0.063	-0.094	-1.217	0.224
Inspire a shared vision	-0.033	0.056	-0.044	-0.580	0.562
Challenge the process	0.122	0.072	0.142	1.708	0.088
Enable others to act	0.093	0.057	0.110	1.616	0.107
Encourage the heart	-0.086	0.069	-0.105	-1.252	0.211
Collectivism	**0.245**	**0.047**	**0.297**	**5.223**	**0.000**
Gender	0.056	0.059	0.049	0.950	0.343
Organization	-0.091	0.061	-0.081	-1.504	0.134
Position	0.118	0.074	0.086	1.594	0.112
Length of service	-0.029	0.063	-0.025	-0.461	0.645

R= .320   R Square= .303   F=7.017   Significance of F at 0.05

It can be recognized that none of the personal factors of employees affected organizational commitment. Similarly, none of

leadership practices were found to have an effect on organizational commitment. However, the results presented in table 15 reveal that collectivism, as a cultural orientation value emerged as statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. The unstandardized regression coefficient, $ß$ of 0.245 and the standardized $ß$ coefficient of 0.297 of the *collectivism* dimensions were both statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. This result implies that *collectivism* positively affects the employees' continuance commitment.

4.3. The Effects of Collectivism and Five Leadership Practices on Normative Commitment.

<Table 3> depicts the standard multiple regression analysis of collectivism as a cultural dimension, five leadership practices and normative commitment.

It can be seen from that data that the cultural value of *collectivism* and *encourage the heart* were discovered to statistically significant at $p=0.000<0.05$. The unstandardized regression coefficient, $ß$ of 0.177; 0.134 and the standardized $ß$ coefficient of 0.362; 2.75 respectively imply that *collectivism* and *encourage the heart* positively influence the employee normative commitment.

<Table 3> Regression Analysis of Collectivism and Leadership Practices on Normative Commitment

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	$ß$	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.333	0.113		20.564	0.000
Model the way	-0.006	0.035	-0.012	-0.160	0.873
Inspire a shared vision	0.005	0.032	0.012	0.166	0.868
Challenge the process	-0.038	0.040	-0.075	-0.961	0.337
Enable others to act	-0.036	0.032	-0.072	-1.131	0.259
Encourage the heart	**0.134**	**0.039**	**0.275**	**3.469**	**0.001**
Collectivism	**0.177**	**0.026**	**0.362**	**6.760**	**0.000**
Gender	-0.034	0.033	-0.049	-1.010	0.313
Organization	-0.041	0.034	-0.062	-1.209	0.227
Position	-0.001	-0.042	-0.011	-0.019	0.985
Length of service	-0.017	0.035	-0.024	-0.475	0.635

R= .453   R Square= .406   F=5.864   Significance of F at .05

The significance values (p values) for personal factors ranged from 0.227 to 0.985. So, it can be concluded that gender, organization, length of service and position turned out to have no impact on organizational commitment.

4.4. Employee Organizational Commitment

The findings reveal that bank staffs exhibited a moderate level of organizational commitment. It is can be inferred from the data that the employees experienced all three forms of commitment. However, their desire to work with the banks, their feeling of emotional attachment to their organizations, and their responsibility to their organization were not strong as expected. This is an important finding since commitment has been confirmed to correlate with a wide range of outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, job performance and job satisfaction.

Ⅴ. Discussion

The results clearly indicate that there is a relationship between collectivism and three components of organizational commitment, namely affective, continuance and normative commitment. First of all, the positive influence of collectivism at the individual level on affective commitment could be explained by the following arguments. In this study, the employees of the banks appear to be at the collectivist side and expressed a high collectivistic orientation. Influenced by a collectivist culture, the employees of this study tend to appreciate being part of a group, have a stronger striving for belongingness to a community, fulfill these emotional needs for attachment and develop a close relationship with their organization. Furthermore, as employees with a high collectivist orientation, they take an interest in group values and norms, adopt organizational values and regulations within the bank context, and link organizational commitment to personal gains. Therefore, these behaviors of the bank employees eventually have contributed to the development of their affective commitment to the organization. Based on the above arguments, it can be concluded that collectivism has a positive

relationship with employees' affective commitment.

With respect to the relationship between a cultural dimension of collectivism and continuance commitment, it can be seen that there are several explanations. As previously stated, continuance commitment refers to calculations, including costs, investments and payoffs. Recent investments or unattractive alternatives are important rationales that employees with continuance commitment consider when leaving the organization. It is argued that in this research employees appeared to be collectivistic and put an emphasis on close relationships with other people in the organization. They probably invested time and efforts to build and maintain intensive and satisfactory social relationships. These investments would be lost, and gains like status and security would be sacrificed, when changing the organization. Rebuilding a new adequate social framework in another company requires collectivistic employees to devote time and efforts, which as be considered as a cost. Moreover, employees with a collectivist orientation are willing to give up individual goals in order to make the group successful.

One possible explanation for the influence of collectivism on normative commitment is that in collectivistic societies, interpersonal relationships are regulated through norms and duties. In the case of organizational commitment, this entails moral obligations by the family or wider community to stay in an organization, regardless of personal feelings. As previously discussed, the bank staffs appear to exhibit a high degree of collectivism which is laden with cultural values of duties and obligations to the group. Their feelings of obligation and duty to stay in an organization, which are characteristics of normative commitment, result from the internalization of societies' values and beliefs. Having internalized and accepted group-related norms of moral duty, the employees of the banks feel more obligated to stay in an organization. The value of respecting commitment, responsibility, and reciprocity in collective culture creates more normative pressure for employees to share tasks with their group members and feel committed to remain in their organizations.

The results of regression analysis previously indicate that the

participants perceived the great extent of the leadership practice implementation. To put another way, the supervisors of the banks frequently engage in five leadership practices, including *model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart.* However, looking closer into each dimension of leadership practices, it can be seen that there is a positive correlation between two perceived leadership practices of managers and the subordinates' organizational commitment. In particular, the leadership practice of *encourage the heart* has been found to have a significantly positive influence on affective and normative commitment, whereas *challenge the process* has been found to have a negative relationship with affective commitment. The possible explanations for these findings are presented below.

As discussed in the previous section, the respondents perceive *encourage the heart* as the most outstanding leadership practice. The leaders' behaviors associated with the praise others for a job well done; creative rewards for contributions and public recognition of others are highly appreciated and supported by their employees. It can be inferred that the bank leaders of the study seem to understand their subordinates very well, knowing that the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts. The employees may work more efficiently if their efforts are appreciated by the supervisors. That's why the leaders regularly show appreciation for staffs' contributions and find creative ways to ensure that their contributions were noted. They do celebrations and rituals with authenticity and from the heart, so they can build a strong sense of collective identity and community that can draw people forward. In other words, by paying attention, offering encouragement, personalizing appreciation, and celebrating people's accomplishments publicly in group settings, these leaders create, stimulate and rekindle team spirit. Thus, employees feel that they are important and valuable assets of the organization. As a result, the employees feel employees more committed and obliged to the bank and put in more efforts for its success. Considering these arguments into consideration, the fact that the leadership practice of *encourage the heart* is positively related to affective and normative commitment may be easily understandable.

The finding surprisingly arrives at a significantly negative relationship, between the leadership practice of *challenge the process* and affective commitment of the staffs of Vietnamese commercial banks. That means, the subordinates' affective commitment decreases if the leaders engage more frequently in the practice *of challenge the process.* Although managers of three banks exhibited a high extent of engaging in the practice of *challenge the process*, it did result in the decline of affective commitment among subordinates. The explanation for this finding should be viewed in terms of the leaders' perspectives and employees' notions. On the part of the banks leaders, they frequently engage in the practice of *challenge the process by* searching opportunities to improve and get new products, processes, services, and systems adopted. Leaders know well that extraordinary outcomes cannot be achieved by keeping things unchanged. Therefore, these leaders always encourage their subordinate to think out of the box, and take the initiative in improvements. They also support their subordinates to accept the challenges in their works, including experiments, risks, and even failures.

On the part of employees, it can be seen that banks' employees always work in a highly competitive environment; they feel stressful all the time when fulfilling their tasks and responsibilities in the banks. Although the subordinates are encouraged to confront with challenges in innovative ways by their leaders, they cannot and do not like to work under challenges. Another reason may be due to the fact that Vietnamese culture is characterized by stability. Like many other Vietnamese people, the bank staffs prefer stability, so they do not want to think out of the box, accept the challenges in their works and take risks. Living in a country with a low level of social and economic development, the employees do not get used to a highly competitive workplace in which changes, experiments, and innovation are encouraged. It is argued that the high pressure of the working environment combined with the requirement of changes derived from leaders make the employees frightened and unconfident, thus leading to the decrease of affective commitment. There is an assumption that the employees of these commercial banks will feel stronger desire to stay with the workplace if they work in a stable environment. It is suggested that it will be better

if supervisors make sure that the extent of change isn't very large. They should generally approach change and innovation through incremental steps and small wins. Little accomplishments, when piled on top of each other, may build confidence. By so doing, they probably strengthen employees' affective commitment to the long-term future.

The results from the Regression Analysis show that there is no statistically significant relationship between five leadership practices and continuance commitment. As presented before, the supervisors' prevailing practices were model the way, enable others to act and encourage the heart. In particular, it is assumed that the leaders engaged in these desirable leadership practices with the aim to create favorable conditions for their subordinates. However, the employees did not seem to recognize the value of the positive conditions created by such leaders, might seek other opportunities to leave. This can be explained by the fact that Vietnamese tend to be practical and flexible. These characters have been formed in the light the rice-water civilization and the fight against the harsh natural phenomenon. Focusing on direct and short-term benefits, they might not see any benefits when working with their leaders who display such positive leadership behaviors. To put another way, bank employees did not notice that the cost of the desirable environment created by leaders would be lost if they decided to leave the organization. That's why managers of six commercial banks implemented to a high extent all leadership practices, it did not lead to continuance commitment among subordinates. Another argument is that the conceptual link between leadership practices and continuance commitment has been more complex and differed depending on the strength of the other two components that is affective and normative commitment. Taking into account the strength of these two components, it can be seen that the correlation between the leadership practices of *challenge the process and encourage the heart* and affective and normative commitment was weak ($0.3 < r < 0.5$). So, the zero-relationship between five leadership practices and continuance commitment is obvious. To sum up, the only one leadership practice of *encourage the heart* has been found to have a significantly positive influence on affective and

normative commitment. The leaders' engagement in *challenge the process* was believed to have a positive impact on affective commitment, turned out to have a negative effect. The remaining leadership practices, including *inspire a shared vision, enable others to act and model the way* do not affect three components of commitment. These findings are, to some extent, in contrast with most of literature review, which reveals that there is a positive link between five leadership practices and three components of organizational commitment.

Employees displayed a moderate level of commitment to the banks. This may be the explanation for the fact that personal factors came out to have no impact on organizational commitment. Whether the participants were in the state of being males or females; whether they were managers or staffs; whether they worked in state-owned and joint stock commercial banks for long time or short time did not make them show more commitment to their work place.

Ⅵ. Conclusions

The study has examined leadership practices of managers, personal profiles, collectivism and organizational commitment of employees working in six commercial banks of Vietnam. The major findings show bank managers, to a great extent, engaged in five leadership practices, including model the way, in spire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. Among these leadership practices, *enable others to act* and *encourage the heart* were the most outstanding practices. With regard to the employees' collectivism and organizational commitment, the finding indicates that employees working at Vietnamese commercial banks appeared to be at the collectivist side and expressed a high level of collectivism. However, they exhibited the average level of affective, continuance and normative commitment. It is suggested that Board of Management of three banks need to find out the reason why their employees were not highly committed to the banks. The leaders also need to think of the ways to retain employees and increase their commitment.

The only one leadership practice of *encourage the heart* has been found to have a significantly positive influence on affective and normative commitment. The leaders' engagement in *challenge the process* was believed to have a positive impact on affective commitment, turned out to have a negative effect. The remaining leadership practices, including inspire a shared vision, enable others to act and model the way did not affect three components of commitment. These findings are, to some extent, in contrast with most of literature review, which reveals that there is a positive link between five leadership practices and three components of organizational commitment.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests:

All authors have contributed equally to the paper. The authors declared that there were no conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship or the publication of this article.

References

Acar, A. Z. 2012. Organizational Culture, Leadership Styles and Organizational Commitment in Turkish Logistics Industry. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58(12): 217–226.

Alsharafi, H. and I. Rajiani. 2013. Leadership Practices and Talent Turnover: Study on Yemeni Organizations. *Business and Management Research*, 2(3): 60-67.

Blau, G. and K. Boal. 1989. 'Using job involvement and organizational commitment. interactively to predict turnover'. *Journal of Management*, 15(1): 115-127.

Cullen, J. B. and K. P. Parbotteeah. 2013. *Multinational management: A strategic approach* (6th ed.). South -Western Cengage Learning Publisher.

Dunham, R., J. Grube and M. Castaneda. 1994. Organizational commitment: the utility of an integrative definition. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(3): 370-380.

Hackett, R. D., P. Bycio and P. A. Hausdorf. 1994. Further assessments of Meyer and Helen's (1991), three-component

model of organizational commitment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79: 15-23.

Hofstede, G. 1984. *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hoftstede, G. 2010. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

House, R. J., P. J. Hanges, S. A. Ruiz-Quintanilla, P. W. Dorfman, M. Javidan, M. Dickson, V. Gupta and GLOBE. 1999. Cultural influences on leadership and organizations. *Advances in global leadership*, 1: 171-233. Stanford, CT: JAI Press.

IBM Corp. Released 2019. *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows*, Version 26.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp

Kouzes, J. M., and B. Z. Posner. 2012. *The leadership challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations (5th ed.)*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Le, A.K. 2013. Transformational leadership and trust on employee's organizational commitment in Vietnamese context. *Science Journal*, 4(32): 50-60. Ho Chi Minh City Open University.

Lok, P. and Z. P. Wang, B. Westwood and J Crawford. 2007. Antecedents of job satisfaction and organizational commitment and the mediating role of organizational subculture. *Working paper*, 1-41, Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Meyer, J. P. and N. J. Allen. 1987. Organizational commitment: Toward a three-component model. *Research Bulletin*, 660. The University Of Western Ontario, Department of Psychology, London.

Meyer, J.P., S. V. Paunonen, I. R. Gellaly, R. D. Goffin and N. D. Jackson. 1989. Organizational commitment and job performance: It's the nature of commitment that counts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 74: 152-156.

Meyer, J. P. and N. I. Allen. 1997. *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research and application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Meyer, J. P., and L. Herscovitch. 2001. Commitment in the workplace: Toward a general model'. *Humean Resource Management Review,* 11: 299–326.

Meyer, J. P., T. E. Becker and R. Van Dick. 2006. Social identities and commitment at work: Toward an integrative model. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27: 665-683.

Mitchell, J. 2013. *Leadership development: How to think and communicate as a leader*. Mitchell Leadership Consulting Publisher.

Mowday, R. T., R. M. Steers and L. W. Porter. 1979. The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14: 224-247.

Nguyen, N. T., N. K. Mai and V. P. Nguyen. 2014. Factors Affecting Employees' Organizational Commitment – A Study of Banking Staff in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. *Journal of Advanced Management Science*, 2 (1): 7-11.

Northouse, P. G. 2013. *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

PwC Vietnam. 2013. *The talent gap: A review of human capital in Vietnam's banks*. People and Change Team, PwC Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Retrieved from https://www.pwc.com/vn/en/publications/2013/. (Accessed June 15, 2017).

Sharifian, Farzad. 2017. *Advances in Cultural Linguistics*. Singapore: Springer.

Towers Watson. 2014. *Total rewards survey*. Towers Watson & Co., New York, NY. Retrieved from http://www.towerswatson.com. (Accessed December 30, 2017).

Triandis, H. C. 1995. *Individualism and Collectivism*. Boulder, Co: Westview Press.

Vincent, C and L. Candy. 2014. An Integrative Framework for Customizations on Satisfaction: The Case of an Online Jewelry Business in China. *Journal of Service Science and Management*, 7(2): 165-181.

Ramayana Retellings in Southeast Asia:
Ravana and Hanuman in Popular Culture, Case study in Thailand and Vietnam

Nguyen Thi Tam Anh*, Nguyen Duy Doai**

[*Abstract*]

The Ramayana is a very popular epic in Southeast Asia. It is the story of King Rama who must save his kidnapped wife, Sita. After Sita was abducted by the Demon King Ravana (Tosakanth) and taken to Lanka, Rama and his brother rescued her with the help of the monkey warriors, especially with the help of the Monkey King Hanuman. Along the way, the epic teaches Hindu life lessons. Today The Ramayana is told and retold through literature, theatre, orally, in movies, and is referenced in many other forms of popular culture. Nowadays, in Thailand, Ravana and Hanuman deconstruct the role of divine and become folk deities that also find their places in calendar art, advertising and stamps, etc. And in Vietnam, Ravana and Hanuman have become the two figures that can't be absent from Southern Vietnam Khmer ceremonies. In this article, our aim is to show how Ravana and Hanuman became symbols of popular culture (case studies in Thailand and Vietnam). The data provided in this article is drawn from field surveys with reliable reference resources.

Keywords: Hanuman, Khmer Vietnam, popular culture, Ravana, Thailand.

----

 * Professor, Ho Chi Minh City Open University, Vietnam, anh.ntt@ou.edu.vn.
** Professor, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, HCMC, Vietnam. nguyenduydoai@gmail.com.

Ⅰ. Introduction

Southeast Asian cultures have as a key characteristic, a "unity in diversity" - a cultural aspect mixed with national and regional characteristics created through the social and cultural exchanges of natives and migrants.

One of the creations with the widest impact on culture and society across all Southeast Asian countries is the Ramayana epic. This is one of the oldest and most famous epics in the literary marvels of Indian culture. The Ramayana composed by the sage Valmiki is one of the greatest epics of the Sanskrit language and is dated between 500 B.C.E to 300 A.D (Shwetanshu Bhushan 2009: 8). There are many other versions of the epic in many regional languages found in South Asia. It is omnipresent, found in art, culture, literature, ethics, festivals and ceremonies (Dhar, A 2014: 1). Ramayana has had very wide impact upon culture and society across Southeast Asia. Its influence has been expressed in various artistic fields spanning from literature to performing arts, from architecture to sculpture, and even in religion, customs. etc.

It is in Cambodia that the earliest versions of the Ramayana can be found. The Khmer version of the Ramayana is called Reamker. The Angkor Wat temple belong to the 12th or 13th century also has several bas-reliefs which are based on the episodes of the Ramayana (Santosh N. Desai 1970: 10).

In Thailand, although the Ramayanic influence on this country can be traced back as far as the 13th century, it is, nevertheless, not until the beginning of the Rattanakosin Period (about 1781 A.D.) that the glory of Rama took expression into epic poems (Swami Satyananda Puri 1998: (6)).

In this article, we want to mention two of Ramayana's characters, Ravana and Hanuman, representing popular culture in Thai culture and Vietnamese culture.

We apply the analytical - synthesis method together with ethnographic research to collect reliable data sources. However, we spend more time in Southern Vietnam. Here, we did a lot to

research many times in 2005, 2008, 2012, 2016 in areas where Khmer communities live such as Tra Vinh province (Tra Cu district and Chau Thanh district) and Soc Trang province (Soc Trang Commune and My Tu District (observations and interviews were also applied in these field trip)). In Thailand, we visited Bangkok in 2006 and 2015 and conducted observations at the Wat Phra Kaew. Since this article is a first step, there are countless shortcomings. We will continue to improve in future studies.

Ⅱ. The term "Popular Culture"

Based on the etymology of "popular" as defined by Raymond Williams, we can speak of four corresponding characteristics of popular culture (Storey 2009: 5).

(1) well-liked by many people;
(2) actually made by the people for themselves;
(3) inferior kinds of works;
(4) work deliberately setting out to win favor with the people.

The "culture"[1] is a concept studied and debated a lot by scholars. In this article, we adopted the term "culture" according to Ray Brownie's classification (Jack Nachbar and Kevin Lause 1992: 16), culture can be classified into the following three types:

Folk Culture　　　　*Popular Culture*　　　　*Elite Culture*

However, in reality, these three types of culture do not have boundaries, they interfere with and transform one another; and these are the three different cultural types of culture.

• Folk culture (Folklore) refers to the culture of formation, development, it is directly transferred from generation to generation among ordinary people familiar with each other. Folk culture formed and developed, although there developed and without being lead by financial profit. The origins of folk culture are to be found in the unfulfilled needs by the

---

[1] See Hutnyk (2006: 351−358) for a brief overview of culture.

dominant culture. Folk culture belongs not only to traditional societies (rural, farmers, agriculture) but is also found in modern societies.

- Elite culture refers to the form of culture that requires training for enjoyment, in which "passionate artisans" are cultivated beings who are considered as elite cultural distinctions. However, *elite culture* should not be considered as the peak culture and superior to other cultural types.

- Popular culture (mass culture) strives to erase the boundary between folk culture and elite culture. When mass culture is associated with industry then it is considered as commercialized.

In addition, some other researchers also give their definition of the term "popular culture", for example, Barry Brummett (1994: 21) considers pop culture as*: "those systems or artifacts that most people share and that most people know about".*

Ⅲ. Ravana and Hanuman in popular culture in Thailand

Thailand is often called the "Land of Smiles", not only because visitors love its natural beauty and historical riches, but also because of the country's friendly people and fascinating culture. The main feature of Thai religious and cultural life is cultural adaptation. The Thais have mixed elements of animism with Brahmanism and Buddhism. In this regard, we would like to note that two figures of the Ramayana that feature in the life of the Thai people are *Ravana* and *Hanuman.*

Ramakian is the Thai version of the Indian Ramayana epic, also known as Ramakirti. According to the Indian legend, the person who composed Ramayana in the its earliest form was Valmiki; the epic consisted of consisting of 24,000 double verses (sloka). However, the Thai version of the Ramakian (Ramakirti) came from the South Indian Ramayana versions rather than the Sanskrit version of Valmiki. Ramakian (Ramakirti) also contains indigenous Thai

religious values. King Rama I of the Chakri Dynasty (1782-1809) was the first to introduce Ramakirti into Thai art (Swami Satyananda Puri 1998: 5-8).

It was also in the Ramakian version of Thailand that the two main characters, Ravana and Hanuman, appeared more prominently. Ravana was renamed as Thotsakan, whereas the name of Hanuman was kept intact. The two figures became the dominant symbols in sculpture, painting and performance in the religious beliefs of the people in the country (Thailand). Furthermore, Ravana and Hanuman have become figures in popular culture more generally.

Thai legends inform us that Thotsakan is a character from the epics, who fell in love with Sida (Sita), wife of Phra Rama. Thotsakan kidnaps Sida, leading to a huge war between demons and humans. Thotsakan is the king of demons with ten heads, and with his 20 arms possesses innumerable weapons and stoutly believes in his invincibility. Further, Phra Rama is revered as an incarnation of Phra Narai (Vishnu), and he is the son of King Tosarot of Ayodhya.

The Ramakian story clearly shows the struggle between Good and Evil. Good and Evil are shown in the images of Phra Rama and Thotsakan. The story also shows the philosophy of dharma (Duty) in the action of Phra Rama - a prince who left the palace in a miserable forest yet still lived a life full of dharma. The issue of Honor and Love was also highlighted at the end of the work, when Phra Rama doubted the fidelity of his wife, Sita. Rama asks his brother - Phra Lak to lead Sita into the forest and kill her, but the sword falls from his hand and turns into a garland around her neck. Therefore, Phra Lak returned to the palace and left Sita to wander in the forest. After that, Sita once again refused to go back to the palace and asked for the help of Thao Virunal, king of the underground world. Only after Phra Rama had overcome all the challenges, she returned with Phra Rama to reign in Ayodhya (Swami Satyananda Puri 1998: 120-123; Pueandek Publishing Co. Ltd.: 92, 102).

We can recognize Hanuman and Ravana in the Ramakian character lines:

- The Prince's line (with Phra Rama as the representative) represents goodness, heroic spirit, talent and virtue. The characters in this line include the prince and princess depicting the beauty and goodness that exists in society as an ideal that people desire. In this line, we also have Monkey (Hanuman as the representative) signifying courage and loyalty, intelligence and strategy. Monkeys are considered brave yet cunning, ready to use tricks if necessary. Within the spirit of Indian religion in the theme of "unity between opposites", the Monkey character line is the bridge to show that: in order to conquer evil, sometimes we need evil, and using evilness to fight for goodness.

- The Demon (Yak) line (Thotsakan as the representative) denotes evil, the baddie that exists in nature and society. These are the characters that demons are demonic, huge and fierce, often causing adversity for others. The battle between the Prince and Yak lineage often represents conflicts, confrontation between the Good and the Evil, between the righteous and the unrighteous. Crucial to the story of the Ramakian, is that it still shows people's will and belief in the victory of truth even though the lives of Good and Evil are always intertwined.

Hanuman is the Hindu mythical Monkey God in the time of Rama, invincible and has much greater power than humans, he has many extraordinary abilities. In Thai culture, Hanuman leads an army of monkeys to destroy evil.

Thotsakan and Hanuman exerted an important influence upon Thai art. The traditional dance theater - Khon in which is depicted the epic Ramakian and excerpts of the war between Rama and Thotsakan - who kidnapped his wife, has always been considered one of the most immortal performances. In this fight, Hanuman is Phra Rama's right-hand man, so the Hanuman character segments are also very impressive and appealing to the audience. Khon theater is considered as a cultural heritage of the Thai people, in which, the art of dance and masks are the two most important factors (Clontz 2014: 5).

In the strategy of developing tourism and promoting the
country's art and culture, Thailand has been very successful in
choosing the traditional Khon stage. Because in Khon, the mask is
a very important part. The characters of the Ramakian epic with the
lines of Demons and Monkeys are extremely diverse with different
styles, colors, and patterns. Artisans in the process of making Khon
masks encounter many taboos and solemn rituals. What should be
noted is that the process of tourism promotion has also brought
about a spatial transformation in the appearance of Khon masks.
The character masks are all stepped from the traditional elite stage
to become very meticulously crafted, tourist products with various
materials from papier-mâché to wood; sizes are also diverse to meet
the needs of travelers. It can be said that the epic characters in this
way not only became extremely close to the Thai people but also
very impressive to foreign visitors. It seems that a good way to
preserve and promote Thai cultural and artistic heritage.

<Figure 1> Thotsakan in Wat Phra Kaew, Thailand
Source: Photo by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

In Thailand, especially in Wat Phra Kaew (Temple of the Emerald Buddha) located in the Royal Palace in Bangkok, there are also images drawn from the epic Ramakien. At the two sides of the gates are two giant protectors. Those are the demon characters - Yak. These characters are shaped in a very sophisticated way with bright colors, but still show the ferocity and majesty of a *Dharmapala* (Dharma protector, doorkeeper). According to our statistics through fieldwork, there are 12 of them, including Thotsakan <Figure 1>.

Thai culture has harmonized all the indigenous cultural elements into Buddhism, and at the same time, combined elements of Brahmanism, turning Brahman deities into *Dharmapala* (*Dvarapala*) and deities maintain the direction (*Dipalaka*) in the Buddhist temple. The reconciliation and integration of these elements has played an important role for Buddhism to keep its status until today as the state religion in Thailand.

<Figure 2>Thotsakan on stamp
Source: Collected by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

<Figure 3> Thotsakan on T-shirt
Source: https://fineartamerica.com
/shop/kids+tshirts/ravana

<Figure 4> Thotsakan on watch
Source: https://www.businesstr
aveller.com/features/tradition-in
-a-timepiece/

Furthermore, the characters of Thotsakan and Hanuman in Khon have become extremely popular and familiar when commercialized as souvenirs available in various shops and supermarkets, souvenir shops across the country and in diverse forms of products such as stamps <Figure 2>, T-shirts <Figure 3>, watches <Figure 4>, paintings, skincare masks, oils, key chains, etc. All of these have made Thai art become even more popular. In this way, Thai artisans will find an output for commercialized products, whereby they are still able to maintain and preserve their traditional occupations.

<Figure 5> Hanuman Thai Tatoo
Source: http://sakyantmagicalthaitattoo.com/sak-yant-magical-thai-tattoo-history-5/

In Suvarnabhumi airport, there is also a huge golden statue with red and green patterned borders (the caption below the statue is Tosakanth - another name for Thotsakan). The presence of the enormous guardians here means that you can be assured of a safe journey. In particular, Hanuman became a sacred symbol in Thai tattoo art (Sak Yants). There are many variants of Sak Yants with Hanuman <Figure 5>. Hanuman's image has been used to give people a sense of protection from danger as well as becoming fearless in the face of adversity. A Hanuman tattoo on the body is believed by Thai people to increase confidence and help people to focus and boost their determination when doing something.

<Figure 6> Hanuman in Khon masks
Source: Photo by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

<Figure 7> Thotsakan in Khon masks
Source: Photo by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

In general, the Thai tourism industry can promote and introduce images like Thotsakan and Hanuman (or any Khon mask) through handmade products <Figure 6><Figure 7>. During our field trips in Thailand, we found that there are many small and convenient handicraft products such as Thotsakan and Hanuman masks made of silver, paper, etc... being sold as souvenirs. These are motifs representing a unique art form, and tourists often prefer these motifs. We think this is a very effective way to introduce national culture. Tourists may not know whether it is a good character or a devil or a god or a person but will be fascinated by the popularity, which will gradually increase their interest and attention towards the local culture.

Ⅳ. Ravana and Hanuman in popular culture in Vietnam

In Vietnam, Ravana and Hanuman characters are known primarily in the cultural life of the Khmer community in the Southern region. As mentioned above, Reamker is the Khmer version of the Ramayana epic. In this version of Reamker, the character Ravana changed its name to Krong Reap while the monkey character Hanuman was still known as Hanuman or Haknuman. In Cambodia, Krong Reap and Hanuman are two important figures in the epic Reamker performed on the Royal stage of elite culture. On the other hand, in South Vietnam, these two characters became popular when associated with community activities. The images of Krong Reap and Hanuman were portrayed by the Khmer community through two main types of performances: *Robam show* and *Rom Yak group.*

Robam is a form of classical theater. Its plots are inspired by the subjects of Buddhism and Brahmanism, and most significantly, Ramayana. In Robam, dance is the main performing language, therefore, Robam is also called "dance drama". We speculate that Robam has originates from an ancient type of classical-palace theater of Cambodia. The classical form of Cambodian theater is called Lakhol. According to the author Pich Tum Kravel, as noted in his book *Khmer Mask Theater* (2000: 22-26) and in *Khmer Dances* (2001: 29), there are 3 forms of Lakhol:

• *Lakhol Kbach Boran:* the ancient form, with all female actors play the role of "rom"- dance. For example, the role of Preah Ream, Preah Leak are male roles but are performed by females. These actors can play the Reamker drama and also other dramas such as Preah Chinavong, Tupsangwa, Preah Waysandor, etc.

• *Lakhol S'romonl:* this is a form of Spek Thom (shadow puppet) - only used to perform the story of Reamker.

• *Lakhol Khol:* this is Lakhol wearing masks but the actors are all male (Lakhol Bros) and only play the story of Reamker.

Among the above forms of theater, only Lakhol Khol is fairly close to Robam because this is the only form of performance in which masks are used. The type of Lakhol Khol that Khmer people still performed today is called Lakhol Reamker by some people in Battambang, whereas the Khmer people in Kampuchea Krom (Southern Vietnam) call it as Lakhol Yak Rom or Robam. If Lakhol Khol was the only Reamker, Robam has expanded to many other ancient topics and stories such as Preah Chinnavong, Tupsangva, etc. Besides, in Robam, the role of Preah Ream, Preah Leak, and King are male roles but are performed by females. In this respect, Robam is like Lakhol Kbach Boran.

Also, according to author Pich Tum Kravel, these documents agree on the characteristics of Lakhol Khol as follows: (2000: 38)

• Drama dialogue is expressed through poetry, rhyming literature;

• Actors are all male, even female roles are played by males;

• All roles, from humans such as Preah Ream and Preah Leak to Monkey (svar), Demon (yak) require masks. Only one role performed by female does not require wearing a mask but the actor has to put on heavy makeup, implicating to the audience that she is wearing a mask;

• All roles are not allowed to speak or sing, but allowed to

act according to the narratives read aloud from backstage. Except for two roles, Eysay and the clown are permitted to speak when acting to trigger laughs from the audience;

• Reamker should only be performed at certain times, and the best time to perform in a year is during the New Year ceremony (Chol Chnam Thmay) to lure away evil spirits, bad omens of the past year and to welcome goodness and fortune in the coming year. Besides this, Reamker is also performed in the Rainmaking ceremony (Pithi sum tuk plia) when the country suffers from long draughts, or it may be performed at big events such as the King's birthday;

• Before performing perfomers must carry out a formal prayer for the Ancestors.

Remarkably, the Robam stage also bears quite a lot of these characteristics. According to ancient regulations, Lakhol Khol only has male actors (also known as Lakhol Bros) but in Robam stage, we find both male and female actors. Significantly, in Robam most of the roles are played by women, except the masked roles and that of clown. Perhaps, this is also developed and altered over a long period, but the general form of the Robam is still officially coming from the Royal dance (Lakhol Loung).

Through many ups and downs, the Royal dance artists scattered all over the region to continue performing and passing on the classic art forms. The Robam theater, which is a part of the art, has been "localized" by artisans in Southern Vietnam as a public art form preserved until today.

In most cases, the Robam Kru in Southern Vietnam does not dare to claim that they know the Reamker story well. Therefore, this leads to countless variations in the storyline. The Khmer has the phrase "*as long as the Reamker*" to indicate the massiveness and the length of this story. Later, the Robam Kru say they do not remember all the episodes in the Reamker, so they accidentally attached this episode to the tail of another episode, yet thanks to the talents of Khmer artisans, the audiences still find it very interesting and reasonable.

According to earlier research (Nguyễn Thị Tâm Anh 2015) on the traditional arts of the Khmer, Robam is also divided into two main protagonists who represent the two types of people in society: the protagonist (representing the good side as the king, the prince, Hanuman and his soldiers) and the antagonist (representing the demon side that is typical of the Yak and the soldiers of the Yak). There are always Yaks playing the role of antagonists in most dramas. They represent the dark and ambitious forces. "*Killing Yak*" became the main motif in the Khmer stage as well as in the cultural life of the Southern Khmer people.

Moreover, the Robam show is also a ceremonial stage. Robam performance reflects the dreams and beliefs of the Khmer people and to expel the evil spirits as well. The story tells that in the past a disturbing event happened in their village, they invited the Robam group to perform and after the main Yak in the play passed away, it was considered that ghosts and evils were destroyed. From then on, the village was peaceful once again. Or as another story says, "*Robam performance is to pray for rain, against drought and disease*"[2] because the Robam performance usually took place in the dry season, during which there will often be drought and disease. Khmer people believes that Robam can bring peace to their village.

In the faith of the Khmer, Yak (representing the demon that is typically Krong Reap and Krong Reap's soldiers) is the soul of Robam. Therefore, the Khmer community created a more popular performance type of Robam, the Rom Yak group <Figure 8>. This dance group can perform whenever the community has important festivals and ceremonies. Khmer festivals are often associated with ancient wet-rice agriculture. Since the majority of Khmer people are farmers, the festival is usually held at the end of the season, or when harvesting and waiting for the next season.

---

[2] This is a motif in Ramayana: Ravana sent his brother, Kumbhakar, across the river of the Milky Way in the sky, not pouring water on the ground. Monkey troopers must face drought and die a lot.

<Figure 8> Monks and The Yak group dance, Tra Cu district, Tra Vinh province, Vietnam
Source: Photo by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

The festival plays a very important role in the life of the Khmer, dominating the spiritual and material activities and occupying a great amount of time. The festival is an occasion for Khmer people to praying God for blessings.

Khmer festivals entail the following characteristics:

• Deeply influenced by religion (heavily imprinted by Brahmanism and Theravada Buddhism). Festivals are often organized according to Buddhist rituals, expressed through participation, and place importance on the role of the monks. The festival is usually held at the temple with rituals such as chanting prayers, blessings, offering rice to monks, presenting offerings to the temple.

• Solemn spirituality. It is not only an opportunity for Khmer people to play but also an opportunity for them to bless their loved ones, and for themselves. Though poor, the Khmer are still prepared offerings for the Buddha through monks or

come to the temple to cook rice or to help with the festivals.

• The rituals in festivals are often associated with the legends of Buddhism, so they are preserved and passed on to their descendants by the Khmer, such as the ceremony of building sandy mountains, boat racing ceremonies, rice-laying ceremony, etc.

• Offerings also play an important role, in expressing the meaning and content of the ceremonies. For example, the ceremony of worshiping the moon (Ok Om Bok) must have flat nuggets, the ceremony of offering monk's clothes (Kathan Nah Tean) must have clothes, the Retreat ceremony (Vassāvāsa) should have towels, candles, rainwater, etc. In addition, the Khmer people also have special offerings such as sla-thor, which is an offering made of banana trees, flowers and betel nuts to bring to the temple.

• The festival usually lasts all night, for many days at the temple yard. During this period, the temple is very busy, crowded with Buddhists.

In the great festivals of the Khmer people, the role of the Yak figure is to some extent expressed through performing. Through the field survey and interviews with Khmer residents in Tra Vinh province, we acknowledge the presence of the Yak in Chol Chnam Thmay (New Year) and Ok Om Bok festival, two of the largest and most important festivals of the year in the Khmer calendar. In addition to the above mundane festivals, we also observe the religious rituals of the year in Tra Vinh province and recognize that in the Kathan Nah Tean there is also a dance performance of *Rom Yak group.*

During these occasions, a group of people wearing masks of Yak (Ravana), Monkey (Hanuman), Mother Ping pouy (an elderly woman who acts as an intermediary between the two characters, Yak and Monkey), and the general riding a horse, are seen to be dancing and screaming to express the faith of Khmer people in Buddhism. They believe that goodness always wins and overcomes evil.

<Figure 9> The Yak dance in Maha Sangkran, Tra Vinh province, Vietnam
Source: Photo by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

On the first day of Chol Chnam Thmay, after washing, Khmer residents go to the temple with incense sticks and gifts to join in the new Maha Sangkran procession. Under the direction of an Acha, people stand in line and go around the Great Hall three times to celebrate the New Year. After the ceremony at the temple, the Sangkran procession leaves the temple and head to every house in the hamlet and commune. Heading the procession is an orchestra, playing along the group of people wearing masks of the Yak, the Monkey, Mother Ping pouy, and the general riding on a horse <Figure 9>. They just walk and dance. Yak perform fierce and ruthless movements. He scares children and people and destroys their house. Then, the Monkey comes to stop the Yak. They fight each other until the situation became critical, when the mother Ping pouy comes, dissuades, and mediates between them. The general following her has a minor role, mainly to create a joyful and lively atmosphere during the festival. Then, the monks come to each house and recite the sutra to bless all the families in the hamlet and drive away from the Yak. After the Maha Sangkran procession, people gather at the temple to listen to the monk's sermon.

<Figure 10> The Yak vs. Haknuman, Tra Vinh province, Vietnam
Source: Photo by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

The Yak figure here means a symbol of evil or bad luck. The way that the Yak comes to a family and then destroys or teases people symbolizes the unlucky and unwanted things that happened to the family in the previous year. The motif of the Monkey who comes and drives away the Yak in a symbolic welcoming of righteousness and good things, and of chasing away bad and evil things from the past year so as to celebrate a new, peaceful and happy year. The two characters of Yak and the Monkey in the New Year's Celebration performance represent the "*ring out the old, ring in the new*" of the Southern Khmer people. <Figure 10>

Kathan Nah Tean is conducted during the month that runs from September 16th to October 15th of the lunar calendar. Buddhists will choose one of those 29 days to celebrate the "*giving monk's clothes*" for the temple monks in their area. However, each pagoda can only celebrate this ceremony once a year.

Rom Yak groups are also often present on this day. The dancers escort the plants that people brought from the house to the temple. They also wear masks, costumes and weapons. The Yak image here represents the demon who tries to obstruct the followers from coming to the temple to give offerings, but cannot hinder the sincerity of everybody. <Figure 11>

<Figure 11> The Yak soldiers is fighting in the Kathina, Tra Vinh province, Vietnam
Source: Photo by Nguyen Thi Tam Anh

In addition, in the past, when a family member left home to become a monk, on their way heading to the temple for the ceremony there would be many relatives and family members following and bringing offerings. At that time, leading the group and playing music would be the the Phlêng Pinpeat orchestra, followed by the group of people wearing masks of the Yak, the Monkey, and Mother Ping pouy who walk and dance. The Yak holds a stick to fight the Monkey and blocks the way to the pagoda for the ceremony. However, the Yak finally often failed. It is an image that symbolizes the group of Mara's troops when they obstructed Buddha Shakyamuni.

Thus, in this case, the image of the Yak symbolizes the demonic force that is destructive and obstructs people from doing good things. In other words, Yak is a symbol of evil. But in the end, these bad things are annihilated by righteousness and subjected to the tolerance of Buddhism. The Yak figure wore the yellow mask and thus symbolizes that the bad and evil succumbed to the

Buddha to become an army to protect the Dharma. The artisans use yellow - the ochre color of the robes, to make masks, which shows the transformation of Yak's character. His face still bears fierce features such as slanted eyes, big mouth and sharp fangs but the color yellow on the mask helps us to distinguish good from the evil. This is a factor that we are very interested in when observing the ritual. Thereby, it shows the creativity and tolerance of Khmer residents. Moreover, it also affirms the faith and influence of Buddhism on the Southern Khmer community in Vietnam.

In festivals, the form of *Rom Yak group* is heavily influenced by religion. The agricultural Khmer residents, in their festivals, often use the image of Yak through dance to express their desire to chase away evil and darkness; and welcome good luck and peace. Many secular and religious ceremonies in Khmer Buddhism also have an image of Yak, almost all of which imply the hidden meaning of goodness beating evil and justice beating cruelty.

In terms of sacredness, it can be said that Yak-Hanuman are religious figures, but the way it is expressed in folk beliefs and festivals is very intimate and simple in order to express the belief of the rule of *cause – effect* and *good – evil*.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

Ravana and Hanuman are symbols that show that Thai and Khmer are influenced by Indian culture but localized with indigenous beliefs. The art of Southeast Asia is mainly taken from Brahman mythology and Buddhism.

In fine arts, Ravana and Hanuman are motifs to express the endless creativity of artisans across Southeast Asia. In terms of sacredness, Ravana and Hanuman can be recognized as religious figures. But these characters show amazing vitality when going from legend to popular culture. It shows a transition of faith in the religious and mystical lands of Southeast Asia.

References

Bhushan, Shwetanshu. 2009. Samskaras in the Sutras and the Ramayana: A comparative study. PhD Thesis. Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.

Brummett, Barry. 1994. *Rhetoric in Popular Culture*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Clontz, Jack M. 2014. *Khon Mask - Thailand's Heritage*. Bangkok. Thailand: Museum of Contemporary Art.

Dhar, A. 2014. The Ramayana and Sita in Films and Popular Media: The Repositioning of a Globalised Version. *The Return of the Epic Film: Genre, Aesthetics and History in the 21st Century.* A. Elliot, ed. 201-215. UK: Edinburgh University Press.

Đỗ, Thu Hà. 2002. *Vấn đề bản địa hoá sử thi Ramayana Ấn Độ tại một số nước Đông Nam Á (Localization of Indian epic Ramayana in some Southeast Asian countries).* Hanoi: Van hoa Thong tin publisher.

Hutnyk, John. 2006. Culture. *Theory, Culture & Society,* 23(2–3): 351–358.

Lucas, David M. and Jarrett, Charles W. 2014. The Yak of Thailand: Folk Icons Transcending Culture, Religion, and Media. *International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering,* 8(11): 35-63.

Nachbar, Jack and Kevin Lause. 1992. *Popular Culture - an introductory text.* Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.

Nguyễn, Thị Tâm Anh. 2015. *Hình tượng Chằn (Yak) trong văn hoá Khmer Nam Bộ (Yak symbol in Khmer culture in Southern Vietnam).* Vietnam: Van hoa Dan toc Publisher.

Puri, Swami Satyananda (narrated). 1998. *The Ramakirti (Ramakien) The Thai version of the Ramayana.* Bangkok: Printed by Printing House of Thammasat University.

Rama 1. 2003. *The Story of Ramakian – From the Mural Paintings along the Galleries of the Temple of the Emerald Buddha.* (Illustrated Book for Teaching Aid Manual). Thailand: Pueandek Publishing Co., Ltd.

Santosh N. Desai. 1970. Ramayana - An Instrument of Historical Contact and Cultural Transmission between India and Asia.

*The Journal of Asian Studies,*30(1): 5-20.

Schechner, Richard. 2004. *Performance Theory*. London and New York: Published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library.

Storey, John. 2009. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture - An Introduction (Fifth Edition)*. New York: Routledge.

Tum Kravel, Pich. 2000. *Khmer Mask Theater*. Phnom Penh: Toyota Foundation.

_____. 2001. *Khmer Dances*. Phnom Penh: Toyota Foundation.

Documents of The Nguyen Dynasty's Mission to China in 1883:
The Origins and Historical Values*

Nguyen Thi Thu Thuy**

[*Abstract*]

In 1882, after the French defeated Tonkin for the second time, the Nguyen Dynasty led by King Tự Đức 嗣德 appointed Phạm Thận Duật 范慎遹 and Nguyễn Thuật 阮述 as envoys to the Qing Dynasty to seek the Chinese's help to deal with the French invasion. The trip's information from 1883 such as the schedule, the content, the discussion, and the progress was specifically reflected in the two envoys' diaries, including "Notes of Voyage to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu" 建福元年如清日程 (Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật), "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" 往津日记 (Nguyễn Thuật). This article presents the origin of these documents and their historical values in order to provide insights into the study of diplomatic relations between the Nguyen Dynasty and the Qing Dynasty in the late 19th century through the 1883 mission.

Keywords: Phạm Thận Duật, Nguyễn Thuật, Notes of Voyage to Qing, Notes of Voyage to Tianjin, Sino-Vietnamese Relationship

---

Ⅰ. Introduction

In 1882, after the French defeated Tonkin for the second time, Li Hongchang 李鴻章 invited 2‐3 Vietnamese to visit Tianjin to discuss the situation in Vietnam and to discuss about the way to deal with France. King Tự Đức 嗣德 appointed Phạm Thận Duật 范慎遹 as the chief envoy and Nguyễn Thuật 阮述 as an assisting envoy on the mission to China with an aim to seek Chinese help to deal with the French's colonial invasion. The schedule as well as the work content and the developments of the embassy trip in 1883 were specifically reflected in the two envoys' diaries: "Notes of Voyaye to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu" (NVQDFYJ) (Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật), "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" (NVT) (Nguyễn Thuật). The origin and the content of the *NVT* have been presented in the studies of some Chinese scholars such as Chen Chingho 陈荆和, Gong Min 龚敏, Wang Zhiqiang 王志强, etc.

The article "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin by Nguyễn Thuật: the guide of academic connection through the survey of the archives at Rao Zongyi, the University of Hong Kong and the letters between Rao Zongyi and Paul Demiéville" of Gong Min (2011) can be considered as an elaborate and clear study representing work on the process of collecting and publishing NVT in Hong Kong. The author's use of the term "academic predestination" here implies that for more than half of the twentieth century, after being collected and stored in three different places (Vietnam, France and Hong Kong), the NVT were preserved, annotated and published by three famous Sinologists. Thanks to that, NVT was able to reach researchers outside of Vietnam.

Regarding the article "A Review of "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" an Its Historical Value" Wang (2010: 72) affirms:

> The work "*NVT* is a valuable cultural document as it provides new perspectives in the research on the history of China - Vietnam relations in modern times and historical bases for in-depth research on the activities of the Chinese boat Zhaoshang Department along with materials studying Vietnamese - Chinese cultural exchanges. The fact that Nguyễn Thuật went to the Qing dynasty was mentioned in the *NVT*, and it reflected Chinese - Vietnamese relationship, from

form to content. The content being that of the "suzerain-vassal 宗藩" relationship between the two countries; particularly, it has clearly shown that the feudal dynasties of Vietnam hoped to break the traditional tributary structure, so it wanted to find out the world's opinion to get rid of the current state bondage.

In the work "Comparison of "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" and "Notes of Voyaye to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu", Wang (2012: 59) also affirms that:

> In terms of name, although NVT is private (while NVQDFYJ is official, which was written by two people and narrated the tasks), it has richer content than NVQDFYJ, with more cultural and historical values, and receives more interest and research by international scholars. Of course, if both these books can be combined, they will have the effect of supplementing and correcting one another on historical events in the Chinese-Vietnamese relations in modern times.

It can be said that the articles of Wang Zhiqiang are worth referencing, contributing to the reader's further understanding about the historical values and the influence of NVT in terms of researching the Chinese – Vietnamese relations in late nineteenth century. However, the detailed research of these two diaries as a source of historical information for the learning of the trip in 1883 has not been systematically mentioned. Based on the inherited research achievements of previous scholars, this article presents documents about the mission trip in 1883 by the Vietnamese envoys. The article further affirms the multifaceted value of NVQDFYJ and NVT; in terms of history, place, literature, and language; in the research literature regarding the mission trip in particular and Vietnamese - Chinese relations in modern times in general; by presenting the historical values and illustration of some specific contents in the two diaries about the journey taken by the mission envoys, about the content and results of the mission trip, about the cultural exchange between Vietnam and China and Japan. This article also provides insights for the study of diplomatic relations between the Nguyen Dynasty and the Qing Dynasty particularly and some historical issues of Vietnam and China in the

late nineteenth century broadly.

Ⅱ. Documentation and circulation process

There are two copies of NVQDFYJ. The first one, with 126 pages containing the seal of the Library of French School of the Far East (École française d'Extrême‐Orient), is archived at the Institute of Sino‐Nôm 漢喃 Studies, symbolized A929, and bears the title of "Notes of Voyage to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu" 建福元年如清日程 on the cover. The second one is marked A1471 and has the title "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" 往使天津日記 on the cover, with a total of 112 pages. Although the difference is 14 pages, the main content of the two copies is the same, and only the font size is different. In the A929 copy, the Appendix also has three schematic maps of Tianjin 天津, Hong Kong 香港, and Shanghai Concession 上海租界, so the number of pages is a little higher.

In China, *NVQDFYJ* is known as a work in the Vietnamese works "Yuenan Hanwen Yanxing wenxian jicheng" 越南漢文燕行文獻集成 (including 25 volumes that Fudan University Press published in 2010) compiled by the National Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies 復旦大學文史研究院 in cooperation with Institute of Sino‐Nôm Studies (collected by Vietnam). In this book, *NVQDFYJ* was photocopied from the A929 copy‐"Notes of Voyaye to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu" 建福元年如清日程 (referred to as "Notes of Voyage to Qing Dynasty" 如清日程). Therefore, in China, this diary has been circulated with the popular name of "Notes of Voyage to Qing Dynasty" 如清日程 or "Notes of Voyage to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu" 建福元年如清日程.

In Vietnam, NVQDFYJ has been translated and published in the two works: "Phạm Thận Duật: Life and Works" (Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House, 1989) and "Complete works of Phạm Thận Duật" (Hanoi: Culture and Information Publishing House, 2000). In the introduction, the translators also present the origin of NVQDFYJ:

At the current Sino – Nôm library, there are two Chinese copies with

the same content, the same size of 20x30 cm paper, each page includes 9 rows, 18 words and obviously are later copies, but there are some differences in details:

– "Notes of Voyaye to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu" 建福元年如清日程, symbolized A929, with 63 sheets (126 pages – author's note). The main content consists of 52 sheets, including 3 schematic maps of Tianjin, Hong Kong 香港, and Shanghai Concession 上海租界. The last part is called the "Zhong chao dingzhi" 中朝定制 (Institutions of the Qing Dynasty in China), which is actually a record of some miscellaneous things found in China. Because it is a copy, there are still some words left blank, which is probably due to the unclear origin.

– "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" 往使天津日記, A1471, with 56 sheets (112 pages – author's note). The main content consists of 45 sheets, with no maps, but there are few words left blank and more notes. Therefore, we use this copy to translate (with reference to A929 copy) and use the name of this copy because it is more suitable (Pham 1989: 287).

Therefore, in Vietnam, the copy called "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" 往使天津日記 is more popular. NVT has complicated process in comparison with NVQDFYJ. The current printed/ scanned copy of the books; archived in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China; is noted by Chen Chingho based on a copy of NVT kept by Paul Demiéville. After that, NVT was published in 1980 by the Chinese University Press in Hong Kong. Apart from the main content written by Nguyễn Thuật, the book includes Preface 代序 and Commentary 解説 of Chen Chingho and Postscript 阮荷亭《往津日記》鈔本跋 of Rao Zongyi 饶宗颐.

It can be said that the book NVT in its original publishing was associated with the names of many French and Chinese Sinologists and represented an interest to the Chinese Sinologists. Research of Gong Min about the aforementioned book, its retention and publishing process shows the following basic points:

a. Nguyễn Thuật's current copy of NVT was originally from 1887.

b. Nguyễn Thuật's copy of NVT was found by Paul Demiéville in Hanoi, Vietnam in the period of 1920 – 1924. In 1930, he brought

this book to France and kept it privately in his home.

c. In 1966, Rao Zongyi received Paul Demiéville's book during his visit at an academic exchange in Paris.

d. During the period of 1968-1973, Rao Zongyi wrote the Postscript for NVT.

e. In 1975, Rao Zongyi sent the epilogue of NVT to Paul Demiéville to ask for suggestions, and at the same time convey the words of Chen Chingho stating that this book is very valuable and hopes that it would be revised for publication. Later, Rao Zongyi sent letters to Paul Demiéville several times to express concern about the publication of this book.

f. In the spring of 1976, Rao Zongyi went to Paris for the third time to return this book to Paul Demiéville. Paul Demiéville then asked Chen Chingho to translate it for publication. In August 1977, Rao Zongyi revised the "Epilogue" in the book and read it at the Seventh Asian Historian's Conference. This was the first research thesis on NVT.

g. In June 1978, Chen Chingho visited Paris for the second time. Paul Demiéville expressed his belief that the book was currently the only original, and he hoped that the book would soon be published. h. In 1980, NVT noted by Chen Chingho was published by Hong Kong Chinese Publishing House. Unfortunately, Paul Demiéville died in March 1979 with no chance of seeing the book published (Gong 2011: 48).

Ⅲ. The author

Many Vietnamese researchers believe that: NVQDFYJ is the work of Phạm Thận Duật, while NVT is the work of Nguyễn Thuật. The evidence lies in the two selected works of Phạm Thận Duật: "Phạm Thận Duật: Life and Works" (Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House, 1989) and "Complete works of Phạm Thận Duật" (Hanoi: Culture and Information Publishing House, 2000). NVQDFYJ was also printed into a book and considered as a work of Phạm Thận Duật.

Researchers in the work "Vietnamese Chinese Yanxing literature integration" demonstrated that: NVQDFYJ is the common

work of Nguyễn Thuật and Phạm Thận Duật (National Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies, Institute of Hán‐Nôm Studies and National Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies复旦大学文史研究院 2010: 173-174). The basis for the explanation is contained in the "Introduction" and "Conclusion" of NVQDFYJ which clearly shows the log taking the title of Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật to be submitted for royal consideration (Pham 1989: 287).

Researcher Chen Chingho (Vietnamese research specialist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong), by comparing pen strokes and decipheration, affirmed that the work NVT is Nguyễn Thuật's.

Ⅳ. Historical value

NVT and NVQDFYJ have an important value in providing new perspectives in researching the diplomatic relations between Vietnam and China in the early modern period through the trip schedule of the Nguyen Dynasty's envoy. It also presents the cultural exchanges between Vietnam, China and Japan; about the operation of Zhaoshang Department of the Qing Dynasty,... This study will discuss in more detail the value of this document:

4.1. The trip schedule

The mission of Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật to China in 1883 was summarized both in NVT and NVQDFYJ (Pham 1989; Nguyen & Chen 1980):

<Table 1> The trip schedule of the Nguyen Dynasty's envoy

Member of envoy delegation	Time	Route	Tasks
Imperial Duty Envoy: Nguyễn Thuật Attache: Nguyễn Tịch阮籍, Đỗ Phú Tú杜富肅, Lê Đăng Trinh李登貞	- Arrival at Guangdong廣東 on 12/2/1883 - Departure from Guangdong on 1/3/1883	Starting from Da Nang port, transit in Nanhai 南海 bound for Hong Kong and then transit in Hong Kong bound for Guangdong	Present the credentials to the governor named Zeng Guoquan 曾國荃

Member of envoy delegation	Time	Route	Tasks
Imperial Commissioner acting as Chief Envoy: Phạm Thận Duật; Imperial Commissioner acting as Assistant Envoy: Nguyễn Thuật; Attache include: Nguyễn Tịch, Nguyễn Đăng Trinh, Đỗ Phú Túc, Nguyễn Văn Hữu阮文有, Phan Du潘瑜.	- Arrival in Tianjin on 17/3/1883 - Departure from Tianjin on 23/11/1883	Starting from Đà Nẵng port, transit in Nanhai bound for Hong Kong and then transit in Henan河南bound for Guangdong, from Hong Kong to Guangdong. From Guangdong return to Hong Kong to go to Shanghai and then to Tianjin.	Ask the situation before Li Hongchang and the French Envoy Bourrée negotiate and give a resolution on the issues of Vietnam.

NVT recorded that the embassy trip started from January 16th, 1883 (December 8th in the 35th year of Tự Đức (1882)) and ended on January 26th, 1884 (December 29th, in the 36th year of Tự Đức (1883))[1]. NVQDFYJ recorded that the mission started from January 29th, 1883 (December 21st in the 35th year of Tự Đức (1882)) and ended on January 26th, 1884 (December 29th, in the 36th year of Tự Đức (1883)). Thus, the beginning of the trip in 1883 as it was recorded in the works of Nguyen Thuat is not the same. NVT started on January 16th, 1883 while NVQDFYJ started on January 29th, 1883. Thus, NVT is 13 days earlier than NVQDFYJ.

This difference is due to the fact that Nguyễn Thuật and Phạm Thận Duật did not come to China at the same time. King Tự Đức initially only sent Nguyễn Thuật to China. On January 16th, 1883, Nguyễn Thuật took the order of the mission to Hong Kong and Guangzhou 廣州. On January 29th, 1883, 13 days later, King Tự Đức issued a new edict, ordering Phạm Thận Duật to be the chief envoy, and Nguyễn Thuật to be the assistant envoy to Tianjin. Both would be present, together with Li Hongchang and the French envoy, to

---

[1] For the sake of consistency, here we use a day according to the solar calendar, with brackets to note the equivalent in the lunar calendar, which is mentioned in two diaries.

negotiate on the issue of Vietnam. In fact, on January 29th, when Phạm Thận Duật started the trip from Vietnam, Nguyễn Thuật had already arrived in Qiong Zhou Haikou 瓊州海口 (Haikou海口 City, Hainan Province today) two days prior (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 21). On February 20th, 1883, Nguyễn Thuật and Phạm Thận Duật met in Guangzhou. Thus, over a period of more than one month, the two ran their missions separately. Therefore, the diary content differs from one another in this period.

This difference between the two diaries can supply information that provides researchers with a better understanding of the 1883 mission. Specifically, based on records in NVT, we know that Phạm Thận Duật and his companions used Fuji ship 普济輪 of Zhaoshang Department 招商局[2]as the transport vehicle. This clarified the means of transportation which was missing in NVT.

About the end of the mission, NVT and NVQDFYJ ended the embassy trip on January 26th, 1884 (December 29th, in the 36th year of Tự Đức (1883)).

Although the end of the mission is the same, interestingly enough, the two diaries recorded with discrepancy in the last half of the month of the trip. The return trip of Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật began on January 5th, 1884 (December 8th, in the 36th year of Tự Đức (1883)), and they arrived in Bình Định 評定 Province, Vietnam four days later. However, on January 12nd, 1884 (December 15th, in the 36th year of Tự Đức (1883)), Phạm Thận Duật relapsed on his chronic disease and had to stop in Bình Định for treatment. Nguyễn Thuật and his other missionaries continued to return to the capital on the same day. This has translated into the difference in the content of the two diaries over a period of around a half month. NVT departed from Bình Định on the 12nd and arrived in Huế 順華 ancient capital on the 26th. However, the diary of this half‑month is remarkably simple, just records the places he has gone through, and there are 6 days without any record. By contrast, NVQDFYJ of Phạm Thận Duật during this time includes a richer

---

[2] Zhaoshang Department 招商局: a Chinese agency, nominally established as a trading agent but in fact serves to grasp the situation in Vietnam, like the consulate established in 1877 in the capital of Hue and has a branch in some other places.

content. Alongside the monotonous parts, the diary (as the A929 copy) recorded both places that Phạm Thận Duật visited, particularly the natural landscapes which indicated his passionate love for Vietnamese nature. This difference supplemented not only the work of Nguyễn Thuật but also provided information on the natural geographic situation of Vietnam in the late nineteenth century.

4.2. The nature and the end of the "Emperor 天子" – "vassal 諸侯" relationship between Vietnam and China

After arriving in Tianjin, the Vietnamese diplomatic corps was scheduled to meet with Li Hongchang[3] – who was assigned to oversee Vietnamese affairs by the Qing Dynasty. On March 24, 1883 (according to the lunar calendar in NVQDFYJ, it was on February 16), Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật had an audience with Li Hongchang. The two parties held a written conversation and frankly exchanged many issues, including the situation concerning the signing of the treaty between Vietnam and France, the situation of preventing trade by Lưu Vĩnh Phúc劉永福and Vietnam's defense plan (Wang 2011: 63).

During the written conversation, although Phạm Thận Duật made it clear that the road defense was something that the Nguyen Dynasty court could not ignore. However, the difficulty lied in the waterway, because the French ships and artillery were very strong, and the strength of Vietnam could not hold a candle to that. Therefore, the diplomatic corps reported to the Qing Dynasty and Li Hongchang to ask for help and rescue, but Li Hongchang ended the meeting with a very indifferent and unclear attitude: "Currently, France is not willing to negotiate with China on Vietnamese affairs and only listen to some things. I have already applied for a leave to go back to my hometown to take care of a funeral[4], and I do not

---

[3] Li Hongchang (1823 - 1901): an imperial minister of the late Qing Dynasty. He was one of the main leaders of the Duong vu movement. He served as governor and was also the founder of the Chinese navy, shipbuilding, and mechanical engineering bureau. He worked as a mandarin holding many important positions, including the position of BaiYang trade high-ranking mandarin, and WenHua temple scholar. He was recognized with the familiar name of Li Zhongtang (the position of Prime Minister).

[4] Implying that Li Hongchang's mother passed away. Li Hongchang had to take leave to return to his hometown to mourn his mother.

know how many days I'll be gone. You guys just wait here [ie Tianjin], do not rush to return home" (Wang 2011: 61‒63).

Thus, Li Hongchang made it clear to the Vietnamese envoys that the France had reversed the previously discussed things and did not want to discuss the Vietnamese affairs with China anymore. It was not possible for Vietnam to join France and China to discuss the Vietnamese affairs.

Anyway, the motive and the underlying cause for Li Hongchang's cold and negative attitude towards the Vietnamese affairs still requires access to documents and consideration from many aspects. However, in reality, it is true that Li Hongchang ignored and didn't want to have much contact with the Vietnamese diplomatic corps. After the meeting mentioned above, the Vietnamese diplomatic corps had asked to receive Li Hongchang many times but failed, all communication was mainly done through written conversations with Ma Phuc Bon. In the NVQDFYJ, the following phrases are constantly being repeated "Based on the content of the written conversation with the Ambassador Ma [ie Ma Tieya馬鐵崖]…". Every time when there was Li Hongchang's opinion, the Vietnamese envoy team answered very carefully in writing but "the Central Palace only received national letters, did not accept our report to answer questions given by the Central Palace" (Pham 1989: 357).

Accompanying the cold attitude was Li Hongchang's neglect of the war situation in Vietnam. With the policy of "Defense and happening observation" (firmly defending, just observing the situation but not mobilizing), Li Hongchang took no action, despite the French's assault on the Thuận An estuary. The Nguyen Dynasty had to sign the Harmand treaty in 1883, acknowledging the French protection over all of Vietnam.

On July 19th, 1883, the King Tự Đức died when the issue of Vietnam in the negotiations between France and the Qing Dynasty remained unresolved. Recognizing that the attitude of the Qing Dynasty towards Vietnam was "just a concern" (seen from a distance) for a long time, France decided to use force to attack Huế, forcing the Nguyen Dynasty to sign the Harmand Treaty on August

25th, 1883, acknowledging the protection of France over Vietnam.

Before that, on August 31st, 1883 (September 27th of the lunar calendar), Phạm Thận Duật, Nguyễn Thuật and the envoy delegation found out that staying in Tianjin was no longer helpful for the country anymore. They thus asked the Qing Dynasty to let them return to Vietnam. NVQDFYJ recorded this event as follows:

> We composed a statement to apply for the returning to the country and asked Ambassador Ma馬to submit it to Li Zhongtang 李中堂 (Li Hongchang – author's note). After that, the Ambassador Ma (Ma Tieya 馬鐵崖 – author's note) returned and brought with him a telegraph (stating that the French troops took over the fortress on the Thuận An coast 順安訊and that Vietnam and France were discussing the reconciliation). Based on the criticism of the Zhongtang [On the telegraph], we appointed people to copy [the telegraph] and prepare our statement to save and submit it to Li Zhongtang (Pham 1989: 317).

In the context that the French conquered Vietnam, on November 12, 1883, Li Hongchang relied on the following reason: "The envoys in Tianjin, now there is no more negotiation, so it is necessary to be ready to return to your country to avoid waiting for a long time" (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 56), to grant the request of the Vietnamese envoy team to return home from Thiên Tân.

In NVT, Nguyễn Thuật expressed his disappointment of the attitude of the Qing Dynasty as follow:

> The Qing Dynasty sent a dispatch expressing the desire to negotiate the issues between my country and France, and also summoned us to Tianjin for interrogation, but the explanation was unsuccessful, and they delayed to use force to support my country when it was in trouble. This led to the French forcing us to reconcile. This time my country experienced a great event, and the situation could not fail to be followed up. The Qing Dynasty did not protect the border country, and did they have any words to explain to the world? If the situation has come to this, then what else can they say! (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 49).

Even when the delegation left, Phạm Thận Duật offered a letter asking to meet Li Hongchang to say goodbye but he also made excuses to avoid it. November 12th, 1883 (October 13rd of the lunar calendar):

> Upon receiving the official dispatch from Zhongtang (the approval for the envoys to return to the country) entrusted to us to open, we immediately wrote the statement to offer the visit to say goodbye. The statement was delivered to the Ambassador Ma to submit to Li Zhongtang and Zhou 周in the customs. That evening, we met Ambassador Ma and he said that Li Zhongtang was very busy these days, could not receive us. As for Zhou, he was ill. He sent people to deliver letters and perform the rituals to see us off (Pham 1989: 322–323).

On November 23, 1883, the Vietnamese envoy team led by Chief envoy Phạm Thận Duật landed a boat to return home, marking that the noble mission entrusted by the Nguyen Dynasty failed. The mission trip of Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật in 1883 carried a great mission in the context of Vietnam being in danger of complete annexation by France. That mission was the Nguyen dynasty's hope in seeking help from the Qing Dynasty, China regarding both diplomatic and military action. As the King's Chief envoy of the special envoy, Phạm Thận Duật tried his best with the special task that King Tự Đức assigned to the mission. However, times changed, and the Qing court represented by Li Hongchang refused to help, welcoming the diplomatic corps with a cold attitude along with lack of positivity. The result of that trip went against the hope and efforts of Phạm Thận Duật and the diplomatic corps, making the mission of the diplomatic corps a failure.

This event can be seen as a "sanctity removal" for the Qing dynasty – the dynasty that always considered itself "the royal dynasty" and had the role of protecting countries which they considered "vassal kingdom". The fact that the Qing dynasty took no action, implemented the policy of "defense and happening observation" to let the French force, intimidate and strike the Hue capital city of Vietnam clearly demonstrated the choice of strategic

"abandonment" of Vietnam. This choice, according to Wang (2011: 64), reflected the realism in the foreign policy of the Qing court. That kind of realism is also a matter, of course, in the implementation of the comprehensively shrinking policy of the Qing Empire.

After this mission trip, the team of intellectuals and officials of the Nguyen Dynasty had a more accurate view of the Qing Dynasty (even though it was a late redirection!). More than ever, the desire of self‐strengthening to escape Chinese influence and have enough strength to oppose the French colonialism, to defend the national independence was burning and proved its correctness in reality more than ever. According to Wang Zhiqiang and Quan Hexiu (2011: 85), the failure of Phạm Thận Duật's diplomatic corps to achieve the desired result was the end of the relationship in the "suzerain‐vassal 宗藩" style between "the royal dynasty" and the so called "vassal kingdom". Since this event, the relationship between Vietnam and China in particular and the traditional "suzerain‐vassal 宗藩" relationship institution in Southeast Asia in general with taking China as a center have begun to shift to a new modern model.

4.3. Events related to Vietnamese, Chinese and Japanese cultural exchanges

4.3.1. Cultural exchanges between Vietnam and China

On February 11st, 1883 (January 4th of the lunar calendar), while the delegation of Phạm Thận Duật arrived at the Qiong Zhou Haikou, Nguyễn Thuật's delegation was in Guangzhou. Here, Nguyễn Thuật and the delegation were instructed by Shi Qingquan 石清泉 and Ruan Mengxian 阮夢仙 to see the torpedo cannon[5] 水雷礮 in the Qiu Long 九龍 mountain by ship. On that occasion, Nguyễn Thuật asked Shi Qingquan, who held the position of Admiral managing

---

[5] Torpedo cannon: using explosive-wrapped oil paper, every three bag is wrapped into a bundle, covered with oil paper outside, and connected to the detonator wrapped with black cloth on the top. After igniting the detonator, the torpedo cannon will explode in the water, causing the surrounding water to turn black. The sound of the explosion sounded like thunder, many dead fish will float on the surface of the water (See details in: Sun 2010: 67).

Cantonese artillery for the operation principle of underwater torpedo cannon. Shi Qingquan said that Chinese torpedo cannons were mostly bought from Germany. This type of cannon was cast in bronze, contained explosives and placed in the water like a fish. Once you have correctly determined the target when you are at war, it was possible to explode an enemy boat when you fire (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 24). The search made Nguyễn Thuật felt excited and well aware of the benefits of Western weapons.

On February 23rd, 1883 (January 16th of the lunar calendar), NVQDFYJ only recorded: "Guangdong governor ordered chief of Nanhai District to send soldiers to guard the outside of the embassy" (Pham 1989: 293; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 26‐27). NVT also recorded that Nguyễn Thuật, Phạm Thận Duật and his envoys visited the Guangdong Department of Mechanics 廣東機器局. Nguyễn Thuật was surprised to find out that everyone who worked in The Guangdong Department of Mechanics was Chinese. In particular, the person in charge of this department is Wen Zichao 溫子紹 ‐ a person who had never studied in the West, but he had a high level of "Western Studies", which was considered a talented person in the world (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 27).

On April 16th, 1883 (March 10th of the lunar calendar), NVQDFYJ wrote:

> In the morning, Phạm Thận Duật and the interpreter Huy spoke to Tang Daoyuan 唐道員 (Tang Yingxing 唐應星 – author's note) to ask about the work. In the evening, he received Tang Daoyuan at the embassy. Zhaoshang Department said that the French Consul did not agree to allow the Fuji ship to ship rice. Zhang Gung張龔ordered the officer to return to Guangdong to work as a clerk the next day (Pham 1989: 304; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 33).

NVT in addition to copying the event at Zhaoshang Department to visit Tang Yingxing 唐應星 and 黃花農Huang Huanong, it also wrote the fact that Huang Huanong led him to visit the Telegraph Department電報局 ‐ a division of Zhaoshang Department. Nguyễn Thuật has described specifically the layout in the Telegraph Department (Pham 1989: 310; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 33‐34). Nguyễn Thuật and the Vietnamese envoy delegation were

also shown the way to respond to the signals "quickly" at the Telegraph Department. Huang Huanong asked the news from Dajie Kou 大潔口: "Is there a boat coming to Dajie Kou today?" Then he immediately got the answer from Dajie: "Today there is no boat". Then they heard the sound vibrating from Shanghai's telegraph column, and immediately saw Shanghai department asking: "How is the work today?" The other immediately replied: "Today, Vietnamese envoys visit the Department...". Nguyễn Thuật expressed his amazement: The distance from Tianjin to Dajie is more than 100 miles, to Shanghai is more than 2,000 miles, but the information came in just a few moments, which is miraculous. Nguyễn Thuật and the Vietnamese envoy delegation were surprised by the magic of Western technology (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 33 – 34).

On May 18th, 1883 (April 12th of the lunar calendar), NVQDFYJ recorded the event of Nguyễn Thuật and the envoy delegation watching the soldiers of the Atlantic artillery train:

> Nguyễn Thuật and his followers Lê Trinh, Đỗ Phú Túc went to the land of Yaowo 窯窩 outside the North gate, watching soldiers' manoeuver on the sea. There were four units participating in the manoeuver (including middle, half–back, right back and guard). Every day they maneuvered twice, in the morning and in the afternoon, and there were two thousand soldiers involved. The clothes of the soldiers were all black, their shoes were also black, their walking was no different from the Western soldiers. They arranged in a formation, either a fish–shaped formation[6] (Each team has about a hundred people, ten have a decurion, a hundred people have a star leader) or a swallow–wing shape (the formation is divided into three rows, each with no more than 700 people). Sometimes they all stood, sometimes the front row knelt followed by the two rows behind it standing up, and then they all shot. At that time, their hand acted like one: cocking a gun and loading a gun were very proficient, as thousands of people did the same thing. Their general teacher[7], Cha Zihe 查子和, had previously gone to France to study for four years. Upon returning to the country, [he] followed the French training [to guide soldiers]. The commander of the military camps, Huang Lizhuan黄麗川, invited us to observe the

---

[6] fish-shaped ballte: fighting formation like "fish" word

[7] General teacher: Training general teacher

manoeuver, and came back in the evening. (Pham 1989: 307–308; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 38).

In addition to the above information, NVT also recorded the feeling of Nguyễn Thuật after witnessing this event: "The Qing Dynasty has the intention to study the West like that, so is the acquisition of scientific achievements not difficult?" (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 38).

On June 6th, 1883 (May 2nd of the lunar calendar), NVQDFYJ recorded briefly: "Delegating to Dang Duc Huy 邓德辉 to send a dispatch to Zhaoshang Department" (Pham 1989: 310; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 40). NVT clearly stated that the Vietnamese delegation recommended that Vietnam should buy Yangpao 洋礮 (Western artillery), and Yangqiang 洋鎗 (Western gun) (Nguyen & Chen 1980: 40) to practice in the new way of Western guns. The above aspirations of Nguyễn Thuật and the Vietnamese envoy delegation clearly reflected more or less the zeal and expectation of the king and mandarins of the Nguyen Dynasty at that time. They wanted to acquire and learn Western science and technology via China, intending to create self‐reliant power to restore and make the country strong. Commenting on this desire of Nguyễn Thuật, Sun (2010: 43) wrotes:

> For Vietnam, Nguyễn Thuật and the envoy delegation clearly felt the suffering when being invaded by the colonialists. He realized the connection between his country's fate and China's, and, based on the effect of the Yangwu 洋务 movement, saw the need for learning Western technique. He hoped that China and Vietnam could fight against the invasion, and hoped to study/imitate China in Western science and technology to make the country rich and strong, proceeding to maintain independence for the nation

4.3.2. Cultural exchanges between Vietnam and Japan

While taking a ship in Shanghai on his return trip, Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật had contact with Japanese Naval Officer Shōun Sone曾根肅雲 three times. This is recorded by NVQDFYJ as follows:

> The first contact on December 5th, 1883 (November 6th of the lunar calendar):

127

The person receiving the Japanese is Shōun Sone (title of Naval mandarin sent to Shanghai for work). The two parties held a written conversation. He showed a record of the events in our country a few years ago by a Japanese editor, his "France – Vietnam Jiaozheng Ji" 法越交争記 and "Nan Piao jishi" 南漂記事. We made full copies to read. (Pham 1989: 325; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 59).

The second contact on December 6th, 1883 (November 7th of the lunar calendar):
Received Shōun Sone and held written conversation. He gave us two painted wooden trays, four shield – shaped trays, one Xingya Hui 興亞會, a program of Xingya Hui, a see – off poem with the ancient style of poetry. We received the gifts and gave a poem in response. (Pham 1989: 325–326; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 59).

The third contact on December 7th, 1883 (November 8th of the lunar calendar):
That evening, we received the Shōun Sone. Held written conversation and he gave three boxes of medicine for eye pain with Guang Ming 光明 brand and several texts with very good handwriting. (Pham 1989: 326; Nguyen & Chen 1980: 59–60).

Besides contacting Naval mandarin Shōun Sone, Phạm Thận Duật and Nguyễn Thuật also met with three other Japanese monks. Through written conversation between Phạm Thận Duật, Nguyễn Thuật and intellectuals, the Japanese monks have found the similarities in the two countries' culture (Japanese monks also cut short hair, wear robes like monks in Vietnam, both countries have a long tradition of literature and Buddhism and use Chinese 漢子,...).

In addition to the points mentioned above, NVQDFYJ and NVT also provided important information about the form and nature of the "Emperor 天子" – "Vassal 諸候" relationship between Vietnam and China in history, the embassy trip to China of Vietnamese envoys, and activities and the role of Zhaoshang Department of Qing Dynasty, etc. Analyzing the historical values of NVT, Wang (2010: 71) evaluated:

NVT is a valuable cultural document that can provide new perspectives on the study of Sino – Vietnamese relation's history till modern times, providing a historical basis for the in-depth study of

the Chinese Zhaoshang Department's operations as well as materials for studying Vietnamese – Chinese cultural exchanges. That value is well worth for the academic circle to mind and to focus.

Regarding the historical values of NVT for the study of Sino‐Vietnamese relations at the end of the nineteenth century, Wang (2010: 72) continued to affirm:

> The event of Nguyễn Thuật going to the Qing Dynasty documented in NVT reflects the reality of Sino – Vietnamese relations, both the form and content of the "suzerain-vassal 宗藩" relations between the two countries. In particular, it is clear that the Vietnamese feudal dynasties hoped to break the traditional tribute structural framework but wanted to borrow the world's opinion to escape the current state of bondage of the country.

In the comparison between NVQDFYJ and NVT, Wang (2012: 59) said:

> Nominally, although NVT is private (different from NVQDFYJ which has stately nature because it was written by two people and mainly narrated the work of the envoy delegation) but it has a richer content than NVQDFYJ, and greater cultural and historical values. In addition, it better captures the research interest of international scholars. Of course, if both books are combined, it will have the effect of supplementing and correcting each other on historical events in Sino – Vietnamese relations in modern times.

NVT is not only a record of the events that took place during the embassy trip but also expressed its author's personal thoughts about those events. This can be considered the biggest difference between the two diaries. At this point, author Wang (2012: 58) said that: "Luckily this difference between the two diaries supplements, provides true and complete historical events for researchers to study the event later".

Through the contact with Japanese intellectuals and monks, especially, the first of the prince of the Japanese Navy - Shōun Sone, the Vietnamese envoy has had a profound change in awareness. When listening to Shōun Sone's mention of the policy to establish

Xingya Hui to unite countries in Asia to oppose the powerful Western countries, the Vietnamese delegation sympathized with this policy. The support of Shōun Sone's policy in establishing Xingya Hui and the recognition of similarities between Vietnam and Japan, associated with the concept of "同文同種the same language and the same race"[8], are considered a new step in awareness of Vietnamese envoys, creating a new way of thinking regarding the act of saving and ensuring the survival of East Asian countries. Unfortunately, the French colonialists did not allow Vietnam to have enough time to study in the West. In 1884 after the Treaty of Patenôtre, France forced the Nguyen Dynasty to admit its protection throughout the territory. In that context, Nguyễn Thuật's desire of building a rich nation and a powerful defense, in sync with those who advocated the study of "Yangwu", was not fulfilled. "Xingya Hui" - The Union of Asian countries to fight against the invasion of Western countries was only a short but beautiful dream.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

In conclusion, the trip of the envoys of the Nguyen Dynasty to China in 1883 is reflected quite specifically in the two works: NVQDFYJ of Phạm Thận Duật along with Nguyễn Thuật, and NVT of Nguyễn Thuật. The contents of the two diaries provide a lot of information about the mission to China of the Vietnamese envoy of the Nguyen dynasty, about the cultural exchange between Vietnam, China and Japan, about the operation of the Zhaoshang Department of the Qing Dynasty, about the form and nature of "Tianzi 天子" – "Zhuhou諸侯" relationship between Vietnam and China,... The difference between the two diaries, one with personal character (NVT) and the other with state character (NVQDFYJ), also supplements and provides more precisely and completely historical events about the embassy trip in 1883 of the Nguyen dynasty's envoys. With such rich historical materials and multifaceted values in research, NVT and NVQDFYJ are important sources of materials

---

[8] Vietnamese scholars used similar words to describe the close exchange of Vietnam and Japan including cultural *similarities*

in the study of embassy poetry in particular and Sino‐Vietnamese relations in medieval and modern times in general.

References

Chen, Sanjing陈三井. 1990. The value of Nguyễn Thuật: Notes of Voyage to Tianjin in modern historical research阮述《往津日记》在近代史研究上的价值. *Bulletin of Historical Research* 台湾师大歷史学报, (18): 231‐244.

Gong, Min 龚敏. 2011. Notes of Voyage to Tianjin of Nguyễn Thuật: the guide of academic connection through the survey of the archives at Rao Zongyi, the University of Hong Kong and the letters between Rao Zongyi and Paul Demiéville 阮述《往津日记》引发的学术因缘——以香港大学饶宗颐学术馆藏戴密微、饶宗颐往来书信为中心》. *Journal of Social Science Forum* 社会科学论坛, (3): 43‐49.

Liam C, Kelley. 2001. Whither the Bronze Pillars? Envoy Poetry the Sino‐Vietnamese Relationship in 16th to 19th Centuries. PhD Dissertation, University of Hawaii.

National Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies, Institute of Hán‐Nôm Studies and National Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies复旦大学文史研究院. 2010. *Yuenan Hanwen Yanxing wenxian jicheng*越南汉喃研究院合编, 23第23册. Shanghai: Fudan University Press.

Nguyen, Thuat compiles 阮述撰 and Chen, Chingho notes陈荆和编注. 1980. *Nguyễn Thuật: Notes of Voyage to Tianjin*阮述〈往津日记〉. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press 香港：中文大学出版社.

Pham, Duat T. 1989. *Notes of Voyage to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu*. printed in Ha Nam Ninh Literature and Arts Association, *Pham Thuat Duat: Life and Works*. Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House.

Shiu, Wentang许文堂. 2002. The Explanation "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" of Phạm Thận Duật范慎遹《如清日程》题解. *Asia Pacific Research Newsletter*亚太研究通讯, (18): 24‐27.

Sun, Hongnian 孙宏年. 2010. Nguyễn Thuật: the elegant envoy in tragic mission 阮述:悲壮使命中的优雅使者. *World knowledge*

世界知识, (06): 66‒67.

Sun, Hongnian 孙宏年. 2010. From Tradition to Novelty ‒ A Discusstion of Embassador Activities, Technical and Cultrure Exchange Between China and Vietnam in Qing Dynasty从传统到"趋新"：使者的活动与清代中越科技文化交流刍议. *Journal of Wenshan University* 文山学院学报, (1): 39‒44.

Wang, Zhiqiang 王志强. 2010. A Review of "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" an Its Historical Value 越南汉籍<往津日记>及其史料价值评介. *Around Southeast Asia*东南亚纵横, (12): 71‒74.

Wang, Zhiqiang王志强. 2011. A study on Li Hongchang's awareness and policy of Vietnamese issue (1881‒1886) 李鸿章对越南问题的认识与策略研究1881‒1886, PhD Thesis, Northeast Normal University东北师范大学博士学位论文.

Wang, Zhiqiang 王志强. 2012. Comparison of "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" and "Notes of Voyaye to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu 越南汉籍<往津日记>与<建福元年如清日程>比较浅议. *Around Southeast Asia*东南亚纵横, (12): 56‒59.

Wang, Zhiqiang王志强. 2013. The cultural exchange between China and Vietnam through "Notes of Voyage to Tianjin" in the late Qing Dynasty从越南汉籍《往津日记》看晚清中越文化交流. *Lantai World*蘭台世界, (1): 31‒32.

Wang, Zhiqiang and Quan, Hexiu王志强, 权赫秀. 2011. From the 1883 voyage of the Vietnamese ambassador to China considering the end of the angelic and vassal relationship between Vietnam and Sino. 从1883年越南遣使来华看中越宗藩关系的终结. *Shilin*史林, (2): 85‒91, 189.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

NVQDFYJ	*Notes of Voyaye to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu*
NVT	*Notes of Voyage to Tianjin*
Voyage to Tianjin	Nguyen Thuat compiles 阮述撰, Chen Chingho notes陈荆和编注. 1980. *Nguyễn Thuật: Notes*

	*of Voyage to Tianjin*阮述〈往津日记〉(Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press 香港：中文大学出版社)
Voyage to Qing Dynasty	Pham, Duat T. 1989. *Notes of Voyage to Qing Dynasty in The First Year of Jianfu*, printed in Ha Nam Ninh Literature and Arts Association, *Pham Thuat Duat: Life and Works* (Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House)

Ecocriticism in Non-Western Contexts:
Natural Disasters, Ecological Wounds, and Colonial Conditions in *Thơ mới* (Vietnamese New Poetry, 1932-1945)

Chi P. Pham*, Bui Thi Thu Thuy**, Hoang To Mai***

[*Abstract*]

Thơ mới (Vietnamese New Poetry, 1932-1945) is a literary movement in colonial Vietnam that is broadly considered to have marked the modernization of Vietnamese literature. This paper examines depictions about natural disasters, ecological wounds, and about relationships between humans and nature in New Poetry, asking how those descriptions reflect social and political issues in colonial Vietnam. The paper argues that ecocriticism, developed in Western academy, brought to the New Poetry Movement new meanings, associated with a material world. That is the specific reality of colonial Vietnam in the early twentieth century, when the colonial modernization resulted in natural and social collapses in the area. This approach is especially significant, given that New Poetry is largely seen as the embodiment of the expansion of Western romanticism by Vietnamese scholars. Moreover, in examining Thơ mới (Vietnam) from perspective of ecocriticism, this paper extends the ecocritical approach to non-Western literatures. Specifically, although ecocriticism developed in the West,

* Researcher, The Institute of Literature in the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam. phamphuongchi@gmail.com.
** Lecturer, Hung Vuong University, Vietnam.
*** Researcher, The Institute of Literature in the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam.

particularly in United States and England, it has become an effective approach to non-Western literatures, particularly since the early twentieth first century. In this context, Asian literatures, particularly Southeast Asian literatures, potentially offer ecocriticism new meanings, many of which are associated with local social and political conditions and histories.

Keywords: Thơ mới (Vietnamese New Poetry), Ecocriticism in non-Western context, Natural Disasters, Ecological Wounds, Political Turns in Ecocriticism

Ⅰ. Introduction

Although ecocriticism developed in the West, particularly in United States and England, it has become an effective approach to non-Western literatures, particularly since the early twentieth first century. In this context, Asian literatures, particularly Southeast Asian literatures, potentially offer ecocriticism new meanings, many of which are associated with local social and political conditions and histories. This paper extends the rising ecocritical approach to non-Western literatures in examining Thơ mới (Vietnam) from perspective of ecocriticism. Thơ mới (Vietnamese New Poetry, 1932-1945) is a literary movement in colonial Vietnam that marked the turn to modern phase of Vietnamese literature (Jamieson 1995: 108-115). This paper examines the New Poetry's ecologies themes, asking how they reflect colonial conditions of contemporary Vietnam. Sepcifically, the paper delves deeply into depictions of natural disasters, ecological wounds, and relationships between human and nature in New Poetry, examining how they were shaped by social and political issues in colonial Vietnam. The paper argues that ecocriticism, developed in Western academy, bought to the New Poetry Movement with new meanings, associated with a material world. That is the specific reality of colonial Vietnam in the early twentieth century, when the colonial modernization resulted in natural and social collapses in the area. While attending the rising This approach is also significant, given that New Poetry is largely seen as the embodiment of the expansion of Western romanticism by Vietnamese scholars.

Ⅱ. Ecocriticism in non-Western contexts

Despite originating in the UK and the US, ecocritical approach to literary studies has been applied all over the world (Heise 2013). The recent expansion of ecocriticism to include all literatures of the world and indicate its diverse development. Members of the Association for Studies of Literature and Environment (ASLE), who are largely eminent English scholars working on English texts, have attempted to explore environmental issues and ecological perspectives in Asian literary traditions, especially Japanese, Korean, or Chinese literatures. Aim of the scholarship about non-Western ecological literatures is largely to assert points that potentially challenge ecological and environmental views in the West. An early ecocritical scholarship about non-Western literature is Ecoambiguity: Environmental Crises and East Asian Literatures by Karen Thornber (2012). This monograph analyzes environmental crises that are presented in East Asian literatures from the classical to the present time. Thornber emphasizes "the duality" and "the paradox" as the characteristics of ecological views in East Asian literatures. Example analyzed is the parallel reverence of nature and exploitation of nature in the cultures of East Asian countries. She argues that this ecological paradox continues to challenge Western ecocriticism (Thornber 2012: 139). Noticeably, Scott Slovic, founder of the Association of Literature and Environment (ASLE attempts to identify the long tradition of ecocritical perspectives in Eastern literatures even before the entry of environmental and ecological views from the West. In his paper "Landmarks in Chinese ecocriticism and environmental literature: the emergence of a new ecological civilization" (2013), he analyzes ecological and environmental issues in the Chinese poetry of a wide range, from Tang poetry to modern and contemporary poetry. He also describes research centers and events that have existed in China since the ancient time. All are to argue the long established ecocriticism in China.

Moreover, there exist some ecocritical works by non-Western scholars. The edited book Southeast Asian Ecocriticism: Theories, Practices, prospects by John Ryan (2018) includes chapters by non-Western scholars, examining literatures of Southeast Asian

countries from the ecocritical approach. The anthology emphasizes two characteristics of ecological Southeast Asian literature. First, this body of literature is the "upshot" of biocultural inflows of Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism and of indigenous belief in animism and sacrality of nature (Ryan 2018: 9-12). Second, ecological Southeast Asian literature largely criticizes eco-degradation by way of presenting the loss of biodiversity and the situation of being in danger of indigenous animals and plants (Ryan 1-9). These non-Western scholars agree on the point that it is the rapid postwar industrialization that poses immediate social and environmental challenges to the region (Estok 2016: 1-15; Ryan 2018: 13-15).

South and West Asian literatures also form a research subject of non-Western ecocriticism. Specifically, much scholarship examines ancient Indian literature from perspectives of ecocriticism. The monograph Ecocriticism and the Ramayana of Tulsidasa by Pankaj Sharma (2011) and the research article "Ecocriticism in Eastern and Western Traditions" by Raj Kumar Mishra (2012) study the works of Kalidasa and Valmiki from the lens of ecocriticism. The scholar K. R. Aiyer has a series of papers studying the epic Mahabharata from ecological perspectives. Two of them are "Dharma in the Mahabharata as a response to ecological crises: A speculation" (2009) and "A social ecological perspective on some episodes from the Mahabharata" (2009). These scholarly works mainly point out that spirituality and morality in traditional Indian cultures form typical characteristics of Indian ecocriticism. Interestingly, some works of Arabian literature become more politically significant when explored from ecocriticism. In the controversial article *Greening of Resistance in Arabic Poetry: An Ecocritical Interpretation of Selected Arabic Poems*, Hamoud y'ahya Ahmed (2005) analyzes a number of Arabic poems from the lens of ecocriticism. The article describes that nature and environment – embodied in biological communities and organizations in the Arab world -- have formed a force that shaped social and political resistance movements. In this context, Arabian poets presented ecological forms of the resistance in their works. The article points out that there exist the deep and cohesive presence of nature in Arabian poets' descriptions of human resistance to existing land encroachment. Apparently, non-Western

ecocritical scholarship attempts to contextualize non-Western literatures to local ecological and environmental beliefs and practices.

The development of ecocriticism in non-Western areas is the most evident in the emergence of regional and national associations of literature and environment over the world. Local scholars have established branches of ASLE in Japan, UK, Australia / New Zealand, Korea, India and Taiwan, in Europe and Canada. ASLE held the first conference outside of the United States in June 2017 in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. This means that, outside the British and American centers, non-Western scholars has established their own branches or schools of ecocriticism, which are embodied in phrases, as well as in titles of many articles, textbook, and research works, such as "Japanese ecocriticism", "Chinese ecocriticism", and "Taiwan ecocriticism." These phrases suggest the growing belief in the existence of other schools of ecocriticism outside the United States and British; they own specific characteristics that are unique to local cultures and literatures. In other words, the associations or schools of ecocriticism over the world emphasize traditional and indigenous beliefs about relationships between literature and nature while implementing ecocritical theories originated from the United States and British.

Nevertheless, although ecocriticism has had "shoots" sprouting all over the planet outside England and the United States, there remain important questions such as: Should theories and practices of ecocriticism outside the United States and British be understood as the same as in British and the United States? Are the central concepts of ecocriticism such as nature, countryside, and wilderness in the world mean the same as those of ecocriticism in the United States and the United Kingdom? What are the challenges when translating Western ecocritic terms and concepts into other languages and cultures? Have the studies about relations between nature and human in non-English literatures changed or influenced theoretical points of the Anglo-American school of ecocriticism, which is mainly based on English culture and literature? And can the ecocritical approach to non-English literatures and cultures provide these cultures and literatures with new significances? (Flys 2010: 108 -122).

This paper addresses the recent development of ecocriticism in non-Western contexts by way of taking this approach to examine New Poetry Movement (Phong trào Thơ mới, 1932-1945) of Vietnam. This body of Vietnamese literature has never been analyzed from the perspectives of ecocriticism. Instead, most existing scholarship about the New Poetry Movement emphasizes it role as an embodiment of a new paradigm in Vietnamese cultural and literary life in the early twentieth century. That is the emergence of individualism, which marked the shift of the form and content of Vietnamese literature and culture from the traditional models based on Confucian thought to much more modern ones based on Western thought. An ecocritical approach to Vietnamese New Poetry extends the significant dimension of this literature to cover environmental and ecological issues of early twentieth century Vietnam. Specifically, New Poetry, instead of emphatically describing romantic personal emotions, embraces the themes of natural disasters and ecological wounds caused by colonization. As such, the ecocriticial approach potentially provides New Poetry with new political position; that is, the criticism of colonial condition.

Ⅲ. Natural Disasters in Vietnamese New Poetry

Ecocriticism, especially in its latest development, have emphasized the understanding of literary responses to environmental crises, and other social uncertainties caused by climate change, water deficiency, deforestation, and green house. The University of Virginia Press developed a book series, entitled Under the Sign of Nature: Ecocriticism, investigating how weather abnormalities both have been reflected in and have shaped literature and art in America. As part of this series, Dancing with Disaster Environmental Histories, Narratives, and Ethics for Perilous Times (2015) by Kate Rigby affirms that the disastrous effects of climate change over the world indicate the inexplicable complexity in human and natural history. Rigby analyzes many descriptions of catastrophes from the Black Death in the Middle Ages to the super typhoons of the twenty-first century to point out dynamic interactions between humans and non-human factors that are causative, extensive, and consequent.

Another work that explores literary response to the natural disasters is The Sky of Our Manufacture: The London Fog in British Fiction from Dickens to Woolf (2016) by Jesse Oak. In way of analyzing English novels about London fog in the late 19th and early 20th century, the author asserts the importance of fiction in understanding climate change, environmental pollution, and ecological collapse. Also exploring the involvement of literature in environmental matters is the work Different Shades of Green: African Literature, Environmental Justice and Political Ecology (2014) by Byron Caminero-Santangelo. Based on postcolonial studies, political ecology, environmental history and environmental literature in Africa, Byron Caminero-Santangelo highlights how African writers have challenged the unjust and ecologically destructive forms of modern development and resource exploitation.

Interestingly, the most recent publication in the series on the relationship of literature and the unusual climate change is about poetry. They are Building Natures: Modern American Poetry, Landscape Architecture, and City Planning (2017) by Julia Daniel and Recomposing Ecopoetics: North American Poetry of the Self. -Conscious Anthropocene (2018) by Lynn Keller. The former examines the influences of landscape architecture, city planning and park management on American poetry, analyzing how the twentieth century modernists engaged with the green world and artificial public playgrounds. The latter focuses on the 21th century writing of thirteen North American poets who have tried to step through literary conventions in search of forms and languages that match complex environmental problems.

In Vietnam, the ecocritical scholarship that focuses on the relationship between literature and disaster issues largely explores contemporary Vietnamese literature, particularly the prose genre (Nguyễn Đăng Điệp 2017: 1-10). Vietnamese poetry, especially Thơ mới (Romantic New Poetry), 1932-1945, is mainly explored in terms of reflecting, evoking and encouraging harmonious relationships between man and nature. New poems about natural disasters and associated social issues have not received much attention from the perspective of ecocriticism by researchers (Nguyễn Đăng Điệp 2014: 31-46). This paper aims to fill this gap by analyzing descriptions

about natural disasters and destructions in New Poetry, understanding how those descriptions reflect colonial conditions of Vietnam in the early twentieth century.

It is discernible that New Poetry expresses human awareness of natural phenomena unfavorable to man. The lyrical characters in New Poetry acknowledge that natural phenomena do not please people in the tropical monsoon land. In other words, the physical responses of people to climates and ecologic systems typical of the tropics occur frequently in this poetry. For example, Anh Thơ's poem "In the Summer" (Vào hè) describes the sultry, stinky, and exhausted silence of the northern Vietnamese summer:

> The sun was burning, the garden trees were breathing the wind
> The alley was full of flies and mosquitoes; the butterflies were absent. ...
> In the fields, rice also began to thirst
> The young girls sluggishly the pulled bucket string.

The hot sun and the dense heat create a thick, stuffy space; the air does not move, the silent objects make the space more stagnant; the appearance of flies and mosquitoes indicate that the air is humid and still. Such a summer-noon atmosphere definitely drains human vitality; people also become somber, and tired; and even young people become "sluggish". The poem is a poetic description of geographical characteristics in the mid-summer time of the Northern Delta of Vietnam, which is both high temperature and high humidity, easily making the body and mind of human drowsy and exhausted.

The acknowledgment of the inevitable but unfavorable natural conditions against the human mental and body forms the main theme in Đoàn Văn Cừ's poem "The Village Field" (Đồng làng). Here, the geographical features (soil, climate, water level, and temperature) are the most challenging to human activities and to plants' survival in the Northern Delta of Vietnam. These challenges appear directly in this poem:

> June afternoon and night the water dried up
> The sound of chicken raising the neck ...

> July it rained, flooding four sides
> Late-night copper waves hit the bamboo-made banks ...
> January's wind and rain were freezing
> ...

The poem features the typical climatic features of the North from time to time. The appearance of the specific time in the poem ("June", "July", "January") gives the impression of the immutable harsh nature. As thousands of generations pass, June is the driest and hottest month of the year, July is the rainiest month, and January is the coldest though theoretically it is spring. Dwellers, as described, appear to have familiarized with the drought in June, flood in July and the coldness in January. In other words, that the climate does not favor humans and other beings is normalized in lives of people in River Delta area. More than that, farm work still takes place in accordance to climatic characteristics of each time: January is for plowing and December is for beating the soil and sowing seeds.

The change of soil over time, accompanied by the blurring of human traces, is also described as a rule in another poem, entitled "Afternoon rain on the grave" (Chiều mưa trên mộ địa) by Phan Văn Dật:

> The old tombs are spacious
> River water has not evaded yet
> Now each year the soil is increasingly falling
> Every day exposing a few more skulls
> Eroding soil, naked banks
> The bones drifted together

The poem describes the erosion of burial grounds, normally established in rice paddies, due to river tides and season floods. The transformation of the burial ground here looks like the rhyme of the universe. The disappearance of human bodies becomes natural. As such, the poem seems to contain a philosophy about the relationship between man and nature, that is the mental acceptance of the harsh conditions of nature. By bringing in the poems the unfavorable aspects and conditions of nature towards the man, New

Poetry reflects and develops a spirit of harmony with nature and the natural way of life of man. Evoking such a philosophy, New Poetry seems to attempt to build a dialectic and indirect relationship between nature and culture. It seems to reassert man as part of nature, or as part of the natural cycle just like the rest of this world. With this meaning, New Poetry potentially offers a point that is relevant to the classic ecocriticism. That is the emphasis on man-made landscape as the symbol of instability, death, and loneliness and nature as the place of alleviation and protection.

But nature in Poetry also appears as a threatening force to human life. Together with socio-cultural forces, nature participates in human destruction. In other words, New Poetry contains the poems that demonstrate mismatches of cultural and natural duality. Poems about natural disasters of New Poetry show that people are both struggling and fleeing from society while struggling and feeling from nature at the same time.

Specifically, a series of poems in the New Poetry movement describes natural disasters of the delta area in the form of stories that contain events, plots, and characters. In them, the two main protagonists are human and water; the narrative progresses in the order that water attacks humans and in return, humans psychologically, physiologically and physically react to escape from it. The final win always belongs to nature. This is apparent in the poem "Night rain on the Fish Tent" (Mưa đêm lều vó) by Trần Huyền Trân:

> Rain flooding pond, rain throughout the night
> The trees on the shore bewildered, seeing the rising water
> My tent, ants have moved to the roof
> The old fisherwoman worries that she does not have a boat

Here, people and creatures reacted passively to the floods: "trees bewildered", "ants ... moved to the roof", and "the old fisherwoman worries that he doesn't have a boat". The inability of man facing the nature is also demonstrated in the poem "Mountain rain" (Mưa ngàn) by Hồ Dzenh:

April flood and heavy rain
Water flowing down bringing along all the yellow leaves
Road back: flooded river, floating bridge
The way to your hometown is too far away!

Culture - embodied in objects made by humans for survival such as "boats", "tents", "bridges", "ways of return" -- become useless and are even destroyed by the onslaught of nature (bridges are washed away, roads are flooded).

In the works by the female poet Anh Thơ, natural disasters are described as the "wrath" of heaven and earth. Both the sun and the flood appeared in a fierce, fervent state: "the sun is shining through the golden sun!". All living creatures were exhausted facing the drought:

Banana garden wilted in silence
The vegetables in the pond were dried up
In the fields, ripened rice was burned to the ground (Great Drought).

Anh Thơ also describes storms and floods as raging hurricanes:

Rains are pouring all over the sky,
The wind is roaring all over the earth, hurting trees
Lightning raging from the sky vibrating
Howling long snails in fear
In the wind roaring green bamboo (Thunderstorm night).
The scene of the broken dyke is described as a cataclysm:
The dyke broke down on a rainy night
River water flowed massively, submerging the rice fields (Flood).

The poem "The sound of waves" (Tiếng sóng) by Phạm Huy Thông also shares the scene of terrible storms and floods, which become fiercer when being placed in a dark space:

There are many dark nights like hell,
Waves like a holy ghost howling,
Naturally, in the dark, lightning flashed
And storms roaring and thunders booming
Chaotic night waves shouted loudly

The whole universe seemed to be buried in a storm!

Strong verbs "massively ... pour", "roar", "slash tree", "strike back", "roar ... snatch tree", "howl", "roar", "Booming", "thunderstorms" and "chaos of lightning," emphasize the wild and rage angers of the nature. And the whole universe, including people, became small and helpless as if "to be buried in a storm!". Likewise, the poem "Deep Love" (Tình thâm) by Hồi Văn Thảo also shows the "cruelty" of nature:

> A big and cruel wave
> Slowly slap the hip
> Leaning ... then falling ... the farmer:
> "Oh! hurry up! Otherwise I will die! ...
>
> In the dark pool a person was wading
> Hands holding the child, holding his wife, floundering in the water ...
>
> Silence ... slowly sinking into the bottom of the water
> Wanting to pull his wife up, but being exhausted
> Trying his best to raise up the child, diving straight to shore
> Looking back, just a hazy sequence
> Where is the corpse of unlucky flowing?

The poem is like a short film showing a family caught in a flood. The husband tries to save his wife and children. However, he is exhausted; the wife sacrifices herself, leaving him so that he can save their child.

All the poems are about human fear and horror in the face of natural disasters. Man becomes small and helpless in front of it; cultural objects and human civilization are depicted in the state of fleeing from nature, powerless and overthrown by nature. Here, it seems that people who are at the deathly pinnacle of their lives - on the boundary between life and death --become prisoners of culture and history. They realize that their lives are ruled by nature and that they could never be able to live in a space out of nature. The poems seem to be proving that man cannot expect a relief either in culture or in nature.

New poems about natural disasters also present a deep sense

of space and place as a fact that the lyrical author and the characters deeply feel connected with words, images, and stories that are related to their own geographic place. This embodies what the critic Neil Evernden describes the ways through which ecological stories evolve (Evernden 1978: 16-20). The sensitivity of people to geography is more discernible in Doan Van Cu's poem "Omen: Good, Evil, Weather" ("Điềm ứng: lành dữ, thời tiết"). In this poem, natural phenomena correspond to individual and communal destinies: for example, the phenomenon "bear eating the moon" is the omen of "community's unavoidable hunger"; "crowing hen" is a signal of bad news; similarly, "the black clouds rising in the east, it is about to storm / The crabs scrawling on the main road: a flood is coming⋯ / The moon is covered with clouds: there are coming drought and cracked fields / Ants crawling on the walls: big rains are wading / lightening mid-autumn moonlight: a good harvesting is coming / A dark night, ghosts are wandering/ if they are lighting green, it will be sunny; red, raining / Crows crying, dead people, dead soul". The poem demonstrates human's recognition or awareness of the initiative and acumen of natural creatures in particular and of the non-human world at large. The poem is also the human's self-consciousness about the inseparable relationship between their lives and the lives of all beings.

Notably, this relationship tends to appear in ominous and catastrophic forms. This shows the human's insecurity living in the universe. In another poem, Đoàn Văn Cừ names this insecurity as "Lingering Vague Fears" (Những mối lo sợ phấp phỏng). The poem is short, but includes adjectives that indicate human's constant mental crises facing natural disasters: "youth and elders are afraid" and "flabbergasted worrying the broken dyke":

> June rain flashes brightly
> The wind flies, the straw swirls in the distance
> Youth and elders are looking for ways to avoid storms
> Take the pestle to support the house
> July is resplendent with dike protection
> It rains, flood water keeps pouring back
> Villagers flabbergast, worrying broken embankments
> At late night, they cut the bamboo stumps

June has not yet come, but the lyrical character and the lyrical author have faintly feared about the natural disasters normally happening during this time. All the characters in the poem are anxious about the disasters and even take extreme actions in responding to the forecasted catastrophes: storm has not come yet, but people have already "supported the house;" the embankment has not been broken yet, but people have already rushed to "cut the bamboo stump" even in the dark to support it. This indicates that people constantly live in a state of anxiety and uncertainty. In other words, natural disasters and other dangers hidden in nature are seen as possible at any time and people are constantly feeling insecure. Yi-Fu Tuan, a humanist geographer in his book *The Landscape of Fear* affirmed that this type of uncertainty is common in many ecological literatures (Tuan 1979). Natural catastrophic events cause humans to struggle and even die in the literal sense of the word. Yi-Fu Tuan describes this strange connection - the connection that occurs between human consciousness and a place - as an "awareness of the place," where from time to time, places can become places of terror or a landscape filled with dark images of the mind and with fears of drought, earthquake, floods, famines, and diseases that are all felt by members of a community (Tuan 1979). The village space in the New Poetry with the emergence of natural disasters becomes a container filled with fears of seemingly captive people, helpless people, and people of failure.

But the New Poetry of natural disasters not only reflects man's self-awareness of their failure in front of nature and his abandon of the traditional thinking of nature as a place to return for peace and stability. Rather, New Poetry's narratives about natural disasters reflect and participate in a discourse on environmental and social justice. Observably, disaster poems focus on rural areas and the inferior social groups. In other words, those who suffer the disaster can be classified under what Karen Warren calls "Other human groups" in her book *Ecofeminist Philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It is and Why It Matters* (2000). According to Warren, inferior people groups such as women, people of color, children, and the poor people belong to the Other human groups. The inferior position is derived from the condition of being unfairly excluded

from the occupation of land and other natural sources. The characters who are defeated and exhausted by nature as seen in the New Poetry of Vietnam are largely women. It is the girl who visits the field in the poem "Big Drought" (Đại hạn) and "the young girls" drawing water from the well in the poem "In the summer" (Vào hè) by Anh Thơ. It is the wife drowned in the poem "Deep Love" (Tình thâm) of Hồ Văn Thảo. The appearance of the image of women in Anh Thơ's drought poems interestingly corresponds to Karen Warren's depiction of unjustly possessed (labor force) condition of women in drought conditions. Warren describes that in Asia and Africa, the majority of women and children are responsible for securing water. The scarcity of water causes women to walk farther to find water. And in Vietnamese New Poetry, the emergence of depressed women in the drought reflects both the possessed state of their labor – farming and gardening identified as women's work - and women's risks and dangers in the face of natural disasters. And as Warren argues, among those who suffer from environmental damage including the white, the black, the poor, children, women, the elderly, colonists, and Third World people, women are the most exposed to disproportionately high risks and dangers compared to men.

Not only women but also farmers are affected by natural disasters in Vietnamese New Poetry. The low class of those directly affected by natural disasters can be implied through the image of tents and thatched houses that pervade many new poems. As commonly described, the structure of these setting places is largely fragile, so poor farmers are the most direct and fastest subject exposed to the destructing forces of natural disasters: "In the village, the roof flies away" (Storm (Cơn giông), Anh Thơ), "All over the village, the house roof is exposing to the open air" (Thunderstorm night (Đêm going tố), Anh Thơ). Moreover, the destruction of nature is not only manifested in the fact that it takes away human lives but also in the fact that it threatens human survival. That is, for poor peasants, natural disasters destroy their crops – their food and clothes: gardens are being flooded: "The trees were lost in the middle of the immense" (Flood (Lụt), Anh Thơ), fields are drying "In the fields, ripen rice was burned to the ground ... / The girls took

each other to visit the fields. / Roll the buck rope depressively on the deserted field ... / In the field, ripened rice is dry till dead" (Great Drought, Anh Thơ). Lost crops, starvation, and homelessness are all the consequences of natural disasters that the farmers suffered.

Here, it seems that the Vietnamese New Poetry, with poems about hostile natural disasters, reflect the weather situation and social condition of Vietnam that were associated with colonization before 1945. According to the agricultural report of the colonial administrators in Indochina, Annam farmers always faced the dangers of tropical climate including storms, floods and droughts and related dangerous diseases. From 1902 to 1918, the Red River Delta was flooded every year; from 1913 to 1915, devastating floods destroyed 94,000 and 365,000 hectares of rice fields. In the years before the World War I, per capita rice consumption dramatically decreased and hunger was rampant. This situation became worse in 1916 as a result of droughts and floods. The rice harvest yielded half of the previous year's crop. In the 1920s, similar conditions forced northern farmers to become workers in the rubber plantation areas in the south and even further on the island of New Caledonia (Brocheux 2015). In the years 1936-1937, farmers from North to Central Vietnam experienced unusual droughts and catastrophic floods. As described by Geoffrey C. Gunn, in the summer of 1937, the monsoon appeared, creating long rains throughout the Red River Delta. In provinces such as Bac Ninh, Hai Huong, Hung Yen, and Bac Giang, dykes broke all at once, water spilled over the area. This made the productivity of rice decrease significantly. Famine threatened severely (Gunn 2014 121). Thus, the Vietnamese New Poetry reflects the local natural conditions and its impacts on the psychological life, physical condition and other material aspects of contemporary Vietnamese people.

Ⅳ. Ecological Wounds in Vietnamese New Poetry

With the advent of the animal rights movement, ecocritics increasingly accept that the non-human beings have emotions - or

at least are able to endure and experience pain - and therefore should be respected and sympathized (Phillips 2010: 1-2; Trexler 2015). Specifically, although the ecocritics do not claim that other ecosystems have emotions similar to humans, they do recognize the fragility and the biological importance of certain geographical areas. Human activities can adversely affect the species in these areas, even creating some lasting wounds on them. In order to sense the ecological wounds, environmentalists developed an awareness that humans are actually trapped in an ecosystem like any other animals. That is, when humans destroy the landscape by discharging hazardous waste into it and by blocking or filling wetlands, those interventions also spoil quality of drinking water, shade and oxygen needed for human life and limit humans' ability to mitigate floods with natural drainage. That wounded ecosystem would hurt people in return (Woolbright 2011: iv-v). Ecological critics have searched in literature for suggestive presentations of ecological wounds. Examining the Vietnamese New Poetry, this paper argues that this body of modern Vietnamese literature contains haunting expressions about painful feelings of the ecological world.

Indeed, a prominent theme in many new poems is the loss and vulnerability of beings living in forests. In these poems, natural beings painfully groan due to brutal interventions from humans. That is the scene of the forest being slaughtered: the animals are murdered, resulting in "the carpet of leaves and the blood of the birds over floating;" leaves of the forest are trampled, "groaning" (Fighting Elephants (Chiến tượng), Chế Lan Viên). In the poem, entitled "Visitors from afar" (Khách từ ngàn phương), by Cẩm Lai, the forest world becomes barren: "the forest is empty, trees are scattered"; only "yellow leaves... shivering;" in remaining tree bushes, "the leaves are leaving," and lonely birds are chirping "anxiously." The animals in Dinh Hùng's poetry howl and cry: "The wild gibbons cry, scaring the late moon" (The falling direction of the stars (Những hướng sao rơi)); "The forest that day echoed savage laughter / ... I came here to hear the mountain gibbons sadly crying" (A nature's girl (Người giá thiên nhiên)). The lotus pond in Trần Huyền Trân's poetry transforms into a sewage: "Being famous as a lotus pond/it is in fact now a waste water pond" (Mother raising children (Mẹ

nuôi con)).

The poem "Green Nostalgiat" (Nhớ rừng) by Thế Lữ presents the most complex vulnerability of forest beings in particular and of nature in general. Vietnamese scholars have largely examined the poem's symbolism, which embodies Vietnamese intellectuals' longing for freedom in the colonized condition of their country (Nguyễn Đình Hòa 1972:17). However, this poem in its literal meaning is about the condition and the mood of a tiger living in a cage in a park. This man-made living space is supposed to save this animal from extinction. However, the tiger is constantly nostalgic for the wild life in the forest. S/he misses "the sound of the wind roaring ... the voice of the mountain screaming." S/he also longs for the majesty that s/he possessed in the past, when s/he could "sing out loud the long epic" and "bravely walk with dignity." All the moves in the past occurs in heroic manners, that are contradictory to the imprison of the present:

> Moving the body like a smooth rolling wave
> Quietly playing with dark shadows, thorns leaves, sharp grass
> In the dark cave, when my eyes are crippled
> I can make everything silent.

But all these nostalgic images reflect mental exhaustion of the tiger, who is forced to live in the man-made house. The poem apparently criticizes the nature preservation that does not favor the animals and other non-human beings, whose lives are attached to the wilderness and freedom.

The idea of appreciating the wild nature (animals and plants) in the poem corresponds to the complex notion of nature protection in recent discussions among ecocritics. Bernard Williams emphasizes the paradox in projects of preserving the untouched natural spaces and species. He says, "we have to use our power to preserve a sense of what [nature] is not in our power." And "anything we leave untouched, we have already touched." The poem by Thế Lữ is filled with the sound of birds, plants and trees. However, they are all set in the context of a lost past, which is only for memory of the lyrical character, the tiger. That is the lost scenery. The reality in the

present is the loss and mourning of wild nature. The blood-stained and wound-stained images of the forest in the poems suggest a warning of the consequences of the wildlife protection programs that aim to capture animals and place them into parks.

According to Ursula Heise, ecocritics have recently asked the question which conflicts shape stories about endangered species in specific cultural communities. In the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century, when mass extinctions of many species happened, the term "biodiversity" emerged as an imperative of the environmental movement, resulting to the frequent concern of extinction that was seen as a guarantee of the quality of the environmental movement. "Endangered or extinct animals become a way of commemorating or mourning the loss to think of one's own collective identity in the context of the major change in modernization or colonization, or both (Heise 2107: 8). In this understanding, the image of the tiger nostalgic for the freedom indicates that the preservation programs did not prioritize nature's benefit and survival but proved human domination. That is, this animal is supposed by humans to have the tendency of living and feeling like humans; thus it is thought to be certainly happy to live in the park. The tiger's view of the park as a prison suggest a criticism of the ignorance of human towards the non-human beings' voices, feelings, and emotions. Moreover, the green nostalgia of the tiger suggests the present disappearance of wild landscapes caused by preservation programs. While seizing land, forest and species into preserved areas, owners of these programs must potentially abuse landscapes and injure ecosystems.

Moreover, contextualized in the colonial preservation initiatives in the early twentieth century in Vietnam, the poem "Green Nostagia" provokes political meanings that are associated with ecological messages. Specifically, the nostalgia for freedom and the imprisoned condition of the tiger apparently referred to the disappearance of forest which was the result of the colonial projects of preserving nature and building parks in Indochina. In his study "Protection of Forests and Colonial Environmentalism in Indochina, 1860-1945," Frédéric Thomas (2009) examines ecological consequences of the French's occupation of Indochina's forests and establishment of conservation sectors. In order to rationalize the colonial

government's intervention in Indochina's land and forest resources, French administrative officials fabricated the discourse of intense destruction of nature, in which precious animals such as water buffalo were increasingly extinct and many died due to viral infections. The discourse aimed to justify the governmental projects of transforming natural land into protected areas which would expand the land areas controlled and occupied by the colonial government. By 1928, up to 6.8 percent of the forests in Indochina were classified as protected areas and by the end of the colonial period, six hundred protected areas were set up in Indochina, representing 5.2 percent of the total area of rural land, 8.1 percent forest land. In 1926, the colonial government planned to create a conservation area for some species and to build a national park. The purpose of these plans was to protect elephants, rhino, wild buffalo, and female deer from extinction. And, as Aline Demay (2015) describes in his book Tourism and Colonization in Indochina (1898-1939), the establishment of national parks to protect the indigenous flora was mainly aimed at attracting tourists (113-115). And as noted by Thomas (2009), protected area projects did not aim to protect the tropical forest environment but often to give priority to "free exploitation of the richest forest areas".

Thus, the poems about forests in general in New Poetry and the poem "Nhớ rừng" in particular, definitely resonated the public discussions about the colonial project of constructing forest reservation areas. Moreover, with emphasis on the nostalgia of forest creatures who were free and happy in the past and on their currently imprisoned and vulnerable condition, the poem seems to have participated into the anti-colonial movement in Vietnam from the late 1920s to the late 1930s. In other words, as the historian Thomas (2009) observed, public opposition to conservation policies form a central factor in the formation of many national independence movements [in Indochina]" (105).

It is obvious that natural disasters and ecological themes of the Vietnamese New Poetry are associated with the colonial conditions of Vietnam during the French colonial period (1858-1945). In other words, ecocriticism provides the Vietnamese New Poetry with undeniable political and social allegories, all of which suggest a

criticism of colonial policies of exploiting the local natural and ecological sources. These social and political messages potentially attend to rising theoretical and practical turns in ecocriticism recently. That is, this literary approach increasingly concerns complex associations between ecological and environmental problems with social and political conditions. Specifically, at the beginning 1970s, ecocriticism mostly concentrated on nature writing; since the early 21th century, this approach has tended to explore how literature presents social and political issues associated with environmental and ecological ones. In other words, recent environmental crisis - especially those associated with weather changes – have driven many environmental activists and even environmental scientists to further think about the complex connections of culture, language and narrative with natural and environmental issues.

In her lecture delivered at the Department of Literature (Hanoi National University of Social Sciences) on December 2, 2017, Ursula Heise quoted environmental historian Sverker Sörlin (2012: 788):

> "Our belief that science alone could deliver us from the planetary quagmire is long dead. For some time, hopes were high for economics and incentive-driven new public management solutions. However, after the 20 years since the Rio Conference in 1992... we must again determine path-ways to sustainability. It seems this time that our hopes are tied to the humanities."

The significance of such a transformation is not just a closer analysis of what is often referred to as the "human dimension of environmental crises" in the policy statements of NGOs and international institutions. Instead, when exploring local, ethnic, regional and global cultures of environmental issues, environmental humanists have searched to redefine perceptions of ecological crises. These crises, which are often primarily approached as questions about governmental policies, technology and science - like pollution, biodiversity loss, global warming - are now understood as challenges to social justice and cultural discrimination.

According to Ursula, environmental justice has formed a

central question of the latest development of ecocriticism. Environmental justice as a movement emerged in the United States in the 1980s, focusing on the uneven distribution of natural resources and environmental risks among different population groups. For example, colored communities (particularly African-American and Latino-American groups) often face hazardous industries, hazardous waste sites, polluted air and water, and barren soil. At the same time, similar environmental movements were prominent in the southern hemisphere: the sociologist Ramachandra Guha and the political scientist Joan Martínez-Alier called it "the environmental movement of the poor." This phrase means that communities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America believe that fighting against deforestation, erosion, pollution and government land acquisition is for self-preservation. Currently, as Ursula observed, ethnic minority communities (people of color, women, ethnic minorities, low-income people) are simultaneously fighting against conservation projects such as protected areas of wildlife or national parks. They are inherently established by environmental organizations in North America or Western Europe without taking into account opinions of the local communities. Environmental justice movements are not always easily connected to each other. Nevertheless, over the past decade, in new areas of social struggle such as food justice, energy justice. and fair weather, the struggles for a sustainable ecosystem have become connected in many parts of the world (Heise 2017: 5-8).

By way of implying colonial conditions in poetic descriptions of natural disasters and ecological wounds, the Vietnamese New Poetry affirms recent social and political concerns of ecocriticism. This potentially indicates dynamic developments of ecocriticism when it comes to non-Western literatures.

Acknowledgment:

(National University of Singapore), who checked the English of this work.

References

Ahmed, Hamoud y'ahya. 2005.Greening of Resistance in Arabic Poems. An Ecocritical Interpretation of Selected Arabic Poems. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, (1): 13 – 22.

Aiyer, K. R. 2009. Dharma in the Mahabharata as a response to ecological crises: A speculation. *The Trumpeter*, 9. http://trumpeter.athabascau.ca/index.php/trumpet/article/view/1078/1470 (Accessed December 20, 2018).

Aiyer, K. R. 2009. A social ecological perspective on some episodes from the Mahabharata. *Indian Journal of Eco-criticism,* 2. https://vdocuments.mx/ecocritical-review-of-the-mahabharata.html (Accessed on December 20, 2018).

Brocheux, Pierre. 2015. Colonial Society (Indochina), 1914-1918. *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*. Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson eds. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin. https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/colonial_society_indochina (Accessed on February 29, 2019).

Demay, Aline. 2015. *Tourism and Colonization in Indochina* (1898-1939). Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Estok, Simon C. 2016. *Partial Views: An Introduction to* East Asian Ecocriticisms. *East Asian Ecocriticisms: A Critical Reader*. Simon C. Estok and Won-Chung Kim, eds. 1-15. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Flys, Carmen. 2010. The State of Ecocriticism in Europe: Panel

Discussion. *Ecozon@,* 1 (1): 108-122

Frédéric, Thomas. 2009. Protection des forêts et environnementalisme colonial: Indochine, 1860-1945. *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 56 (4): 104-136

Gunn, Geoffrey C.. 2012. *Rice Wars in Colonial Vietnam: The Great Famine and the Viet Minh Road to Power.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Heise, Ursula. 2013. Globality, Difference, and the International Turn in Ecocriticism. *PMLA,* 128(3): 636-643.

. 2017. *Ecocriticism.* Lecture delivered at the Department of Literature, Hanoi National University of Social Sciences.

Jamieson, Neil L. 1993. *Understanding Vietnam. Berkeley*, CA: University of California Press.

Lại Nguyên Ân. 1998. *Thơ mới 1932 – 1945 tác giả và tác phẩm.* Hà Nội; NXB Hội nhà văn.

Mishra, Raj Kumar. 2012. Ecocriticism in Eastern and Western Traditions. *IUP Journal of English Studies*, 7 (1): 1-9.

Nguyễn Đăng Điệp. 2017. Thời đại khủng hoảng môi trường và vai trò, vị thế của phê bình sinh thái. *Phê bình sinh thái – tiếng nói bản địa, tiếng nói toàn cầu.* 1-46. Hà Nội: NXB Hội nhà văn.

_____. 2014. Thơ mới từ góc nhìn sinh thái học văn hóa. *Thơ Việt Nam hiện đại tiến trình và hiện tượng.* 31-46. Hà Nội: NXB Văn học.

Nguyễn, Đình Hòa. 1975. *Some Aspects of Vietnamese Culture: Four Lectures.* Carbondale (Ill.): Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Center for Vietnamese Studies.

Phillips, Dana. 2010. Introduction: Special Issue on Animal Studies and Ecocriticism. *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies,* 11: 1-2

Ryan, John. 2018. Southeast Asian Ecocriticism: Theories, Practices, Prospects. Maryland: Lexington Books.

Sharma, Pankaj. 2011. Ecocriticism and the Ramayana of Tulsidasa.

Saaebrüken LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.

Sörlin, Sverker. 2012. Environmental Humanities: Why Should Biologists Interested in the Environment Take the Humanities Seriously? *BioScience* 62.9. https://academic.oup.com/ bioscience/article/62/9/788/231186 (Accessed Feb. 20, 2019).

Trexler, Adam. 2015. *Anthropocene Fictions The Novel in a Time of Climate Change*. Virginia: University of Virginia Press.

Tuan, Yi-fu. 1979. *Landscapes of Fear*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Woolbright, Lauren. 2011. Wounded Planet, Wounded People: The Possibility of Ecological Trauma. PhD dissertation. Clemson University.

Text and Manuscript Guideline

1. TEXT STYLE

1) Language
The manuscript should be written in English.

2) Length
The manuscript should be between 5,000 to 10,000 words in length, including references, appendices, tables and figures. Book Review or Research Report submissions must be between 1,000 to 2,000 words.

3) Format
All pieces must be encoded in a Microsoft Word file, 1.5-spaced, in Times New Roman, Font Size 12.

4) Spelling
The Journal uses US spelling, and the author should therefore follow the latest edition of the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

5) Abbreviations
In general, terms should not be abbreviated unless they are used repeatedly and the abbreviation is helpful to the reader. Initially use the word in full, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter use the abbreviation only.

6) Sections, Tables and Figures
Sections and sub-sections should be divided by "I, 1.1., 1.1.1." And tables and figures should be numbered by <Table 1>, <Figure 1>. The Journal prints papers in black and white but upload PDF files in full color at the journal homepage.

7) References

References should be in Roman script and placed at the end of the manuscript in alphabetical order.

2. FOOTNOTES AND CITATIONS

1) Footnotes

Notes should be kept to a minimum and numbered consecutively throughout the manuscript. Notes should be included as footnote, and not as endnote. Footnotes with more than 5 lines will be inserted into the text.

2) Citations in the Text

All source references are to be identified at the appropriate point in the text by the last name of the author, year of publication and pagination where needed. Identify subsequent citations of the same source in the same way as the first. Examples follow:

- If author's name is in the text, follow it with year in parentheses.
  Wong (1986)

- Pagination follows year of publication after a colon.
  James (1979: 56)

- If author's name is not in the text, insert, in parentheses, the last name and year. (Duncan 1986: 76)

- Give both last names for two authors. Give all last names on first citation in text for more than two authors; thereafter use "et al." in the text. When two authors have the same last names, use identifying initials in the text.

- Separate series of references with semi-colons and enclose them within a single pair of parentheses.
  (Edwards 1981: 43; Lee et al. 1983: 112).

- In case of daily, weekly, monthly publications and similar references, pagination follows 'dd/mm/yyyy' after a comma.
  (Korea Times 01/04/2014, 3).

- For a manuscript that is planned to be published, year of writing shall be indicated. When there is no year of writing, n.d. shall be written.
  Taylor (n.d.)

- In case of an organization as an author, information that can be identified shall be provided.
  (Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security 1992)

3. REFERENCES

Detailed information on all literature mentioned in the text and footnote shall be shown in <References> at the end of the text. Literature that was not mentioned in the text and footnote shall not be included.

1) Books

- In case of one author: for author name that is Romanized, family name and first name shall be put in order.

    Jessup, Helen I. 2004. *Art & Architecture of Cambodia.* London: Thames & Hudson.

- In case of more than 2 authors: for the text and footnote, 'et al.' shall be written, but for references, all names of co-authors shall be written. However, if 'et al.' is written on the book cover from the first, it shall be as it is.

    Freeman, Michael and Claude Jacques. 1999. *Ancient Ankor*. Bangkok: Asia Books.

- In case of an edited book, it shall be written in ed.

    Steinberg, David Joel, ed. 1987. *In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

- In case of translated books, it shall be in the order of original author, year of publication of translated books, name of translated book, author and publisher.

    Coedes, George. 1968. *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia.* Susan B. Cowing, trans. Honolulu: An East-West Center Book. The University Press of Hawaii.

2) Journal Articles/ Monthly Magazine

- In case of papers such as journals, monthly magazine, etc, volume and number shall be in volume (number), and the relevant pages shall be definitely indicated.

> Egreteau, Renaud. 2008. India's Ambitions in Burma. *Asian Survey,* 48(6): 936-957.

3) Chapter in a Book

- In case of the text in a compilation, it shall be in the order of author, year of publication, compilation name, compiler, related page and publisher. If there is no compiler, then it can be omitted.

> King, Victor T. 2006. Southeast Asia: Personal Reflections on a Region. *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions.* Cynthia Chou and Vincent Houben, eds. 23-44. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

4) Thesis and Dissertation

- In case of a thesis or dissertation, the following form shall be followed.

> Parker, John. 1988. The Representation of Southeast Asian Art. PhD Dissertation. Harvard University.

5) Newspaper Articles

- In case of a daily newspaper, by-line story of weekly magazine and column, the following form shall be followed.

> Peterson, Thomas. 1993. The Economic Development of ASEAN. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 22: 23.

6) Internet Sources

- In case of the internet searching, it shall be in order of author, year of production, subject and web address (Accessed Month DD, YYYY).

> Hadar, Leon. 1998. U.S. Sanctions against Burma. *Trade Policy Analysis* no. 1. http://www.cato.org/pubs/trade/tpa-001.html. (Accessed May 07, 2008).

SUVANNABHUMI
Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

Submission Guidelines

SUVANNABHUMI is an international, peer-reviewed journal committed to the publication of scholarship in Southeast Asian Studies. It aims to offer a scholarly platform for original works drawn from research findings, theoretical thought, reflection, and/or reinterpretation of long-held viewpoints, ideas, or methodologies. The scope covers in particular, but not exclusively, the following fields of discussion: cultural studies, the arts, language and linguistics, history, archaeology and prehistory, anthropology, sociology, religion, literature, tourism, socio-economic issues, and politics.

- **Manuscripts should be submitted to this Journal Editor(chiefeditor@bufs.ac.kr) with the following details:**

  - ✓ The Author(s)'s curriculum vitae (less than 100 words);
  - ✓ An abstract (150-200 words);
  - ✓ Five key words; and
  - ✓ Contact information in a separate file.

- **In order to ensure a double-blind peer review, the Author(s) is advised to remove any identifying information from the manuscript.**

- **There is no submission charge or Article Processing Charge (APC).**

- **For further details, please visit our website (suvannabhumi.bufs.ac.kr)**

ARTICLES

Articles