

ISSN 2092-738X



# SUVANNABHUMI

Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

**Vol 7, No 1**

June 2015



# **SUVANNABHUMI**

Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

## **EDITORIAL BOARD**

### **Editor**

PARK Jang Sik (Busan University of Foreign Studies, Korea)

### **Associate Editors**

KIM Dong Yeob (Busan University of Foreign Studies, Korea)

KIM Yekyoum (Busan University of Foreign Studies, Korea)

Louie Jon A. Sanchez (Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines)

### **Editorial Board Members**

Stephen Keck (American University of Sharjah, UAE)

Bob Hudson (University of Sydney, Australia)

Bao Maohong (Peking University, China)

Fan Hongwei (Xiamen University, China)

Keiko Tosa (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan)

JEONG Yeonsik (Changwon National University, Korea)

KIM Minjung (Kangwon National University, Korea)

LEE Sang-kook (Yonsei University, Korea)

Fadzliwati Mohiddin (Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Brunei)

Eng Kok-Thay (Documentation Center of Cambodia, Cambodia)

Yekti Maunati (Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Indonesia)

Bounmy Keohavong (Souphanouvong University, Laos)

Ying Hooi KHOO (University of Malaya, Malaysia)

Nanda Hmun (Department of Historical Research, Ministry of Culture, Myanmar)

Maitrii Aung-Thwin (National University of Singapore, Singapore)

Samerchai Poolsuwan (Thammasat University, Thailand)

Le Huy Bac (Hanoi National University of Education, Vietnam)

**Copyright** © Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form without the prior permission in writing from the copyright holder. Special requests should be addressed to the following address.

### **Institute for Southeast Asian Studies**

Busan University of Foreign Studies

A-504, 65, Geumsaem-ro 485, Geumjeong-gu, Busan 48565, South Korea

Tel. +82-51-509-6636, Fax. +82-51-509-6649

suvannabhumi.iseas.kr, editor@iseas.kr

ISSN 2092-738X

Printing: Sejong Press



# SUVANNABHUMI

Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

**Vol 7, No 1**

June 2015



# CONTENTS

## **Special Review**

*on Southeast Asian Studies*

### **Introduction**

Southeast Asian Studies: Area, Method and Comparison  
by Victor T. King ..... 7

### **Victor T. King**

Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies: Issues in  
Multidisciplinary Studies and Methodology ..... 13

### **Cahyo Pamungkas**

Approaches in Southeast Asian Studies: Developing  
Post-colonial Theories in Area Studies ..... 59

### **Shintaro Fukutake**

A Historical Review of Japanese Area Studies and the  
Emergence of Global Studies ..... 77

### **Mala Rajo Sathian**

Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies: Beyond the  
“Comfort Zone” ..... 89

## **Articles**

### **William B Noseworthy**

The Mother Goddess of Champa: Po Inâ Nâgar ..... 107

### **BAO Maohong**

The Pluralism of Ethnic Cultures and Inclusive  
Development in the Philippines ..... 139

### **Lei Lei Win**

A Study on Kyaikkatha: An Early Urban Settlement in  
Lower Myanmar ..... 157

## **Appendix**

Text and Manuscript Guideline ..... 187




# **Special Review**

## on Southeast Asian Studies



**Southeast Asian Studies:  
Area, Method and Comparison**



Victor T. King

The four papers in this special issue of the journal emerged from the International Conference of ISEAS/BUFS on 24 April 2015, hosted by the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies. The two major themes addressed were the 'Regional Characteristics of Southeast Asia and its Comparison with Others' and 'Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies: Methodological Quests'. The relationships between the academic programmes pursued by area studies specialists, the methods they employ to gather and analyze data and the comparisons which they endeavour to make between regions, nation-states, ethnic groups, and communities are undoubtedly complex and disputed.

This special issue is of considerable interest because it comprises the thoughts of four researchers with different backgrounds, interests and agendas: we have views from Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan and the United Kingdom, and all four countries have developed the study of the region from different traditions and have organized and undertaken research on Southeast Asia in different ways and with different emphases.

---

We would like to express special thanks to Professor Victor T. King for generously accepting to write this introduction even on a cruise journey to Alaska.

Victor King in his paper 'Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies: Issues in Multidisciplinary Studies and Methodology' takes a more disciplinary-based view of the study of Southeast Asia whilst recognizing that multidisciplinary research has made a positive contribution to our understanding of the region; the influence of the American model of Southeast Asian Studies and the strength of disciplinary approaches and nation-state-based foci are clear, though early on some prominent British scholars like DGE Hall, JS Furnivall and Charles Fisher had a strong sense of the integrity of Southeast Asia as a region. King casts doubt on whether area studies (as a multidisciplinary, context-driven, and conceptually grounded academic enterprise, and one which is often concerned with policy and practice) has contributed to the development of distinctive methodologies separate from disciplinary-generated modes of data gathering and analysis.

Shintaro Fukutake in his contribution, 'A Historical Review of Japanese Studies and the Emergence of Global Studies' points to the different traditions of the USA and Japan in the development of area studies and the relationship to foreign policy interests (in the case of the USA the relationship has been a close one, whilst in contrast in Japan it has been distant), and the important contribution which Japanese area studies specialists have made to the emergence and shaping of global studies in such universities as Sophia, Doshisha and Tokyo; in this regard he refers to the harmonious development of 'area-based global studies'.

Cahyo Pamungkas in 'Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies: Developing Some Post-colonial Theories in Area Studies' with reference to the study of the Southeast Asian region from an Indonesian perspective explores the possibility and promise of post-colonial theories and offers a critique of colonial discourse and Euro-American social science, and universalist approaches to the understanding of Southeast Asia and the relationship between power and knowledge.

Finally, Malo Rajo Sathian in her analysis entitled 'Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies: Beyond the "Comfort Zone"' pays particular attention, outside of a fixed concept of Southeast Asia,

to the possibilities of addressing cross-national themes by deploying other transnational and trans-border zones, comprising both sub-zones primarily within the region (southern Thailand-northern Peninsular Malaysia; the Southeast Asian massif [Zomia]; the Greater Mekong Sub-region; the Thai-Myanmar-China network; the 'Heart of Borneo'; the Islamic trade network between Muslim countries within and beyond the region] and outside in relation to the wider Asia and Asia-Pacific. Her paper reveals that there is still a tension between those who are content with a contingent, multiple and shifting Southeast Asia depending on the research objectives and interests pursued, and those who desire a much more defined and solid region (shaped by the objectives and requirements of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN]), which in ASEAN terms is increasingly realized, developed and sustained from within the region.

As one would expect there are different emphases between the four papers, but there is an overall agreement that the academic project of Southeast Asian Studies needs rethinking at the present time. This is the result of a range of issues which have come together over the past two decades: processes of globalization and the movement of people, goods, capital, information and ideas across territorial/regional boundaries; the problems of theory and methodology within area studies; the difficulties occasioned by the colonial-imperialist origins of the construction and study of Southeast Asia as a defined and delimited region; and the decline in government financial support and student interest in Southeast Asian Studies in some countries where in the past the study of the region enjoyed considerable popularity. What is clear is that the contributors to this journal issue, though they are all in agreement that Southeast Asian Studies as a currently established and defined academic and institutional set of programmes will continue (more energetically in some countries than others), argue that it has to change and has to move away from a preoccupation with nation-states as units of analysis. It has to engage with transnational issues embodying a range of material and immaterial mobilities, importantly the movement of ideas and information technology, as well as the

problems incurred by environmental change, and also to develop relations with wider programmes of study: Asian Studies, Global Studies, Border Studies, Diaspora Studies, among others (see the papers by Mala Rajo Sathian and Shintaro Fukutake).

Despite their differences and the different traditions they represent the four contributors are agreed on the positive character of area studies: its context sensitivity; the recognition of local knowledge, perspectives, interests and interpretations; the importance of grounded research concerned to understand Southeast Asia from the perspective of flux, process, cross-border relations, and hybridity; the need to focus on subaltern, marginal and territorially peripheral groups across the region; the increasing need for multi-site research using comparative perspectives (both within and beyond Southeast Asia); the interesting possibilities of inter-referencing within a regional frame of reference; the advantages of conceptual fluidity and the deployment of low-level concepts accessed in an eclectic and purpose-driven way; the importance of the relationship between research and policy and practice (as illustrated in Cahyo Pamungkas's examples of research on Indonesian forestry and human rights issues in Indonesian Papua); and the expansion of reciprocal, equal, open-ended and mutually enriching research partnerships between researchers within Southeast Asia and beyond.

However, what continues to be problematical is the role and position of local Southeast Asian scholars in the academic enterprise of Southeast Asian Studies. The importance of strengthening and developing the study of Southeast Asia within the region is accepted by all the contributors, but there continues to be concerns about the imbalance in role, position, status and impact between the research and publications of local scholars and of those from outside the region. Some of these concerns revolve around the constraints imposed by Southeast Asian governments and sponsors on local scholarship and the strong requirement to produce reports in response to the government need for practical- and policy-related research rather than to provide more conceptually and theoretically innovative and informed publications.

What the papers in this special issue also demonstrate are the problematical binaries between area and disciplinary studies; insiders and outsiders; Southeast Asian/Asian and Euro-American; practice/policy and theory; local and universal knowledge; and context and comparison. Nevertheless, there seems to me to be no contradiction between acknowledging a political reality (which comprises the constitution of a Southeast Asian presence and identity within global affairs constructed and deployed by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and developing and using research-directed, fluid and contingent perspectives on Southeast Asia.





## **Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies: Issues in Multidisciplinary Studies and Methodology\***



Victor T. King

### **[ Abstract ]**

The paper brings together several strands of debate and deliberation in which I have been involved since the early 2000s on the definition of Southeast Asia and the rationale of Southeast Asian Studies. I refer to the relationship between area studies and methodologies as a conundrum (or puzzle), though I should state from the outset that I think it is much more of a conundrum for others than for me. I have not felt the need to pose the question of whether or not area studies generates a distinctive method or set of methods and research practices, because I operate from a disciplinary perspective; though that it is not to say that the question should not be posed. Indeed, as I have earned a reputation for “revisionism” and championing disciplinary approaches rather than regional ones, it might be anticipated already the position that I take in an examination of the relationships

---

\* This paper is a substantially extended and revised version of Victor T. King (2014) “Southeast Asian Studies: The Conundrum of Area and Method”. In Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüland and Judith Schlehe (eds), *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 44-63.

Adjunct Professor, Center for Ethnic Studies and Development, Chiang Mai University, Thailand, [victor.king@cmu.ac.th](mailto:victor.king@cmu.ac.th); Emeritus Professor, University of Leeds, UK. [v.t.king@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:v.t.king@leeds.ac.uk)

between methodologies and the practice of “area studies” (and in this case Southeast Asian [or Asian] Studies). Nevertheless, given the recent resurgence of interest in the possibilities provided by the adoption of regional perspectives and the grounding of data gathering and analysis within specified locations in the context of globalization, the issues raised for researchers working in Southeast Asia and within the field of Southeast Asian Studies require revisiting.

**Keywords:** Region, Southeast Asian Studies, Disciplines, Methodology, Conundrum

## **I . Setting the scene: area studies, anthropology and other disciplines**

I do not claim any originality for what I am about to say on Southeast Asian Studies, definitional issues, and the practices of area studies. Indeed, as I have earned a reputation for “revisionism” and questioning the concept of a Southeast Asian region (see, for example, Goh 2011a:7-8), then the position that I take in this excursion into the relationships between methodology, research practices and area studies might be anticipated. However, given the recent substantial interest in the possibilities and problems of regional definition, of the resurgence of the case for multidisciplinary area studies and for the pedagogical advantages of an area studies approach, then the questions and issues of what defines Southeast Asia and whether regional perspectives have generated particular methods of knowledge gathering, processing and production require further scrutiny.

Perhaps a brief reminiscence might be in order at the outset in order to orient our thoughts? Some 40 years ago, when I was a junior lecturer, research sponsors in the United Kingdom and those professional associations representing area studies constituencies were debating what constituted this field of studies, its rationale and “the hard core” of what it did. The underlying reason for this was to determine whether or not area studies offered something to the academic and wider world which was thought to be worth

funding. As I recall two particular conclusions were reached. First, it was proposed that the value of area studies resided in its emphasis on working in the vernacular and in its commitment to understanding what was happening “on the ground”. For an expatriate researcher this also entailed the attempt, insofar as this is ever possible, of developing an understanding and perspective “from the inside” (and see Simandjuntak and Haug 2014).

In this endeavour, the relationships between area studies and anthropology in cross-cultural research are clear. The emphasis on learning and working in another language had the consequence, at least in the UK of excluding American Studies and other Anglophone studies from the area studies fraternity. Secondly, it was proposed that in area studies there resided the possibility of multidisciplinary approaches, and of overcoming some of the blinkers and parochialism of academic disciplines. In this respect, there was some disagreement about whether or not this would lead to genuine interdisciplinary endeavour, and through “intermarriage”, the breaking down of disciplinary boundaries and the forging of new fruitful unions. Recent calls for a re-energizing of area studies coupled with a desire to de-colonize this field of studies have similarly drawn attention to the need to dismantle disciplinary barriers and practices (see, for example, Goh 2011a, 2011b, 2014). These barriers seem especially resilient when one thinks that the call for interdisciplinary studies goes back a long way. Yet a few years ago, Hans Kuijper asserted provocatively that “[a]t their very best, area studies are no more than multidisciplinary in character. Consisting of juxtaposed, not yet integrated partial studies, they are essentially disjointed. Providing the reader with a Humpty-Dumpty broken into bits, they are not *compositions*” (2008: 205).

In this introductory contemplation, I think it is also useful for me to address some of the issues raised at the international conference held at the University of Freiburg in May 2012 on the theme of “Methodology in Southeast Asian Studies: Grounding Research-Mixing Methods” from which the book already referred to above emerged (Huotari, Rüländ and Schlehe 2014). Several of the papers have been published in revised form, but it might be

useful to summarize what was presented in the original papers.

I should make my position clear from the start. I am sceptical of claims that a particular methodology or set of methodologies and practices have emerged from the multidisciplinary field of area studies, in our case specifically Southeast Asian Studies; or alternatively I have been unable to discern something methodologically distinctive in the practices of knowledge gathering, processing and generation in Southeast Asian Studies or area studies more generally; epistemologically and ontologically we are in shared, known and well-trodden territory. For me there is no obvious conundrum; for others I think there is. Or to put it yet another way the multidisciplinary field of Southeast Asian Studies, which in any case is not a unitary or homogeneous field of studies, as Szanton has already indicated (2004a:3), has not produced, in my view, a set of specific practices which we as Southeast Asianists (if we can reach any agreement on what a Southeast Asianist is, see below) might adopt or follow in the ways in which we go about formulating research issues or questions; making decisions on how we might address the subject, question, problem or theme before us; deciding upon how we might then identify what kinds of evidence or information we require to address the research task which we have set for ourselves; deciding upon the most appropriate ways in which we gather and select the data; evaluating the robustness, utility and validity of the evidence we have mustered; sifting and choosing the evidence which we shall then use to make our case; and developing or choosing concepts or theories to make sense of, give some kind of logical and coherent form to, and hopefully draw some conclusions from the data collected.

Nor do I think that we have needed to develop and agree upon a separate ethical code to cover our practices; in my case I follow those of the Association of Social Anthropologists and the British Sociological Association (and see Caplan 2003). In this regard the study of Southeast Asia has not, *contra* John Bowen's position from an American perspective (1995, 2000, 2004) and that of Mary Steedly (1999), produced a distinctive or dominant style, perspective, approach or tradition of research or scholarship (see King 2001), though this American-derived proposal seems to

be especially resilient (see, for example, Hirschman and Edwards on Clifford Geertz, 2007: 4377). Rather the major part of the knowledge which has been produced on Southeast Asia has not required a program of Southeast Asian Studies within which to produce it, nor, if we were to be honest, has it depended on a multidisciplinary framework of study and analysis to make it possible. Having said this Southeast Asia, in a variety of ways, has been constructed and reconstructed, primarily through different disciplinary interests, approaches and perspectives. I shall return to consider its realization as a region by those who live there in a while, as well as suggesting that working in a multidisciplinary environment might generate a certain attitude and approach to research (though the approach and practices are derived primarily from disciplinary training).

## **II . A view of the 2012 Freiburg conference**

In a subsequent unpublished paper I provided an overview of the 2012 conference; here I present a brief summary of the conference. First, some papers adopted methods, practices and techniques which are standard ones in the major disciplines involved in Southeast Asian Studies (political science, economics, sociology-anthropology), though there is also frequent reference in the papers to the problem of the distinction and the relationships between “area” and “discipline”. I also use this distinction in the current paper, but only as a convenient short-hand and not in any precise or easily definable way; this is an issue to which I shall return later (and see Szanton 2004b). I think, the argument that the field of area studies encourages “mixed methodologies”, with the implication, I suppose, that disciplinary approaches do not, needs much more careful qualification. One only has to look back at research handbooks in anthropology and ethnographic research for example, in a field which was often castigated by the hard social sciences like economics for its lack of a robust, scientific and testable methodology, to admire the sophistication of methodological thinking and debate and the wide range of

methods and techniques which were already being deployed (see as a case in point, Ellen 1984).

Therefore, some conference papers traversed rather familiar methodological terrain in examining the use and the value (or otherwise) of in-depth interviews (and issues arising from cross-cultural interviews); case-studies and comparisons; comparison at different levels and scales and across different units; questionnaire surveys (with random or defined selection of those to be questioned); public opinion research; cross-sectional correlations; bivariate regression plots; gini coefficients; the use of quantitative data-sets, censuses and other demographic data usually in a time series; the selection of variables and the analysis and interpretation of their interconnections; laboratory-style experimentation; content analysis; qualitative-historical research; participant observation or “observant participation”; and the need to insert the gender dimension into research where necessary. Where there might be a degree of methodological novelty is in the cross-national, trans-cultural, reciprocal, tandem, complementary, role-reversal, “reversed gaze”, interactive kinds of joint, collaborative research described by Judith Schlele between German and Indonesian researchers working within the Freiburg Southeast Asia program. It does take account of the importance of conducting an equal “dialogue”, a “productive conversation” and “self-reflexivity” in the context of the coming together of different academic cultures and different ways of knowledge production, and the blurring of the distinction between “outsider” and “insider” anthropology (and see Schlehe and Sita Hidayah 2014). Yet again, this is a development of methodology within the discipline of anthropology rather than area studies; it comprises novel ways of “doing ethnography”. Finally, some of the papers raised the long-standing issue of quantitative as against qualitative approaches, their respective advantages and disadvantages and the possibility or desirability of their combination.

Secondly, there was some consideration of the differences between disciplines, particularly in the social sciences, though we should keep in mind Ladislav Holy’s view, to which I largely subscribe, that “because all social sciences investigate basically

the same phenomena and share the same ideas about their constitution, the boundaries drawn between them are often blurred and at times questionable" (1984: 14). Holy does, however, point out that the main distinguishing feature of anthropology within the social sciences is "the unique method of yielding data through long-term "participant observation"" (ibid). In this connection, and leaving aside participant observation for a moment, I think we would be hard-pressed to argue for any significant difference between sociology and anthropology. With regard to anthropology and other disciplines there still seems to be a view that anthropology is concerned primarily with the local and particular (and therefore by implication is more focused on defined spaces and contexts) and that political science, economics and sociology tend to operate on a larger scale and undertake comparative work across cases, countries and regions. I would want to qualify these kinds of observations in that we should at least acknowledge an early view of anthropology as "comparative sociology" and the fact that there are significant areas of anthropology that are by no means so location- and context-bound.

Thirdly, there were papers that continued the attempt to draw distinctions between area studies and disciplines and that discussed the methods which area studies practitioners deploy to address their preoccupation with region (which are both its strengths and weaknesses): context-sensitivity; the distinctiveness of a case, community, process; and in-depth field research in the vernacular. It was argued that one of the major issues for the disciplinary specialist is that of comparison across the region (and beyond), and the problem of the comparability of units of analysis is particularly acute with regard to those units which have emerged from intensive, contextual field research. The distinction between area studies and disciplines also raises the issue of how area studies programs are organized in relation to disciplinary and language training and to the encouragement of multidisciplinary perspectives and approaches. Finally, a question posed by some contributors was whether or not Southeast Asia as a defined region is sufficiently distinctive to merit a context-sensitive area studies approach and specific methods of research

devised to capture something assumed to be different from other cases or regions.

Fourthly, there were those contributors who continued to contemplate issues of intellectual hegemony, the power relations in knowledge production, and the question of the “indigenization” or “decolonization” of Southeast Asian Studies. Who asks the questions and why? Who sets the research agenda? Who determines the priorities and interests? What values underlie what they do? What are the possibilities for de-centring and diversifying Southeast Asian Studies and developing and recognizing “local” or “within-region” perspectives, interests and priorities? These questions bring us back to debates about the relations and encounters, at times even the opposition between foreign/local, exogenous/endogenous (indigenous), outsider/insider, and Euro- American/Southeast Asian, though I accept, as some conference participants had already observed, that these categories are rough-and-ready ones, the boundaries between them are fuzzy, and, in certain respects, they no longer have much relevance. If one does accept that there is some utility in debating issues in relation to this categorical fuzziness, then its replacement by some form of negotiated settlement seems to me to be desirable. Yet, there is a point when we have to cease blaming colonialism and imperialism for all our woes: I think local Southeast Asian Studies has come of sufficient age and robustness to answer for itself, though the point was raised in the conference that we should beware of essentializing ‘the indigenous’, just as we have retreated from positions that tend to stereotype and essentialize Euro-American ethnocentrism.

Overall I detect a tendency across several of the papers for the construction of unitary or homogeneous categories, distinguished from each other and sometimes opposed, which seem to me to require constant qualification. Some contributors question these but others leave them largely intact. They include “Southeast Asia”, “Southeast Asian Studies”, “area studies”, “disciplines (and within these political science, economics, sociology-anthropology and so on)”, “insider (local)”, “outsider (foreign)”, “Euro-American” and “Southeast Asian”, “theory” and “practice”, “context” and “comparison”. I shall return to some of these matters below.

### III. Areas, disciplines and my involvement in the debates

#### 3.1 *Southeast Asian Studies: shifting grounds and areas*

We should not get too preoccupied with the distinctions between area studies and disciplines. As I have already emphasized, and Szanton before me (2004a:3), area studies is a heterogeneous mix. There are important national differences in history, organization, theoretical interests, and approaches between Southeast Asian Studies as it developed in the United States, the United Kingdom, continental Europe (France, Germany, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries), Australia, Southeast Asia itself (and among countries within the region), China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (see Park and King 2013). Broadly there have been different theoretical orientations, sub-regional concentrations, and disciplinary specializations and mixes, and different ways of organizing the delivery of Southeast Asian language training, teaching and research between disciplines and multidisciplinary regional programs. Southeast East Asian Studies as a separately identifiable academic field of study has also fared much better in some countries than in others. In recognizing this heterogeneity and, for some, a failure or a “maladjustment” on the part of area studies to respond satisfactorily to such processes as globalization, there have also been calls for “the strategic defragmentation of area studies into comparative studies of global problems” (Schäfer 2010:2).

If we take the situation in the United Kingdom as an example, the overwhelming majority of the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Studies in the UK would not see themselves as area specialists or Southeast Asianists *per se* (see King 2011; and Szanton 2004b). They are located in departments of political science and international relations, economics, geography, anthropology, sociology, archaeology and history, as well as in multidisciplinary fields of study such as gender, development, management, tourism and environment, or in museums, libraries and other research institutions. Most of them would claim to

have a primary interest in one or at the most two countries in the region, and some work on countries and issues beyond Southeast Asia as well. Some do not work in the vernacular and instead focus on European language materials (mainly English) and archives. Even those in Southeast Asian programs would probably hesitate over whether they see themselves as area specialists; and those in language teaching, I am sure, would respond that they are teaching, for example, Indonesian language and are specialists in Indonesian literature, culture or history, and similarly for teachers of Thai, Burmese, Khmer, Malay-Indonesian, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

A close colleague of mine in a Southeast Asian Studies program and whose background is geography but who would see himself as a development studies specialist has taught a wide-ranging postgraduate course on methodology to a very mixed bag of students who come with different academic and training backgrounds. He has worked in the vernacular in Thailand, but has also undertaken field research in Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam. Insofar as I recall conversations with him about these matters he would claim, in certain contexts, that he is a scholar of Southeast Asia, but this would only be a part of his identity. His methodology course, though including such matters as cross-cultural communication, field research, language training and context sensitivity, would not be out of place in any mainstream social science training program.

In my own case, I started my academic career as a geographer, moved into sociology and anthropology, followed a course in Indonesian Studies, was appointed to a position in an area studies program, though with the responsibility to teach sociology, then moved into a Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, and subsequently into a multidisciplinary Southeast Asia program (which comprised a collection of individuals who had their roots in departments, and teaching and other responsibilities in those departments), and finally to a program in East Asian Studies focusing primarily on China and Japan. I have written general books on Southeast Asia but I would be hard-pressed to claim a consistent and unequivocal identity as a Southeast Asianist. If

asked, I would argue for a position in sociological and anthropological research, but during the past twenty years I would also claim a position and identity in development studies, environmental studies, ethnic studies, tourism studies and most recently in cultural and heritage studies. If someone was to ask me about my expertise in regional terms, then I suppose I could claim a Southeast Asian scholarly profile, but I would probably be more comfortable at the sub-regional level as a specialist on Borneo, first-and-foremost, and then on the Malay-Indonesian world (comprising Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei, but not the Philippines).

This discussion has a bearing on methodological issues. If I and my colleague, for example, both relatively long-serving members of Southeast Asian Studies programs, only see ourselves as Southeast Asianists in certain contexts and at certain times, why would the relationship between methodology and area studies be of special and urgent moment for us? We are as much if not more rooted in other scholarly fields from which we have invariably drawn our methodological training. I grant that this might also be in part because of the strength of disciplines in the UK; and, in planning and developing area studies centers in the 1960s, the UK turned to the American model of Area Studies Centers (Cornell, Yale and California among others). In other words in my career and experience an area center or program provided a convenient locational and organizational umbrella in order to bring together academics from different disciplines and subject areas; but the training in methods, techniques, conceptualization and analysis came from the disciplines not from the area. This is presumably the reason why Goh Beng Lan refers to me as a disciplinary revisionist and also suggests that for me, as a revisionist, Southeast Asia simply serves as a specified place, a locale for data gathering, analysis and experimentation rather than a clearly defined, delimited, identifiable and substantial region with a character, persona and genius of its own (2011a: 7-8).

Nevertheless, I would have to at least counter this with a reference to what I believe I have drawn from my encounters in area studies. The positive elements are: a recognition of the importance of working in local languages; cultural sensitivity and

the avoidance of stereotyping; the value of engaging across disciplinary boundaries and across the political boundaries of the nation-state; the recognition of the importance of local knowledge and perspective; and the need to ground one's research, particularly in the era of globalization, in definable and graspable social, cultural, economic, political, historical and geographical contexts. I am content to subscribe to Szanton's mission for area studies which is 'to deparochialize US- and Euro-centric visions of the world in the core social science and humanities disciplines, among policy makers, and in the public at large' (2004a: 2). However, this is where it gets complicated again; much of what I have said here could also have been said of anthropological approaches and perspectives (Szanton refers to area studies as "an act of translation" [ibid: 1] which is what anthropologists usually engage in). Harris' comments on the impact of globalization on anthropology could also have been said of area studies in that it challenges anthropology "to rethink its founding categories and redefine its projects" (1996: 1).

### ***3.2 Disciplines: beware essentialization***

Just as we can and should deconstruct the scholarly enterprise of Southeast Asian Studies and area studies, we should also beware of reifying and talking about disciplines as if they were unified and definable academic phenomena. In some respects we use them for convenience, but one only has to consider the history of the development of anthropology for example (which I have just referred to as if it was in some way a homogeneous and definable field of study) to realize just how problematical the construct "anthropology" is as well. In his examination of the development of European anthropology, Schippers refers to the field as "a patchwork of disciplines, scientific interests, methods of investigation and theoretical schools..." (1995: 234). In this history of the subject, we have to acknowledge the separation, but in some European institutions the continuing relationship between physical-biological and social-cultural anthropology, and the separation, though again with continuing connections in some countries and institutions, of the study, usually through field

research, of non-Western societies (firmly within “anthropology” in such countries as the UK, France and the Netherlands which had large colonial empires) and research on European, mainly “national rural societies” which usually came under the umbrella of “ethnology” or “folklore studies”, or sometimes “ethnography” and which had close relationships with such fields as geography, philology and statistics (in such countries, without substantial colonial empires, as Germany, Austria, the Scandinavian countries, and Russia) (ibid: 235-40).

Of course, the delimitation of anthropology as a discrete field of study with its own theories, concepts and methodologies becomes even more problematical when one considers the broad separation between American cultural anthropology and Anglo-French-Dutch social and structural anthropology; the subdivision of anthropology into particular specialisms which then entered into dialogue with other social sciences, thus blurring the disciplinary boundaries: economic anthropology, political anthropology, the anthropology of religion, the anthropology of complex societies, applied anthropology, and so on); and the most recent post-modern fragmentation of parts of what used to come under the umbrella of anthropology but are now found in such fields as cultural studies, media studies, the performing arts, museum studies and gender studies. Yet there are a range of methods, techniques and practices which have been developed to identify, access, gather and process social and cultural knowledge within anthropology and sociology which are deployed in area studies.

### **3.3 *A personal engagement***

At this juncture and as an introduction to the resurgence of interest in area studies during the past decade or so, I should refer to my engagement with these matters in order to establish my view on the development of thinking on Southeast Asian Studies and area studies more generally. Perhaps it is also of interest to track some of the pathways of the debates as they emerged and developed from the year 2000, though there was a good deal of activity in the 1990s as well (see, for example,

Ananda Rajah 1999; Andaya 1997; Anderson 1992; Hirschman 1992; Keyes 1992; Lieberman 1993, 1995; Lombard 1995; McVey 1995, 1998; Milner 1999; Reid 1988/1993, 1994, 1999; Reynolds 1995; Shamsul 1994; Wolters 1999). I had already entered the fray well before this more recent twenty-first-century upsurge (see, for example, King 1990, and others before me; see, for example Fifield [1976, 1983]), but it all restarted for me when I chanced to read John Bowen's paper in the then newly-launched French journal *Moussons* (2000) to which I have already referred, which sought to discover a dominant scholarly style in the study of Southeast Asia. I am not very often moved to write a response to a colleague's work, but, in this case, I felt the urgent need to qualify what I considered to be a primarily American view of the state of play, heavily influenced by Geertzian cultural anthropology, Weberian sociology, and field research in Indonesia. I presented in a paper in *Moussons* what I considered to be a European response (though I do not claim any particular expertise in Dutch, French, German and Scandinavian area studies) indicating that there were (and are) significant differences between American and European perspectives on and approaches to the study of Southeast Asia; there are also important differences within Europe itself, which in turn have methodological implications (King 2001).

Coincidentally I was then invited as a discussant to a panel which featured a paper by the American anthropologist Mary Steedly entitled "From the Interpretation of Cultures to the Banality of Power: Anthropology in the Postcolony" delivered at a conference organized by the International Institute for Asian Studies at the University of Amsterdam in March 2001. Steedly's position which, in part, also echoed Bowen's proposals suggested again an American, Geertzian and Indonesian-centric view of Southeast Asia. The conference served to celebrate Professor Heather Sutherland's contribution to the study of Southeast Asian history. Her position in the field of studies was acknowledged with the appearance at the conference of Anthony Reid, Wang Gungwu, Ruth McVey, Thongchai Winichakul and many others. Out of this conference came the edited book *Locating Southeast Asia* (2005), of which I subsequently wrote a review (King 2006a:

16-19).

One of the most important contributions for me of the Amsterdam conference was Heather Sutherland's paper on "contingent devices"; with great eloquence it captured for me what I had long thought was the most appropriate way to conceptualize Southeast Asia (or more appropriately "several Southeast Asias") (Sutherland 2005: 20-59; and see McVey 2005: 308-319). Here then is the nub of the problem. How do we define Southeast Asia? And this seems to me to be a crucial question in any consideration of appropriate methodologies.

The story continues with Ariel Heryanto's justified response to Bowen's and my papers with the title "Can there be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies?" (2002, 2007). Bowen and I had been preoccupied with the Euro-American contributions to the study of Southeast Asia and Heryanto made the case for a locally inspired and directed area studies. Although I accepted the main thrust of what Heryanto had argued, I disagreed with his interpretation of the more recent configuration of relations between Euro-American and Southeast Asian research on the region; this was set within the context of the demise of Southeast Asian Studies in the UK and in other parts of the Western world and its vibrant development in Asia.

Among other matters this disagreement was expressed in my keynote address at the International Institute for Asian Studies, Amsterdam, entitled 'Southeast Asia: Personal Reflections on a Region', in November 2004 to mark the launch of Ooi Keat Gin's three-volume *Southeast Asia: A Historical Encyclopedia* (2004). It so happened that Vincent Houben was in the audience and invited me to write a chapter for his forthcoming edited book *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions* (co-edited with Cynthia Chou) (2006a, see below); I duly obliged and the paper, with substantial revisions, was published under the same title as the Amsterdam keynote address (King 2006). In the meantime, a version of the paper which emphasized the crisis in Southeast Asian Studies in the UK was delivered at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies at the University of Lund

and appeared in the Centre's Working Paper Series as *Defining Southeast Asia and the Crisis in Area Studies* (2005). Among other issues, what this work emphasized was precisely the importance of the study of Southeast Asia from within the region. There lies the future in my opinion, and if we are concerned about methodology, we must wish to argue that there lies the future for methodological development.

For me there was then something of a lull in engagement in international debate. The Centre for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Hull was finally closed in 2005 and I moved to the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Leeds. The withering of Southeast Asian Studies in the American-inspired form which it had taken in the UK from the 1960s was almost complete, but the study of China and Japan in Leeds was vibrant, as it was in our partner university, Sheffield. During this time my chairmanship of the Asian Studies Panel in the national Research Assessment Exercise in the UK, which commenced its work in 2005 and was completed in 2008, brought it home to me just how much research on the Asian region was undertaken outside the area studies constituency.

In writing a report on the submissions to our panel which came from only ten British universities we could give only a partial picture of the national state-of-play in Asian Studies because much of the work had been conducted through disciplinary departments and other fields of study and submitted to disciplinary panels. I then had the opportunity to take stock of where the study of Southeast Asia had taken us when I wrote a history of the Association of Southeast Asian Studies in the UK to celebrate its fortieth anniversary (1969-2009) (King 2009a). The crisis, as I perceived it, was primarily in multidisciplinary centers where languages were also taught; development, growth and energy lay elsewhere. The study of Southeast Asia had become institutionally disparate; it was spread widely across the UK and was being conducted in departments, non-area studies multidisciplinary programs, and other institutions. This too has implications for methodologies; these too are likely to be disparate and to be situated and developed within disciplines and other subject fields and not in

## Southeast Asian Studies.

My focus on the demise of ‘the old’ Southeast Asian Studies, in Heryanto’s terms (2002, 2007), continued with an invitation to participate in a conference organized by the Sogang Institute of East Asian Studies at Sogang University in Seoul in March 2010. The conference provided the ideal opportunity to learn much more about Southeast Asia from an East Asian perspective and the different ways in which Southeast Asia has been conceptualized within Asia (see Park and King 2013). I also presented a paper entitled “*The Development of Southeast Asian Studies in the UK: the Making of a Region*” (2010) which charted the rise and demise of Southeast Asian Studies in my own country. Subsequently the study was extended to include continental Europe and to make some comparisons between the development of this field of studies in the UK and in France, Germany and the Netherlands in particular; in this regard it is clear that different traditions have been developed and that yet again we are unable to discern a unitary Southeast Asian Studies project and trajectory (King 2011; and see King 2013).

My story continues with the invitation to write a review essay on three edited books on area studies, Asian Studies and Southeast Asian Studies which have appeared relatively recently (Terence Wesley-Smith and Jon Goss [2010]; Jacob Edmond, Henry Johnson and Jacqueline Leckie [2010]; and Goh Beng Lan [2011b]). What struck me about these volumes, among many other things, in their efforts to “remake”, “recenter”, “decenter” and “diversify” the study of Southeast Asia, Asia and Asia Pacific, was the relative absence of any consideration of “where some boundaries, zones, frontiers, locations, and sites end and others begin, nor how the designated units or areas remain useful to academic theory and practice” (King 2012a: 316). And finally in 2012 through to 2014 the opportunity to examine the relationship between area studies/Southeast Asian Studies and methodology has enabled a further expansion of our thinking about Southeast Asia and how it has been and is being constructed (King 2014).

#### **IV. A resurgence of interest in 'area'**

##### ***4.1 Handling the perceived crisis: attack is the best form of defence***

Having said all of this in what I suppose can only be characterized as “a sceptical mode” let me now turn to and summarize what seem to be the main issues which have surfaced or rather resurfaced during the past decade or so. One of the main concerns, it seems to me, is for those scholars who desire to give some agreed shape and substance to Southeast Asia as a region in order to argue for the value of Southeast Asian Studies specifically and area studies more generally, and, in some cases to propose that something conceived of as the “old” approaches to the study and understanding of Southeast Asia should be replaced by “something new”; and that this “something new” should increasingly be a locally generated and conceived project. There are also those who wish to draw attention to recent developments in the teaching and learning environment of area studies and innovations in the way in which knowledge of an area is conveyed. These considerations have real moment if we wish to suggest that there is a methodology or set of methodologies appropriate to Southeast Asian Studies and area studies. Indeed, some of this will turn on whether or not we can agree what Southeast Asia comprises, and it is clear that the disagreements about the definition of Southeast Asia as a region often relate to different disciplinary and research subject perspectives.

During the last decade we have been inundated with a spate of edited books on Southeast Asian Studies and area studies more generally. This merely continues with greater intensity the outpouring of debates on “What is Southeast Asia?” in the 1990s. If we thought that the field of area studies was in its last throes, it is obviously not going quietly. During the last decade there has been on average a book a year debating the issues which I have introduced in this chapter. This does not take account of the numerous journal articles which have appeared (see, for example, Evans 2002; Jackson 2003a, 2003b; Burgess 2004; Kuijper 2008; Schäfer 2010). It is also interesting to note that the

Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and the National University of Singapore have played a significant role in this profile-raising industry. This is not surprising when one takes into account its stake in Southeast Asian Studies and area studies more generally and that it lies, along with Malaysia, at the “low centre” of Anthony Reid’s “saucer model” of Southeast Asian identity (1999).

I may well have missed some publications but those which have impressed themselves on my consciousness are: *Southeast Asian Studies: Pacific Perspectives* (Anthony Reid 2003a); *The Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines* (David Szanton 2004); *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space* (Paul Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt 2005a); *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions* (Cynthia Chou and Vincent Houben 2006a); *Knowing Southeast Asian Subjects* (Laurie J. Sears 2007); *Southeast Asian Studies in China* (Saw Swee-Hock and John Wong 2007); *Remaking Area Studies: Teaching and Learning across Asia and the Pacific* (Terence Wesley-Smith and Jon Goss 2010); *Recentring Asia; Histories, Encounters, Identities* (Jacob Edmond, Henry Johnson and Jacqueline Leckie 2011a); and *Decentring and Diversifying Southeast Asian Studies; Perspectives from the Region* (Goh Beng Lan 2011b).

It all begins to have a feverish quality about it; specialists in area studies, Asian Studies and Southeast Asian Studies seem to be running a high temperature.

I recognize that those who have specialized in the study of Southeast Asia, and particularly those scholars located in Southeast Asian Studies centers, institutes and programs, have frequently been engaged in debates and disagreements about what defines their region and what is distinctive about it; and this preoccupation has usually been much more intense when compared with the concerns of regional specialists in other parts of the world. In other words, Southeast Asianists have sought persistently for a rationale for what they do and, in order to serve their students and those they train, to provide an academic basis for considering the collection of countries and peoples which they are trying to

understand as a viable and meaningful unit of analysis and scholarly speculation. The debates have been much more intense in certain academic disciplines which have a greater sense of place (history, archaeology and pre-history, geography, anthropology and linguistics come to mind). But the contagion seems to have spread to the wider Southeast Asian and area studies constituency, arising from a perceived crisis in this field of studies.

Some of the editors in the books referred to above make dramatic and explicit reference to this crisis. Terence Wesley-Smith and Jon Goss introduce the issue in no uncertain terms: "It is widely acknowledged that area studies, the dominant academic institution in the United States for research and teaching on America's overseas "others" is in the thralls of a fiscal and epistemological crisis" (Goss and Wesley-Smith 2010: ix). They identify the roots of the crisis in "[t]he dramatic shifts in the global political landscape of the late 1980s [which] revealed the intellectual and economic vulnerability of the area studies establishment" (ibid: xiii). Goh Beng Lan then widens the unease: "[t]he attack on area studies has spread across the globe... [and]... the spread of this critique has led to a common view that area studies is in a state of "crisis"" (2011b:1). We are reminded of the two-decade-long crisis, though briefly, by Mikko Huotari in the recent volume on area studies and methodology (2014: 1).

Several of the edited books referred to above attempt to address different dimensions of this perceived crisis, but it has to be emphasized that the difficulties have been experienced much more in some, but not all Western countries, and it has been much less of an issue in the region we refer to as "Asia" or "Asia Pacific", or its constituent parts (East, Southeast, South, Central). Moreover, the crisis has not been one which has progressively deepened, nor has it been felt equally in the study of all regions which come within the purview of "area studies"; the overall picture is a decidedly patchy and uneven one, and in the European academy for example, and for obvious reasons, the study of East Asia (China, Japan and Korea), the Middle East and Eastern Europe (including Russia) have fared much better than Southeast Asian Studies and studies of the Indian subcontinent.

## 4.2 *Rejuvenation*

It is difficult to do justice to such a range of scholarship, but in their efforts to revivify, rejuvenate, refresh and redirect the study of Southeast Asia (and in certain cases Asia and Asia Pacific) and to inject energy and purpose into the enterprise of area studies, most of these edited volumes put a positive gloss on what has been achieved and what the future holds. Reid's book, for example, draws attention to the significant impact of immigrant Southeast Asian populations in the United States after the 1970s, many from the mainland countries but also from the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia (Reid 2003b: 1-23). According to Reid, this migration of people from the region itself, many of whom have settled on the Pacific coast of the United States, has served to give Southeast Asian Studies in the US a new lease of life; rather than decline there is "rebirth". He further argues that the proximity of Australia and Japan to Southeast Asia will also ensure the continuing health of Southeast Asian Studies in those countries; and the region itself has witnessed a surge of interest in the study of ASEAN, not least in such places as Singapore (*ibid*).

Chou and Houben are also positive about the contribution, value and future viability of Southeast Asian Studies, arguing that this field of studies has been "an epicentre for theoretical knowledge production" (2006b: 1). Like Reid, they draw attention to the expansion of studies of Southeast Asia in the region itself, whilst noting the difficulties which it is experiencing elsewhere, especially in Europe (*ibid*: 2). Furthermore, they propose that, in a world in which there is the need to engage with other countries and regions from a position of strength, then a Southeast Asian regional identity through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in particular is "becoming more and more self-evident" (*ibid*: 11).

Overall Chou and Houben are upbeat and optimistic and "although in some places [mainly Europe] there is reason for gloom, Southeast Asian studies as [a] whole is in the process of being reconfigured to become more of a central concern in our

current world” (ibid: 20). I would not wish to challenge this view and I too would maintain that Southeast Asia as a region, concept and scholarly field of enquiry (though not a region that is necessarily fixed and unchanging and its boundaries agreed upon) will continue to have resonance and relevance. This is in spite of the arguments frequently presented by globalization theorists and disciplinary specialists in particular that regions are rapidly losing their validity and viability in a world in which borders and boundaries are constantly traversed and trans-national and cross-cultural encounters and hybridization have become increasingly apparent.

Finally, in their co-edited book, Jacob Edmond, Henry Johnson and Jacqueline Leckie direct their efforts to “recentering” Asia by asserting its “centrality” and rethinking both the concept of “centre” as a zone of “[trans-national] encounter, exchange and contestation” as well as the very notion (or notions) of Asia itself (2011b: 1). Yet the concepts of “center” and “Asia” seem to be rather difficult to pin down. In disciplinary terms the focus of this volume is in the arts and humanities (literature, language, cultural studies, history, and ethnomusicology) with a sprinkling of interest in the social sciences (mainly anthropology). Issues to do with identities and ethnicity and their transformations are also to the fore. In broad regional terms the weight of attention is given to East Asia (Japan, China and Korea) with a few excursions into Southeast Asia, the South Pacific and South Asia, though it has to be said that the emphasis in the volume on diaspora and migration blurs regional definitions.

#### ***4.3 Decentering and diversification: local voices***

Another significant trend in writing and thinking about area studies and specifically Southeast Asian Studies is to argue for its decentering and diversification and the need to take account of “local dimensions”, “local”, “native” or “indigenous voices”, based not on the priorities and interests of those outside the region, but on “local priorities” (Goh 2011a: 1). Harking back to Ariel Heryanto’s plea in 2002, Goh Beng Lan’s edited book (2011b)

serves to enhance the significance of Southeast Asia, with convincing arguments presented for the vitality of scholarship within the region and the contribution of local scholars to understanding their own *habitus*. She also emphasizes the importance of situating knowledge production in a Southeast Asian context, and addresses the distinctions and mutually enriching interactions between locally generated (“insider”) and Euro-American-derived (“outsider”) perspectives on Southeast Asia. Her book attempts to provide us with “afterlives” in Asian Studies (in Miyoshi’s and Harootunian’s terms) which identify “regionally generated scholarships as alternative sites from which Euro-American-centric visions could be denaturalized” (2011a: 1-4). Therefore, for Goh, it is vital in the continuing enterprise of Southeast Asian Studies to consider the experiences, practices and views of local scholars, which also requires us to take account of “the alternative, albeit emergent, models of area studies in the region” (ibid: 15) and “alternative perceptions of Southeast Asia” (ibid: 44).

The crucial need is “to create a platform to speak about Southeast Asian perspectives” so that those who come from and live in the region and share “the same convictions” can debate issues which “may not be of concern to those outside of the region”, and, in addition, “explicate lived realities and understandings of normative social science concepts within the region, rather than taking wider social theories emanating from the West/outside as the formulae for defining the region” (ibid: 15; and see Goh 2014: 28-29). I wholeheartedly agree with the spirit and intent of this volume and Goh’s arguments, just as I supported Heryanto in his call for localization; it is obvious that through the development of regional connections and institutions there is vibrancy in academic studies on Southeast Asia from within the region. Nevertheless, to my mind there is a danger in drawing too sharp a distinction between “insider” and “outsider” perspectives and interests, which Goh recognizes (2014: 29), and a problem in determining what the alternative, emergent models of area studies from within the region comprise and whether or not they are sufficiently different from the kinds of models and concepts that have been developed from outside Southeast Asia.

Be that as it may Goh's volume gives us much food for thought in revealing the intellectual biographies of a number of prominent local scholars who have been active in developing our understanding of Southeast Asian history, culture and identities. In this regard the collection is dominated by the reflections of senior local scholars (Wang Gungwu, Taufik Abdullah and Reynaldo Ileto) and those of the middle generation (Wong Soak Koon, Yunita Winarto, Melani Budianta, Paritta Chalernpow Koanantakol, Patricio Abinales and Goh Beng Lan herself) with two younger scholars (Abidin Kusno and Fadjar Thufail) following up the rear with their thoughts and experiences. Shared themes which cut across the individual concerns of the senior scholars comprised their experience of colonialism, war and conflict; their engagement with the state in their production and exchange of knowledge; and their identification of the broader interrelationships between the construction and acquisition of knowledge on the one hand and relations of power and domination in post-colonial societies on the other.

Yet we might have anticipated more attention in Goh's volume to the influence of national citizenship, ethnic identity and social class membership on the scholarly trajectories of the contributors. Furthermore, my reading of these autobiographies suggests that the influence of Euro-American perspectives (in concepts, methods, and subject matter) has been greater than what one might expect from a volume which seeks to make a case for "local priorities"; the influence of the founders of Western social science and philosophy on the thought and direction of local voices in this volume, and that of outsiders who have made major contributions to our understanding of Southeast Asian realities (among them Benedict Anderson, Don Emerson, Maurice Freedman, John Furnivall, Clifford Geertz, D.G.E. Hall, J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong, George Kahin, Edmund Leach, Rodney Needham, Jacob van Leur, Victor Purcell, Lucien Pye, Anthony Reid, G.J. Resink, Bertram Schrieke, James Siegel, William Skinner, John Smail, Wim Wertheim, and Oliver Wolters) is plain to see. But in saying this I am not disputing the value of Goh's compilation of local intellectual biographies; they are full of

interest, particularly in the way in which the contributors discuss their approaches to disciplines, their involvement with state governments, and their activism in using their knowledge for practical, policy, and social reform purposes.

The call to arms on behalf of local scholarship, keeping in mind the problematical notion of “the local”, is also evident in other volumes published in the last decade or so. Laurie Sears’ *Knowing Southeast Asian Subjects* (2007) has a similar purpose. In the introductory chapter Bonura and Sears argue strongly for the importance and urgency of dissolving the “universalizing tendencies” of Western scholarship and producing knowledge outside of what they refer to as the “Euro-American hegemony” (2007: 15-19). Again I am with them in spirit, but slightly nervous about the vehemence with which scholarship in the West is targeted and whether there is a need to pose the question and issue in such stark terms. In this connection, Korff and Schröter, in their review of trends in anthropological and sociological research, also draw attention to a range of problems both from the perspectives of European scholarship on the one hand and local scholarship on the other, and the need for more dialogue between them (2006: 63-72). What they indicate, among other issues, are the pressures and incentives on local scholars, to undertake politically relevant research and to focus on local issues within a nation-state framework; it suggests that the emergence of alternative ways of thinking about regionalism may be more difficult than we suppose in an environment which directs local research to policy and practical matters (ibid: 65-66).

There is also a much more technical, hands-on contribution. To advance this localization approach, Wesley-Smith’s and Goss’ volume on *Remaking Area Studies* is an attempt to create “more empowering forms of area studies” (2010: x). This task of “remaking” was in fact undertaken in an American outlier in the School of Hawaiian, Asian, and Pacific Studies at the University of Hawai’i, Manoa, though with important outreach, dialogic and student-centered teaching and learning programs in partnership with institutions in New Zealand, Fiji, the Philippines, Singapore and Japan. The program which operated over two phases from

as long ago as 1997 to 2002 and comprised collaborative research and an interactive learning program was in turn part of the Ford Foundation's general program *Crossing Borders: Revitalizing Area Studies*. This volume advocates the development of innovative and collaborative pedagogical practices across countries and cultures in the Asia Pacific region in order "to bring area studies to the areas studied" through the use in the classroom of interactive technologies (e-mails, websites, video-conferencing) (ibid: xviii). It appears to be a counterpart to the kind of collaborative program of research undertaken in the Freiburg-Gadjah Mada partnership, though with less personal face-to-face contact (Schlehe and Sita Hidayah 2014).

#### **4.4 A sceptical note**

The only volume out of the recent flood of publications to adopt a rather more sceptical tone on the value of defining a bounded Southeast Asian region and the utility of attempting to understand it in terms of a multidisciplinary area studies approach is that edited by Paul Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt entitled *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space* (2005a). They tend towards the generally accepted view that Southeast Asia emerged as a regional concept primarily as a result of external involvement and interest (from the US, Europe and Japan) so that these foreign powers could "deal collectively with a set of territories and peoples that felt no particular identification with one another" (2005b: 11). The editors conclude that attempts to define Southeast Asia have been "inconclusive" and that the term "Southeast Asia" continues to be used "as little more than a way to identify a certain portion of the earth's surface", and that the question of whether or not the concept of Southeast Asia as a defined region "will acquire greater coherence in the future, or become increasingly irrelevant,....cannot be answered" (ibid: 14). I think that I am closer to this position than one which accepts the region in some substantial and bounded way. Kratoska *et al's* volume focuses rather more on regional constructs and concepts as, in Heather Sutherland's terms, "contingent devices" and not "fixed categories" (2005: 20-59);

the emphasis is much more on the contestation of space, the movement of populations, capital, cultures and ideas, and the importance of networks and brokerage; linkages, flows or movements (of people, goods, ideas), flux and process, mediation, shifting or transient borders and borderlands, unboundedness and openness, hybridity, marginal populations, and conceptual fluidity. (Kratoska, Raben, and Nordholt 2005b: 12-15).

McVey echoes this in her observation that “we may need to think in terms of not one but many Southeast Asias” (2005: 315). This perspective is most consummately explored and evaluated in Howard Dick’s contribution to the volume in his consideration of Southeast Asia as “an open system” (2005: 250-74). I firmly recognize the value of conceptualizing Southeast Asia as “a contingent device” and one which will shift its boundaries and character depending on scholarly objects of enquiry and academic disciplinary interests and inclinations. But in my opinion, there is no contradiction between acknowledging the continuing importance of Southeast Asia as a region and the field of studies devoted to it on the one hand, and proposing that the region, as a concept and as a focus of scholarly investigation and analysis, can mean different things to different people.

Surprisingly there also seems to be a tendency to take for granted definitions of Asia, Asia Pacific and Southeast Asia in various instances of these books, with only a few of the contributors debating what these terms denote and how we might profit in our research and teaching by continuing to use them. With regard to regional definition the volume which manages to say very little about what constitutes Asia is that by Edmond *et al*, which has the ambition to “recenter” the region or aspects of it. Asia appears to be in one sense something concrete and graspable. Asian places, histories, and cultures, we are told, “increasingly resonate around the globe and affect the lives of many far removed from its regional geographies’ in a ‘new Asian century” (Edmond, Johnson and Leckie 2010b: 1). We can guess from the contributions what Asia might comprise, but we remain unsure about what are the elements of Asianness that are being recentered (other than that they derive from places,

peoples and cultures usually associated with Asia [China, Japan, India, the Malay-Indonesian world, and those of mobile Anglo-Indians, Okinawans and Japanese who carry with them something rooted in Asian history, culture, and geography]).

At one point Asia in broad terms is conceived of as a center (or centers) in the context of a “historical recentring of Asia through movements of people and changing conceptions of space and heritage” (ibid:3); here we have a sense of location and definition, though one which is subject to change. But then the editors shift their ground and recentering appears merely to be the process of highlighting some areas of Asian history, cultures and politics which have been “overlooked” (ibid:1) which in turn involves a shift in emphasis to other disciplines or fields of study beyond ‘the narrow framing of Asia around geopolitical or economic interests’ (ibid: 2-3). The discovery of “new”, “overlooked”, “unexpected” or “alternative” Asian centers in the context of newly emphasized fields of scholarly enquiry (historical, literary and cultural studies, sociological and anthropological approaches) seems not to be particularly “new”, and the notion of center (in terms of shifting subjects, disciplines, zones [places], populations, cultures, histories) becomes exceedingly slippery and difficult to pin down.

We also come away from Goh Beng Lan’s book, with its very welcome locally-grounded intellectual biographies of Southeast Asian scholars, with only the haziest notion of what the major defining characteristics of Southeast Asia as a region are from local perspectives, what the local emergent models and alternative perceptions and visions of area studies generated by these biographies might look like, and whether or not Southeast Asian Studies as a language-based multi- or interdisciplinary field of scholarly endeavor focused on a socio-culturally, symbolically, historically, geographically or politically defined region of the globe is a useful and viable mode of enquiry to help address the issues which the contributors to the volume raise.

In her editorial introduction, Goh appears to reject undue emphasis on the nation-state as a unit of analysis and on “the possibility of any bounded geographical and identity conceptions”

(2011a: 2). Yet, insofar as I can detect any analytical and definitional boundaries which are drawn in this volume, we still appear to be operating with the nation-state-based, ASEAN-defined Southeast Asia and the intra-regional networks which sustain “the lived reality of [constructed] regional identity and geography” (ibid: 39). It would seem that the Western construction of Southeast Asia is being embraced, filled in, elaborated and developed by local scholars but with the hope that this endeavor can be founded on local perspectives and priorities. What is clear is that most of the contributors, other than the editor, do not really address to any extent, the issue of regional identity or identities, cross-national and trans-ethnic comparative studies, and the crucial features of area studies programs designed to understand Southeast Asia as a region. Indeed most of the personal reflections focus on a particular nation-state and specific issues within that territorially bounded unit, though I do accept that where the collection does have a special importance for area studies perspectives is in the willingness of the contributors to engage with research problems across disciplinary boundaries.

Let me now return to the *Remaking Area Studies* volume which presents even more problems in defining regions because it wishes to conjoin Asia with the Pacific, an enterprise which I have always felt to be fraught with difficulties. Teresia Teaiwa in her chapter “For or *Before* an Asia Pacific Studies Agenda” seems to be equally concerned, and she could be talking about Southeast Asian Studies in some respects. She identifies precisely some of the major issues which have been debated in area studies more generally, which seem to take on a rather more extreme form in Pacific [Island] Studies: the region “is conceived of and practiced rather loosely”; “[it] is not consistently defined by practitioners”; “[m]uch work published and presented under the rubric of Pacific Studies has a single national or ethnic focus, does little to extend the possibilities for comparative analysis within the region, and tends to rely on theoretical sources from outside the region as a point of reference. As for disciplinary or methodological consistency, there is none....” (2010: 111). If we accept her assessment of the problems, then how or why would we want to

bring the disparate field of Pacific Studies into the equally disparate field of Asian Studies and within that as well Southeast Asian Studies?

In summary then, in this attempt to capture some of the issues of the last decade, I accept most fulsomely that regions do have a cognitive existence and, with regard to *Decentring and Diversifying Southeast Asian Studies* and Goh Beng Lan's apparent embracing of the ASEAN-nation-state definition of Southeast Asia, I am prepared to recognize that for certain political and academic purposes this delineation of the region is "a lived reality". Yet, along with Heather Sutherland I continue to conceive of Southeast Asia as a "contingent device" and, in that regard, there are other ways of seeing Southeast Asia from different disciplinary perspectives, particularly anthropological and archaeological ones, and these need not be locally generated; in other words there are several possible "Southeast Asias", as Ruth McVey has proposed.

Therefore, if we adopt the position that Southeast Asia can be defined in a number of ways according to different disciplinary and research interests then the methodologies will vary depending on the task in hand, the research problem formulated, the breadth and depth of the study contemplated. Neither will it be so preoccupied with what now seems to me to be a fruitless debate about the respective contribution of insiders and outsiders, or the continuing anxieties about exogenous hegemony. The definition of Southeast Asia and how to study it will shift, depending on whether the research undertaken focuses on archaeology, prehistory, comparative anthropology, sociology, geography and demography, language and linguistics, economic development, international economics, political science, strategic studies and international relations, or history.

My Southeast Asia as an anthropologist is not the Southeast Asia of the political scientist focusing on the development and sustainability of the nation-state; nor is the Southeast Asia of the archaeologist, prehistorian or linguist the Southeast Asia of the economist. And now having set out my stall what do I have to say about methodology? I can only recommend what I have

found useful, and that utility comes not from a specific area studies perspective but from the need to secure groundedness and context. In this endeavor I am essentially adopting the methods and practices of anthropology. But, having said this, I have never confined myself to a small anthropological corner of Southeast Asia, anxious about moving into other researchers' territories beyond Borneo. When you gain confidence from delving into your bit of Southeast Asia then I think you can embark on rather more ambitious cross-regional research (which is what I have been doing during the past ten to fifteen years (see, for example, King 1999; 2008/2011; King and Wilder 2003/2006; Park and King 2013; King 2015).

## **V. A methodology for area studies?**

I have adopted a particular approach to research and the analysis of research findings which I began to rationalize in the 1990s. It probably remained buried in my subconscious before then. But, in thinking about it more deeply and explicitly, I think I have come to some sort of understanding of what it is all about. I was given the opportunity to set this down in a keynote address to the Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia (Malaysian Social Science Association) in 2008 in Kuching, Sarawak which provided the opportunity to locate what I was saying in a Borneo context, but to move beyond it and to present more general thoughts about the ways in which many of us, perhaps somewhat unknowingly, conduct our research (King 2009).

Let me preface this summary of my approach to research with reference to a chapter by Tim Quinlan on applied anthropological research in southern Africa in the 1990s. He was making a case for the need for South African anthropologists to focus on practical and applied research and on the building of a unitary state. He was countering what he saw as one of the major preoccupations of Euro-American social scientists with "theory". He says "Postmodernism seems to be a luxury affordable amongst North American academes and perhaps, along the

corridors of Cambridge”, but, for him, it is not affordable in southern Africa (1996: 74). I have great sympathy with this position and it squares with my own interests and preoccupations in grounded and applied research. It is characterized in the term which I first coined in the 1990s to refer to my research practices – “a jobbing social scientist” (King 1994) and then elaborated fifteen years later (2009).

Several meanings, some popular and some technical, have been attached to the term but I continue to see it in a positive sense; it is not an approach to academic endeavor which is in any way lacking in professionalism. It is a style of work, an approach, a method and a perspective which is wholly professional and rooted in scholarship. Coincidentally, Tony Barnett and Piers Blaikie also coined the term at the same time as me in their research in rural Uganda in the 1980s on the social and economic impact of the AIDS epidemic (1994). My suggestion is that working in a multidisciplinary area studies environment encourages, but does not monopolize this kind of research. It may draw eclectically on concepts and frameworks from more than one discipline; and in collaborative work and in the supervision of research one tends to get involved in several different topics of interest, often simultaneously, which may not have very direct or demonstrable connections with each other. Nevertheless, “jobbing” is a methodology which is not distinctive or unique or particular to area studies; it emerges from social science training.

Let me repeat what it comprises: in research we invariably formulate a set of specific questions; in order to answer these we (or perhaps I should say ‘I’ as an anthropologist) piece together the jigsaw from a range of materials garnered from field observations, interviews, surveys, casual conversations and encounters, and a mix of published and unpublished data (King 2009: 18). In attempting to understand this medley of materials I have usually drawn eclectically on certain concepts and analytical frameworks, which hopefully ,have provided me with, in Barnett’s and Blaikie’s words, “a “coherent” [empirical] account which in some way relates to the “problem” from which the journey originated”

(1994: 226). It should be a logical, coherent, internally consistent analytical narrative which, as its main objective, makes sense in relation to the original questions asked. Its main task is not to formulate theory but it might well feed into theoretical work. The concepts deployed are at a relatively low level of abstraction; they do not comprise a unified or coherent body of theory as such. This jobbing approach therefore draws on a range of concepts that happen to be at hand and pragmatically utilizes them to address the research questions posed (ibid: 1994: 247-248). The research approach lends itself to practical and policy-related work, and the *modus operandi* is to move to-and-fro with some ease between empirical work, practice and application, conceptual deployment and formulation, and analysis. In all of this work I have usually proceeded on a case-by-case basis recognizing that there are significant variations at the local level between the circumstances of different communities and populations. Even a low level conceptual framework might not enable us to capture the diversity of lived experiences, though it is still preferable to higher level theory. In my 2009 paper, I then made reference to a range of what I called “jobbing concepts”, which I need not repeat here (King 2009b: 18-20).

Most recently, in an extended book chapter, I have used this approach or mode of enquiry to consider the problems posed by globalization theory (which is a universalism) as it relates (or not) to research on the ground in Sarawak (2012b). I do not have the luxury of time or space to return in detail to that paper and so perhaps an extended quotation from it captures my position: ‘One of my tentative conclusions will be that the concept of globalization neither seems to offer those social scientists who prefer to work “on the ground” anything that is particularly useful, nor adds significantly to the intellectual armoury which we already have at our disposal. Have we been seduced by the globalization theorists? Have some of us been seduced by yet another general theory which purports to explain and analyze major trends and processes that are currently taking place in our “runaway world”, but which ultimately explains very little?’ (2012b: 117-118). In this regard I have enormous

admiration for Clive Kessler's contribution to the same volume "Globalization: Familiar Issues But a New-fangled Discourse – or "Déjà Vu All over Again?" (2012); I am in whole-hearted agreement with him.

## VI. Concluding remarks

Some brief comments on Huotari's recent thoughtful consideration of the relationship between area and method within a Southeast Asian Studies context provide an appropriate conclusion (2014: 1-24). He argues for a methodological dialogue, especially in attempting to go beyond the oversimplified binary distinction between "universal disciplinary knowledge and area-specific, interdisciplinary knowledge" (ibid: 1). The path he and other authors take in the Freiburg volume already referred to (Huotari, Rüländ and Schlehe 2014) is to focus on "context-sensitive" methods, practices and techniques deployed in knowledge production in area studies in an attempt to find a scholarly "middle ground" between disciplinary and area studies specialists. Huotari also recognizes the lack of "methodological coherence" in area studies but draws attention to 'methodological tolerance' (2014: 3).

I would also resist the universalizing impulse in much mainstream disciplinary research (see, for example, King 2012b), but other than some modest eclectic area studies contributions to research practice (among which I count my concept of "jobbing") I would maintain that area studies specialists still work within those approaches to knowledge production generated within disciplines. The contributions to the Freiburg book continue to initiate knowledge production from a disciplinary perspective (anthropology is prominent in the case material presented), and the contrast between what economists and anthropologists do is also a preoccupation in attempting to bring together disciplinary practices with the demands of local, context-sensitive research. Therefore, as examples, the innovative collaborative, reciprocal project organized between Freiburg and Gadjah Mada Universities

is a product of reflexive developments within anthropology, not within area studies (Schlehe and Sita Hidayah 2014), to which Huotari himself alludes (2014: 22). Kathryn's Robinson's consideration of the contribution of a gender studies approach to Southeast Asian Studies starts from anthropological, sociological and feminist dimensions of gender studies; it is not in any obvious sense derived from an area studies perspective, other than to point out that the role of women and their high status relative to other regions (neighboring and further afield) has been an important "theme" in the study of Southeast Asia (2014: 108-109, 125-126; and see Korff and Schröter 2006: 65-66). Finally Chua Beng Huat makes a case for much more inter-referencing within Asia, rather than continuing a preoccupation with Euro-Asian hierarchical comparisons (and more than this extending the concept of comparison to one of "affinities", and utilizing such notions as "points of reference", "citation", "evocation", "inspiration", "absence", "resonance", and "provenance") (2014: 273-288). Yet, as he notes, the method is derived much more from cultural studies, though it was also developed within an Asian (though not Southeast Asian) frame of reference (ibid: 287).

To repeat, my starting point in this debate: Southeast Asia for me is a shifting, variable, open-ended concept. Its configuration and content will vary depending on research perspectives, approaches and interests. The methods we use are almost always (in my case at least) derived from fields of study outside of area studies. It is also interesting that, for those, who are committed to and focused on the defence and indeed the remaking and re-energizing of area studies generally and Southeast Asian Studies, or Asian Studies or Asia Pacific Studies in particular there seems to be surprisingly little thought given to the definition and delimitation of the region(s) and the scope and competence of the field of studies designed to study the region(s) so identified. In this exercise of rethinking and rejuvenation we should also beware of the construction of categories and indeed oppositions, which, in some cases, are not very helpful and need to be heavily qualified. I must confess, in attempting to convey my message, I have also used some of these categories ("area studies" and "disciplines"

being the main ones), but I do so for convenience not with the conviction that they are, in some way, homogeneous, fixed and delineated. The dualisms “insider/outsider” or “Euro- American/ Southeast Asian” also need decidedly to be laid to rest. And finally I turn to “jobbing” – an approach, a lifestyle, and a vocation – and its capacity, in methodological terms, to question and deconstruct “universalizing tendencies”.

## References

- Ananda Rajah. 1999. Southeast Asia: Comparatist Errors and the Construction of a Region, *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, Special Focus: Reconceptualizing Southeast Asia, Amitav Acharya and Ananda Rajah (eds), 27: 41-53.
- Andaya, Barbara Watson. 1997. The Unity of Southeast Asia: Historical Approaches and Questions. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 28: 161-171.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1992. The Changing Ecology of Southeast Asian Studies in the United States. *Southeast Asian Studies in the Balance: Reflections from America*. Charles Hirschman, Charles F. Keyes and Karl Hutterer eds. 25-40. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Association for Asian Studies.
- Barnett, Tony and Piers Blaikie. 1994. On Ignoring the Wider Picture: AIDS Research and the Jobbing Social Scientist. *Rethinking Social Development*. David Booth ed. 226-250. Harlow: Longman Scientific and Technical.
- Bonura, Carlo and Laurie J. Sears. 2007. Introduction: Knowledges that Travel in Southeast Asian Area Studies. *Knowing Southeast Asian Subjects*. Laurie J. Sears, ed. 3-34. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, and Singapore: NUS Press.
- Bowen, John R. 1995. The Forms Culture takes: a State-of-the-field Essay on the Anthropology of Southeast Asia. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 54: 1047-1078.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. The Inseparability of Area and Discipline in Southeast Asian Studies: a View from the United States. *Moussons. Recherche en sciences humaines sur l'Asie du Sud-Est*, 1: 3-19.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. The Contributions of Southeast Asian Studies in the United States. *The Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines*. David L. Szanton, ed. 386-427. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Burgess, Chris. 2004. The Asian Studies "Crisis": Putting Cultural Studies into Asian Studies and Asia into Cultural Studies. *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 1: 121-136.
- Caplan, Pat, ed. 2003. *The Ethics of Anthropology. Debates and Dilemmas*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Chou, Cynthia and Vincent Houben, eds. 2006a. *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, and Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006b. Introduction. *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions*. Cynthia Chou and Vincent Houben, eds. 1-22. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, and Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies.
- Chua Beng Huat. 2014. Inter-referencing Southeast Asia: Absence, Resonance and Provocation. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüländ and Judith Schlehe, eds. 273-288. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dick, Howard. 2005. Southeast Asia as an Open System: Geo-politics and Economic Geography. *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*. Paul H. Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt, eds. 2005a. Singapore: Singapore University Press, and Ohio: Ohio University Press, Research in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 111, 250-274.
- Edmond, Jacob, Henry Johnson and Jacqueline Leckie, eds. 2011a. *Recentring Asia; Histories, Encounters, Identities*. Leiden and Boston: Global Oriental.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011b. Introduction. *Recentring Asia; Histories, Encounters, Identities*. Jacob Edmond, Henry Johnson and Jacqueline

- Leckie, eds. 1-9. Leiden and Boston: Global Oriental.
- Ellen, R.F., ed. 1984. *Ethnographic Research. A Guide to General Conduct*. London and San Diego: Academic Press, Research Methods in Social Anthropology 1.
- Evans, Grant. 2002. Between the Global and the Local there are Regions, Culture Areas and National States: a Review Article. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 33: 147-161.
- Fifield, Russell H. 1976. Southeast Asian Studies: Origins, Development, Future. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 7: 154-61.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1983. Southeast Asia as a Regional Concept. *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, 11: 1-14.
- Goh Beng Lan, ed. 2011a. Disciplines and Area Studies in the Global Age: Southeast Asian Reflections. *Decentring and Diversifying Southeast Asian Studies: Perspectives from the Region*. Goh Beng Lan, ed. 1-59. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011b. *Decentring and Diversifying Southeast Asian Studies: Perspectives from the Region*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. Moving Theory and Methods in Southeast Asian Studies. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüländ and Judith Schlehe, eds. 27-43. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Goss, Jon and Terence Wesley-Smith. 2010. Introduction: Remaking Area Studies. *Remaking Area Studies: Teaching and Learning across Asia and the Pacific*. Terence Wesley-Smith and Jon Goss, eds. ix-xxvii. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Harris, Olivia. 1996. The Temporalities of Tradition: Reflections on a Changing Anthropology. *Grasping the Changing World: Anthropological Concepts in a Postmodern Era*. Václav Hubinger, ed. 1-16. London and New York: Routledge.
- Heryanto, Ariel. 2002. Can There be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies? *Moussons. Recherche en sciences humaines sur l'Asie du Sud-Est*, 5: 3-30.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. Can There be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian

- Studies? *Knowing Southeast Asian Subjects*. Laurie J. Sears, ed. 75-108. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, and Singapore: NUS Press.
- Hirschman, Charles. 1992. The State of Southeast Asian Studies in American Universities. *Southeast Asian Studies in the Balance: Reflections from America*. Charles Hirschman, Charles F. Keyes and Karl Hutterer, eds. 41-58. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Association for Asian Studies.
- and Jennifer Edwards. 2007. Social Change, Southeast Asia. *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Sociology*, vol. 9. George Ritzer, ed. 4374-4380. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Holy, Ladislav. 1984. Theory, Anthropology and the Research Process. *Ethnographic Research. A Guide to General Conduct*, R.F. Ellen, ed. 13-34. London and San Diego: Academic Press, Research Methods in Social Anthropology 1.
- Mikko Huotari. 2014. Introduction: Fostering Methodological Dialogue in Southeast Asian Studies. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüländ and Judith Schlehe, eds. 1-24. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- , Jürgen Rüländ and Judith Schlehe, eds. 2014. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jackson, Peter, A. 2003a. Space, Theory, and Hegemony: The Dual Crises of Asian Area Studies and Cultural Studies. *Sojourn. Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 18: 1-41.
- , 2003b. Mapping Poststructuralism's Borders: The Case for Poststructuralist Area Studies. *Sojourn. Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 18: 42-88.
- Kessler, Clive S. 2012. Globalisation: Familiar Issues But a New-fangled Discourse – or “Déjà Vu All over Again?” *Social Science and Knowledge in a Globalising World*. Zawawi Ibrahim, ed. 23-50. Kajang: Malaysian Social Science Association and Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information and Research Development Centre.
- Keyes, Charles F. 1992. A Conference at Wingspread and Rethinking

- Southeast Asian Studies. *Southeast Asian Studies in the Balance: Reflections from America*. Charles Hirschman, Charles F. Keyes and Karl Hutterer, eds. 9-24. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Association for Asian Studies.
- King, Victor T. 1990. *Between West and East: Policy and Practice in South-East Asian Studies in Britain*. Hull: Hull University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1994. Reflections of a Jobbing Social Scientist Twenty Years On. *The Sarawak Gazette*, 121: 15-19.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. *Anthropology and Development in South-East Asia: Theory and Practice*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. Southeast Asia: an Anthropological Field of Study? *Moussons. Recherche en Sciences humaines sur l'Asie du Sud-Est*, 3: 3-31.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. *Defining Southeast Asia and the Crisis in Area Studies: Personal Reflections on a Region*. Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, University of Lund: Working Paper no. 13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006a. Review of 'Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space', edited by Paul H. Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt, *ASEASUK News*, 39: 16-19.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006b. Southeast Asia: Personal Reflections on a Region. Cynthia Chou and Vincent Houben, eds. 23-44. *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions*. Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, and Leiden, International Institute of Asian Studies.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008/2011. *The Sociology of Southeast Asia: Transformations in a Developing Region*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press and Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, reprint 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009a. *A History of ASEASUK: On its Fortieth Anniversary*. School of Oriental and African Studies: Association of South-East Asian Studies in the United Kingdom.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2009b. Borneo Studies: Perspectives from a Jobbing Social Scientist. *Akademika*, 77: 15-40.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. The Development of Southeast Asian Studies in the UK: the Making of a Region, *Proceedings of the 2010*

- SIEAS International Conference of Research Clusters, The Historical Construction of Southeast Asia*. Seoul: Sogang Institute of East Asian Studies, 29-31 March, 2010, 131-182.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011. *The Development of Southeast Asian Studies in the United Kingdom (and Europe): the Making of a Region*. Leeds East Asia Papers, New Series No. 3, e-series.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012a. Review Essay. The Problem with Areas: Asia and Area Studies. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 168: 314-324.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012b. Knowledge from the Margins of Malaysia: Globalisation and Research on the Ground. *Social Science and Knowledge in a Globalising World*. Zawawi Ibrahim, ed. 117-164. Kajang: Malaysian Social Science Association and Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information and Research Development Centre.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. British Perspectives on Southeast Asia and Continental European Comparisons: the Making of a Region. *The Historical Construction of Southeast Asian Studies. Korea and Beyond*. Park Seung Woo and Victor T. King, eds. 265-323. Singapore: ISEAS Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2014. Southeast Asian Studies: The Conundrum of Area and Method. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüland and Judith Schlehe, eds. 44-63. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and William D. Wilder. 2003/2006. *The Modern Anthropology of South-East Asia. An Introduction*, London: Routledge, reprint 2006.
- Korff, Ruediger and Susanne Schröter. 2006. Current Trends in Anthropological and Sociological Research in Southeast Asia. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 25: 63-72.
- Kratoska, Paul H., Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt, eds. 2005a. *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, and Ohio: Ohio University Press, Research in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 111.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005b. Locating Southeast Asia. *Locating Southeast Asia:*

- Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*. Paul H. Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt, eds. 1-19. Singapore: Singapore University Press, and Ohio: Ohio University Press, Research in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 111.
- Kuijper, Hans. 2008. Area Studies versus Disciplines. Towards an Interdisciplinary, Systemic Country Approach. *The International Journal of interdisciplinary Social Science*, 3 (7): 205-216.
- Lieberman, Victor. 1993. Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies: Structuring Southeast Asian History. c.1350-c.1830, *Modern Asian Studies*, 27: 475-572.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. An Age of Commerce in Southeast Asia? Problems of Regional Coherence - A Review Article. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 54: 796-807.
- Lombard, Denys. 1995. Networks and Synchronisms in Southeast Asian History. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 26:10-16.
- McVey, Ruth T. 1995. Change and Continuity in Southeast Asian Studies. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 26: 1-9.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998. Globalization, Marginalization, and the Study of Southeast Asia. *Southeast Asian Studies: Reorientations*. Craig J. Reynolds and Ruth McVey, eds. 37-64. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, Southeast Asia Program Publications.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. Afterword: In Praise of the Coelacanth's Cousin. *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*. Paul H. Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt, eds. 308-319. Singapore: Singapore University Press, and Ohio: Ohio University Press, Research in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 111.
- Milner, Anthony. 1999. Approaching Asia, and Asian Studies, in Australia. *Asian Studies Review*, 23: 193-203.
- Ooi Keat Gin, ed. 2004. *Southeast Asia: a Historical Encyclopedia from Angkor Wat to East Timor*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 3 volumes.
- Park Seung Woo and Victor T. King, eds. 2013. *The Historical Construction of Southeast Asian Studies. Korea and Beyond*. Singapore: ISEAS Press.

- Quinlan, Tim. 1996. Circumscribing the Environment: Sustainable Development, Ethnography and Applied Anthropology in Southern Africa. *Grasping the Changing World: Anthropological Concepts in a Postmodern Era*. Václav Hubinger, ed. 74-99. London and New York: Routledge.
- Reid, Anthony. 1988/1993. *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce: 1400-1680, Vol. 1, The Land Below the Winds; Vol. 2, Expansion and Crisis*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1994. Recent Trends towards Future Directions in Southeast Asian Studies (Outside SE Asia). *Towards the Promotion of Southeast Asian Studies in Southeast Asia*. T. Abdullah and Y. Manuati, eds. 256-276. Jakarta: Indonesian Institute of Sciences.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. A Saucer Model of Southeast Asian Identity. *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, Special Focus: Reconceptualizing Southeast Asia, Amitav Acharya and Ananda Rajah, eds. 27: 7-23.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. 2003a. *Southeast Asian Studies: Pacific Perspectives*. Tempe, Arizona State University: Arizona Monograph Series Press, Program for Southeast Asian Studies.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003b. Introduction. *Southeast Asian Studies: Decline or Rebirth? Southeast Asian Studies: Pacific Perspectives*. Anthony Reid, ed. 1-23. Tempe, Arizona State University: Arizona Monograph Series Press, Program for Southeast Asian Studies.
- Reynolds, Craig J. 1995. A New Look at Old Southeast Asia. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 54: 419-446.
- Robinson, Kathryn. 2014. What Does a Gender Relations Approach Bring to Southeast Asian Studies? *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüländ and Judith Schlehe, eds. 107-127. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Saw Swee-Hock and John Wong. 2007. *Southeast Asian Studies in China*. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing.
- Schäfer, Wolf. 2010. Reconfiguring Area Studies for the Global Age. *Globality Studies Journal, Global History, Society, Civilization*, no 22, December 31 ([https://globality cc. stonybrook. edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/no.22.pdf](https://globality.cc.stonybrook.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/no.22.pdf))

- Schippers, Thomas K. 1995. A History of Paradoxes. *Anthropologies of Europe. Fieldwork and Footnotes: Studies in the History of European Anthropology*. Han F. Vermeulen and Arturo Alvarez Roldán, eds. 234-246. London and New York: Routledge.
- Schlehe, Judith and Sita Hidayah. 2014. Transcultural Ethnography: Reciprocity in Indonesian-German Tandem Research. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüländ and Judith Schlehe, eds. 253-272. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sears, Laurie J. 2007. *Knowing Southeast Asian Subjects*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, and Singapore: NUS Press.
- Shamsul Amri Baharuddin. 1994. A Comment on Recent Trends and the Future Direction of Southeast Asian Studies. *Towards the Promotion of Southeast Asian Studies in Southeast Asia*. T. Abdullah and Y. Manuati, eds. 277-296. Jakarta: Indonesian Institute of Sciences.
- Simandjuntak, Deasy and Michaela Haug. 2014. Doing Anthropological Fieldwork with Southeast Asian Characteristics? Identity and Adaptation in the Field. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. Mikko Huotari, Jürgen Rüländ and Judith Schlehe, eds. 67-90. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Steadly, Mary. 1999. The State of Culture Theory in the Anthropology of Southeast Asia. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 28: 431-454.
- Sutherland, Heather. 2005. Contingent Devices. *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*. Paul H. Kratoska, Remco Raben and Henk Schulte Nordholt, eds. 20-59. Singapore: Singapore University Press, and Ohio: Ohio University Press, Research in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 111.
- Szanton, David L. 2004a. The Origin, Nature, and Challenges of Area Studies in the United States. *The Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines*. David L. Szanton, ed. 1-33. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. 2004b. *The Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Teiawa, Teresia K. 2010. For or Before an Asian Pacific Studies Agenda? Specifying Pacific Studies. *Remaking Area Studies; Teaching and Learning across Asia and the Pacific*. Terence Wesley-Smith and Jon Goss, eds. 110-124. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Wesley-Smith, Terence and Jon Goss, eds. 2010. *Remaking Area Studies; Teaching and Learning across Asia and the Pacific*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Wolters, O.W. 1999. *History, Culture and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, Southeast Asia Program Publications, Studies on Southeast Asia, No. 26; revised edition in cooperation with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies; originally published by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1982.

Received: April 13, 2015; Reviewed: May 1, 2015; Accepted: June 1, 2015





## Approaches in Southeast Asian Studies: Developing Post-colonial Theories in Area Studies



Cahyo Pamungkas

### [ *Abstract* ]

This paper proposes an approach in Southeast Asian studies using a post-colonial framework in the study of post-colonial Southeast Asia. This framework is based on the sociology of knowledge that analyzes the dialectical relationship between science, ideology, and discourse. Post-colonial studies is critical of the concept of universality in science and posits that a scientific statement of a society cannot stand alone, but is made by authors themselves who produce, use, and claim the so-called scientific statement. Several concepts in post-colonial theories can be used to develop area studies, i.e. colonial discourse, subaltern, mimicry, and hybridity. Therefore, this study also explores these concepts to develop a more comprehensive understanding of Southeast Asian culture. The development of post-colonial theories can be used to respond to the hegemony of social theories from Europe and the United States. The main contribution of area studies in the field of the social sciences and humanities is in revealing the hidden interests behind the universal social sciences.

**Keywords:** Southeast Asian Studies, Power/Knowledge, Post-Colonial Theories, and Methodological Approach

## **I . Introduction**

There is no agreement among area specialists on developing methods in areas studies. Huotari (2014) explains the recent debate between area studies and social sciences-oriented scholars. Area studies experts are criticized because they do not focus on generalizing scientific knowledge. On the other hand, social sciences-oriented scholars are criticized due their lack of grounded experience (Shea 1997). Area studies experts mostly avoid universal abstractions based on their ontological approach maintaining the study of an area is not capable of universality (Cheah 2001; Johnson 1997; Keim 2011). This debate then raises further questions on how to develop a methodology in areas studies that accommodates the particularity and universality of areas studies. According to Turner (2007), methodology consists of issues arising from theoretical perspectives and those arising from specific techniques, concepts and methods. In this article, I will explore the first element, how to develop post-colonial theory in Southeast Asian Studies.

The aim is to address the following questions: (1) how is the historical development of Southeast Asian studies to be understood as a part of area studies? (2) what are the recent theoretical debates in Southeast Asian studies; (3) and how can the contribution of Southeast Asian studies help solve social problems in Southeast Asian countries? As part of the social sciences, area studies plays an important role in portraying and describing social development in various countries. By starting with the major themes of research, we can examine to what extent area studies can contribute in developing the social sciences and humanities, and what should be done to make area studies play an important role in solving social problems. This study maintains that Southeast Asian studies, as a part of the social sciences and humanities, should have an orientation towards subaltern communities. Moreover, the social sciences should encourage the praxis of emancipation and social change without abandoning its academic principles.

## II . Historical development of Southeast Asian Studies

There is no single definition of areas studies agreed upon by areas studies experts. Areas studies is a form of translation, i.e. “an enterprise seeking to know, analyze and interpret foreign cultures through a multidisciplinary lens” (Tansman 2004: 184). Interdisciplinary cultural specialists like Appadurai questions area studies for its recent transnational and cross-cultural interventions in social processes that compel social sciences to study globalization (Ludden 2000). Social processes on the one hand often relate to other social processes in other sites due to the transnational movement of people, commodities, information, and ideas (Appadurai 2001). Consequently, my definition of areas studies incorporates both the classical concept of area and the recent concept of cross-cultural areas. It is a study of other cultures, either in one or several sites, supported by various disciplines such as languages, history, and anthropology.

The utilization of multi-disciplinary perspectives is still important in areas studies. Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1997 cf. Slocum & Thomas 2003) reminds us that, in the past, the approaches of area studies promoted multi- and interdisciplinary dialogue and discussion with regard to certain areas of the world. Sidney Mintz (1998 cf. Slocum & Thomas 2003) also believes that the concepts of regions, areas, and communities are still an important part of area studies as localities and societies develop a kind of specialization based on their everyday contexts.

The history of Southeast Asian studies cannot be separated from the history of area studies. Area studies is rooted in the development of western colonialism in Asia and Africa. Area studies was developed primarily by Dutch, English, and French colonial governments with the founding of special scholarly associations that conduct research on local art, archaeology, prehistory, culture, history, and language. These associations also recommended political and cultural policies to colonial governments to strengthen colonial hold. The Dutch government established the Department of Indology in 1830 in place of the Batavian Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1778. The English colonial

government established the British Study of India, the Burma Research Society, and the School of Oriental and African Studies in 1917. The French government set up the *Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes* in 1864 and *Ecole Francaise de l' Extrême-Orient* in 1898 to conduct studies of peoples and cultures of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia (Bonura & Sears 2006: 12; Thum 2012 cf. Khudi & Anugrah 2013: 12). Benedict Anderson (1992) notes that these local studies emerged when European researchers also served as officials of colonial governments who were granted access to various reports and documents for writing colonial history.

After World War II, area studies developed in the United States. Yet, before World War II, studies concerning non-white peoples were mostly focused on the Native Indians. American academics did not have much intellectual interest in people outside North America. Moreover, the study of areas was financially sponsored by the American government to support intelligence-gathering activities in order to supply information and data on the potential enemies of the United States (Najita 2002). The funding was used by the government to assist universities in opening programs for studying the history and culture of other countries in Southeast Asia, East Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The research topics of area studies in this period were mostly about the Cold War between the Eastern and the Western Blocs (Raffael 1994). Area studies, including Southeast Asian Studies, have become a mode of knowledge production for supporting military interests. Area studies was seen as strategic if it paid attention to the study Russia and its satellites, Southeast Asia, and East Asia (Chow 2006: 39 cf Sideway 2013: 986).

Area studies between the period 1960 to 1980 marked notable changes. Topics focused on social and economic development and modern culture in the post-colonial countries. In this period, there was an emergence of a comparative approach in area studies. Studies for instance compared the development of Latin American countries and Southeast Asian countries. The notion of local-level "thick description", a research method developed by Clifford Geertz, contributed significantly to the development of area studies.

Approaches of theorization emerged at the macro-level, reflecting the relation between developed and underdeveloped countries. For instance, there was an emergence of dependence theory criticizing the asymmetric relation between developed countries and underdeveloped countries (Thufail 2014).

Several centers of Southeast Asian Studies were established in Southeast Asian countries. The Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) was founded in Singapore in 1968. The Center of Southeast Asian Studies was initiated by the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences in 1973, followed by the Interdisciplinary Program of Southeast Asian Studies in 1976. Establishing the field not only strengthened discourses on development but also responded to the challenges of the Cold War after the defeat of the United States in the Vietnam War (Khudi & Anugerah 2013). In 1986, the Center for Southeast Asia Social Studies in Gadjah Mada University was established. Then in 1995, the University of Malaya founded the Institute of Malaysia and International Studies. This institute focuses on globalization and Occidentalism in Asia, Latin America, and Western countries. In 2001, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences founded the Research Center for Regional Resources, focusing on Southeast Asia, the larger Asia, and Europe.

Centers of Southeast Asian Studies outside Southeast Asian countries can be found in the USA, Europe, Japan, Korea, and Australia. The USA has become the center of area studies after World War II. However, the development of area studies in America dwindled due to large cuts in budget. The funding for area studies given by the federal government under Title VI managed by the US Department of Education was cut to approximately 40% or as much as USD 50 million in 2011, followed by another 2% cut in 2012 (National Humanities Alliance 2013). This cut proved to be challenging for Southeast Asian Studies scholars in terms of funding (Khudi & Iqra 2013).

This condition resulted in the emergence of Southeast Asian Studies outside America. The Federal Government of Australia, for example, has given AUD 15 million to establish the Australian Centre for Indonesia Studies at Monash University, with some

chapters at the University of Melbourne, the Australian National University, and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) . Moreover, Singapore has several Southeast Studies interests at The Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at the National University of Singapore, and the Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University (NTU). With substantial funding, Singapore nowadays plays an essential role in developing Southeast Asian Studies. Japan and South Korea also play a significant role in developing Southeast Asian Studies. In Kyoto University, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies thrives while Korean counterparts support the Korean Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (KISEAS) in Seoul and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies at the Busan University of Foreign Studies (ISEAS-BUFS).

### **III. Recent theoretical debates in Southeast Asia Studies**

Nowadays, Southeast Asian Studies is challenged by four fundamental problems (Khudi & Anugrah 2013). Firstly, there is the economic and political imbalance of knowledge production in Southeast Asian Studies in both developed and developing countries. Following this is the sociological aspect of knowledge of Southeast Asian Studies development related to the position of Southeast Asian academics in this field of studies. Next is the historical context of the birth of Southeast Asian Studies. Lastly, there is also the ambivalent position of Southeast Asian Studies in relation to several paradigms in the social sciences. Of the four, the most crucial is the position of Southeast Asian academics in Southeast Asian Studies. The articles of Heryanto (2007) and Lowe (2007) state that the position of Southeast Asian academics is regarded by Western academics as both an advantage and a disadvantage. On the one hand, it is an advantage since these academics live in Southeast Asia, know the local languages, and possess deep cultural knowledge. On the other hand, it is also a disadvantage as they are perceived to be less critical. By way of illustration, an Indonesian academic who is skilled in a certain field may be regarded merely as an Indonesian expert but not a Southeast

Asian expert. Western academics however position themselves as experts in Southeast Asian Studies despite merely examining certain phenomena in a Southeast Asian country.

Mary Steedly (1999 cf. Thufail 2011), in her review of the state of Southeast Asian Studies, proposes an interesting explanation concerning the limited number of academics who pay attention to violence and conflicts in Southeast Asia. Steedly argues that conflicts and violence are not part of the Southeast Asian cultural theories as researchers cannot significantly explain the normative and symbolic systems of Southeast Asian society.

Heryanto (2007) examines the reasons why local Southeast Asian academicians usually end up underappreciated in the production and consumption of discourse. Although the academicians have more knowledge about the problems in their area, they are usually subordinated to Western academicians. The East's unequal relation with the Western world is deeply embedded in the development of this field of study. To respond to this, Japanese and American institutions provide scholarships for the researchers of Southeast Asia to conduct more studies in their own home area

Heryanto's view is consistent with Celia Lowe's position (2007) that academics or researchers from Southeast Asia are expected by their colleagues from the West to contribute data rather than theories. Lowe's study of the collaboration between Indonesian and American academics in research concerning conservation issues in the Togean Archipelago shows that Indonesian academics are always assigned to read European or American scientific literature which are often irrelevant to observed phenomena. Most Western academics suppose that Indonesia provides a space open to scientific research. In contrast, Indonesian academics tend to hold to the view that the nation—the concept or the identity—is their main focus of study. Lowe furthermore explains that Indonesian academics have been striving to be admitted into the domain of transnational biodiversity conservation.

After the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, a change of orientation has occurred in Southeast

Asian Studies in the USA. Although Southeast Asian Studies are still considered important by American academics, studies of the Middle East have become more strategic in responding to the phenomenon of increased terrorism. Bonura and Sears (2007) note that along with the emergence of armed conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan and the fear of Al Qaeda spreading onto Southeast Asia, the training in language and comparative analysis play an important role in developing national defense. Textual translations and analysis, religious studies, comparative politics, and ethnography play important roles in training and informing flying squads, intelligence agents, and government functionaries. Southeast Asian Studies nowadays faces problems almost similar to that of area studies as it developed in the conflict-ridden colonial era and the Cold War.

According to Bonura and Sears (2007), area studies in the face of global conflicts should have continuously proposed questions about complex social and political realities, and surrendered to being a contributor to state intelligence in the context of political geography. Southeast Asian Studies scholars should have been critically involved in the economic and political debates that reflect political conditions of the war against terrorism. Such critical involvement is important to support higher education in a democratic society. Southeast Asian Studies is expected to not only reveal the economic and political motives beyond the campaign against terrorism, but also to strengthen the consolidation process of democracy in Southeast Asian countries.

Meanwhile, what has area studies contributed towards the development of the social sciences and humanities? Miyoshi and Harootunian (2002), in *Learning Places: the Afterlife of Area Studies*, elaborate the influence of cultural studies and post-colonial studies on East Asian Studies, and compare the economic configurations between East Asia and Southeast Asia. The topic concerning economic inequality and the subject of Southeast Asian Studies have rarely been discussed. Harootunian sees the future of area studies in both methodology—by way of drawing on the scientific specification of area studies—and the sophistication of post-colonial theories. Referring to David Szanton (2003), the

main purpose of Southeast Asian Studies in the present is to develop indigenous vision and knowledge. In the future, these studies are expected to change academic and public visions by developing post-colonial perspectives in the social sciences and humanities.

#### **IV. Using Post-colonial Knowledge in Southeast Asian studies**

Knowledge can be placed as either discourse or ideology. Analyzing knowledge as an ideological discourse means analyzing it at the level of consciousness by which it legitimizes the existing social order. Tim Dant (1991) proposes that western ideology's emphasis on rationalism is the best way forward in seeking knowledge. Sciences and technology have increasingly dominated human life through the ideologization of scientific knowledge. Following Foucault (1972), however, contestation between discourses has always been related to contestation of power. Discourses aim to determine scientific truth. Consequently, knowledges determine truth and error in societies. In reality, no knowledge is free from interest because knowledge is correlated with power. Every form of knowledge contains the will to power and every will to power needs knowledge to support its legitimation.

I put post-colonial knowledge as a critical standpoint of modernity as well as the theoretical framework in analyzing Southeast Asian problems. As mentioned above, the critique of modernity in the context of Southeast Asian studies reveals how post-colonial views strive to explore the impact of modernity on current social life. As theoretical framework, post-colonial knowledge explains the extent and legacy of colonialism on the social, political, economic, and cultural realms.

The following discussion examines several concepts in post-colonial studies (Ashcroft, et al. 2003). Let us begin the colonial discourse. Discourse for Foucault is a system of statements within which the world could be known. It is the system by which the dominant group constitutes the truth by imposing some specific knowledge, disciplines, and values upon dominated groups.

Colonial discourse is a complex of signs and practices that organizes social existence and social reproduction within colonial relationships. It is a system of statements concerning the colonies and the colonial people, the colonizing powers, and the relationship between these two. Fanon (1965) and Said (1978), who both introduced colonial discourses, emphasize the contradictory and conflictual positions between the colonializer and the colonized.

Now, let us continue to discuss the idea of the subaltern. Gramsci (1999) formulated this concept to identify non-hegemonic groups or classes whose rights to participate in writing history and culture are rejected by the ruling. These groups are subjected to the hegemony of the ruling class. "The subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a state. Their history is intertwined with that of civil society and thereby with the history of states and groups of states" (Gramsci 1999: 202). We can investigate the history of subaltern classes in Southeast Asia and their objective formations—their active and passive affiliations to the dominant political formations, the establishment of new parties and the dominant groups, the way these groups produce their claims, and the new formations within the old framework which assert their autonomy. Following the Gramscian concept (1999, 204), it is necessary to trace how subaltern classes in Southeast Asia have developed into hegemonic and dominant groups, how they defeated their enemies and which groups actively and passively support their struggle.

Afterwhich, let us move to hybridity and mimicry. Different from Fanon (1965) and Said (1978), Bhaba (1994) emphasizes that colonial relationships are not simple. There is a difference between the colonizer and colonized subjects that enable both of them to interact. Bhabha states that post-colonial discourses do not make themselves easily recognized in a contradictory opposition between the two subjects. The continuation of colonial discourses does not result in deep oppositions between the two cultures, but in ambivalence and forms of multiple and contradictory beliefs (Bhaba 1994: 94-95). The place of difference and otherness is never fully outside of the subjects, but partly comes from

within. The strategy of subversion of colonizer in recognizing the discriminated groups occurs in the disturbing distance between the colonialist self and the colonized other (Bhaba 1994: 112). Bhaba calls this space as a hybrid gap where the subject is represented in a differentiating order of otherness (Bhaba 1994: 58).

Hybridization is the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. It covers language, culture, politics, and race. All cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space that he calls the third space of enunciation (Bhabha 1990). Hybridity can be implemented via mimicry, which can be understood as the copycat of colonial culture, behavior, manners, and values pursued by the colonized. It contains both mockery and a certain menace. Fanon (1992) argues that the colonized subjects at the beginning were forced to adapt the identity of the colonizer. Different from Fanon, Bhabha (1994) says that mimicry reveals the limitation of authority of the colonial discourse. He explains mimicry is also a part of the colonizing strategy or civilizing mission (1995, 106). The colonizer requires the other, the colonized, as it forces the copying of its norms, values, and behavior. Nevertheless, the self still maintains the distinction between itself and the other, so copying and repetition result in something different (ibid 111).

These three main concepts can be used to analyze a number of phenomena in Southeast Asia. In studying diasporic communities, locating third space for cultural dialogues between migrants and settler's communities is often suggested. The research focus could explore the migrants' strategies in constructing their identities, and how it relates to the realm of politics, economics, society, and culture. It also includes the product of dialectical interaction between the migrants and the native or local culture.

## **V. Contribution of Southeast Asian Studies in Solving Social Problems**

Nowadays, social sciences and humanities are considered less

important or less useful in solving social problems compared to the natural sciences. Therefore, to what extent can Southeast Asian Studies be used to solve current social problems?

The contribution of Southeast Asian studies in solving social problems could be seen in Lowe's paper (2007) on the collaboration of Southeast Asian academics. The result of such collaboration could be perceived as an effort to decolonize the social sciences, as well as to reconsider the ideas of area studies. In Indonesia, the works of Iwan Tjitradjaja, an anthropology professor at the University of Indonesia, develop new theories by finding creative solutions to problems in controlling natural resources in Sumatra. He worked on the issue of community forestry, confronting problems in the distribution of natural resources, proprietary rights, bureaucracy, participation, and the local communities' capability to take advantage of community forest resources.

Tirtadjaja pays attention to the impact of forestry policies in Indonesia and their implementation. His research not only focused on forest degradation but also on the welfare of the local community living near the forest. The forest rehabilitation he proposes strives to return the forest to the community. His approach could be a model not only in Southeast Asian Studies but also in community forestry studies in the USA. The approach begins with returning forest proprietary rights to the community in peaceful ways.

The community's knowledge of the praxis of forest management helps in reconsidering ideas of forest management. Tirtadjaja started to communicate this issue to the official functionaries of planning and forestry, and discovered that they did not have an adequate knowledge of the field through the policies devised previously. Tirtadjaja's research bridges communication process between the bureaucrats and the community. The community members have different interests in managing the forest. The community is expected to manage the forest transparently, democratically, and responsibly. The team of researchers then invited bureaucrats to observe the community practices. The

functionaries directly witnessed the interaction between the team and the community. The functionaries and the community were afforded learning opportunities.

From here, area studies may be seen as useful in solving social problems. Academics graduating from universities in the United States or Europe do not have all the adequate knowledge in these areas. American anthropologists also face a similar problem, that's convincing bureaucrats and biologists to think ethnographically. The question is whether or not it is possible for this participatory observation to be accepted by forest researchers in the USA and the West at large.

Southeast Asian studies contributing in solving social problems may also be seen in the study of the Papuan conflict. Several research projects integrate West Papua into Southeast Asian studies, such as that of Sukma (2005) and Trajano (2010). The research conducted by a team of LIPI researchers led by Dr. Muridan Widjojo produced a book entitled *Papua Road Map* (Widjojo et al. 2008), which identified four fundamental problems in Papua, namely: 1) Papua's history of integration, status, and political identity which are differently understood by Papuan natives and the national government; 2) the political violence and the violation of human rights experienced by Papuan natives; 3) the failure of development in Papua caused by the implementation of the Special Autonomy Law; and 4) the marginalization and discrimination against Papuans.

Various opinions on such matters as Papua's history of integration, status, and political identity cannot be resolved either by exercising unjust violence or development without some inclusive and participatory dialogues involving the central government and Papuans. The political violence and the violation of human rights could be solved by the special courts of human rights or the reconciliation facilitated by the Truth Commission of Reconciliation while the failure of development could be resolved by a more inclusive program of government. In this context, the central government and the regional government of Papua could work hand in hand in defining some new strategies to implement

development centered on the native Papuans. Additionally, the marginalization of native Papuans could be solved by policies of affirmation in the political, economic, social, and cultural realms of Papua.

Based on our study, the office of the Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia initiated an exploratory meeting to enable the stakeholders concerned with Papua's problems to engage in a dialogue. To follow up the initiative, LIPI working with the Network of Papuan Peace (JDP) held several exploratory meetings attended by some representatives of civil society, the regional government of Papua, and the national government. These meetings were aimed at building constructive communication, and identifying some problems, indicators, and solutions to reach a settlement concerning the conflict in Papua. Such meetings were also intended to bridge the gap between the central government in Jakarta and the people of Papua. Political issues, security, law, socio-economic and socio-cultural issues were also discussed there. The agenda of the exploratory meetings was entirely based on the book *Papua Road Map* (Widjojo et al., 2008), while the discussions concerning the indicators of a peaceful Papua was based on the proceedings of the Papua Peace Conference (*konferensi perdamaian Papua*) in 2011 as the source of reference.

The contribution of area studies in solving social problems could not be easily determined. The most important contribution is the form of social commitment of area studies since these studies form part of the social sciences related to human life and behavior. According to Budiman (2013), the social commitment of area studies should not be limited to the two main streams of the field, namely post-modernism, which tends to stop at the deconstruction process of social phenomenon, and the project of neo-liberalism in science which demands practical relevance to the social sciences. It means that areas studies should not be technically oriented, only resolving social problems in Southeast Asia. Instead it should offer a comprehensive and deep understanding of such social problems.

## VI. Conclusion

Several matters related to area studies can be inferred from the previous discussion. First, the history of Southeast Asian studies shows that the field does not only focus on the community or the culture in a certain area but also on issues of the movement of people, ideas, commodities, capital, and information from one place to another. Globalization, transnational issues, and the impact of globalization predominates the contemporary subjects of area studies. Second, theoretical debates in Southeast Asian studies contribute to the development of the social sciences and humanities. Several Southeast Asian experts have provided critical thought to the ideology and practices of Orientalism in the Third World. In the future, Southeast Asian studies may provide a larger space for developing post-colonial knowledge in the region. Third, several research projects in Southeast Asian studies have played a substantial role in providing solutions to social problems as exemplified by the works of Iwan Tjitradjaja and Muridan Widjojo.

Area studies in Indonesia have not developed well because of the limited literature and human resources, as shown by the limited number of researchers and academics who work seriously in area studies. This situation presents several difficulties in evaluating how far area studies in Indonesia can contribute to the development of the social sciences and humanities, and play a significant role in solving social problems. Therefore, researchers should examine the area studies conducted by all research centers and universities in Indonesia. This is important due to the potential of area studies to identify the phenomenon of interconnection and interdependence among cross-border communities beyond political and geographical boundaries.

## References

- Appadurai, A. 2001. *Globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.  
 Ashcroft, Bill eds. 2000. *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concept*.  
 London and New York: Routledge.

- Anderson, B. 1992. The changing ecology of Southeast Asian studies in the United States, 1950-1990. *Southeast Asian studies in the balance: reflections from America*, 25-40.
- Bové, P. A., M. Miyoshi, and H. D. Harootunian. 2002. *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies*. Duke University Press.
- Bhabha, H. 1990. Interrogating identity: The postcolonial prerogative. *Anatomy of racism*, 183-209.
- Bhabha, H. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bonura, C., and L. J. Sears. 2007. Introduction: Knowledges that travel in Southeast Asian area studies. *Knowing Southeast Asian subjects*, 3-32.
- Budiman, M. 2013. Perjalanan intelektual dan pencarian kembali kemanusiaan (Makalah untuk menyambut peluncuran Jurnal Kebudayaan *Kalam online* di Serambi Salihara, 16 Juli 2013).
- Chow, R. 2006. *The age of the world target: Self-referentiality in war, theory, and comparative work*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Dant, T. 1991. *Knowledge, ideology and discourse. A sociological perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. 1972. *The archeology of knowledge* (Trans. A. M. S. Smith). London: Tavistock.
- Fanon, F. 1952/2008. *Black Skin, White Mask*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Pluto Press.
- Fanon, F. 1965. *The wretched of the earth* (Trans. By R. Philcox). New York: Grove Press.
- Gramsci, A. 1999. Prison notebooks. *Further Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, Electric Book Company Ltd, London.
- Harootunian, H. D. and M. Miyoshi. 2002. Introduction: the 'after life' of area studies. *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies*, 1-18.
- Heryanto, A. 2007. Can There Be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies? *Knowing Southeast Asian subjects*, 75-108.
- Huotari, M. 2014. Fostering Methodological dialogue in Southeast Asian Studies. *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*. M. Huotari, J. Rüländ, and J. Schlehe, eds. 1-24. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Jackson, P. A. 2003. "Mapping Poststructuralism's Borders: The Case for Poststructuralist Area Studies." *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 18(1): 42-88.
- Lowe, C. 2007. Recognizing Scholarly Subjects. *Knowing Southeast Asian Subjects*, 109-138.
- Mitz, S. 1998. The Localization of Anthropological Practice: From Area Studies to Transnationalism. *Critique of Anthropology*, 18(2): 117-133.
- Najita, T. 2002. Ando Shoeki: The Forgotten Thinker in Japanese History. *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies*. P. A. Bove, M. Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian, eds. 61-79. Durham N. C. and London: Duke University Press.
- Khudi, A. F and I. Anugrah. 2013. Kajian Asia Tenggara: Antara narasi, teori, dan emansipasi. *Jurnal Kajian Wilayah*, 4(2): 205-228.
- Ludden, D. 2000. Area studies in the age of globalization. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 6(1): 1-22.
- Pemberton, J. 1994. *On the Subject of "Java"*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Rafael, V. L. 1994. The Cultures of Area Studies in the United States. *Social Text*, 41: 91-111.
- Reynolds, C. J. 1995. A New Look at Old Southeast Asia. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 54(2): 419-446.
- Said, E. W. 1978. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin.
- Sidaway, J. D. 2013. Geography, Globalization, and the Problematic of Area Studies, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 103(4): 984-1002.
- Slocum, K. and D. A. Thomas. 2003. Rethinking Global and Area Studies: Insights from Caribbeanist Anthropology. *American Anthropologist, New Series*, 105(3): 553-565.
- Sukma, R. 2005. Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia: Causes and the Quest for Solution. *Ethnic Conflicts in Southeast Asia*. K. Snitwongse and W. S. Thompson, eds. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Szanton, D. L. ed. 2004. *The politics of knowledge: Area studies and the disciplines*. California: University of California Press.
- Spivak, G. C. 1988. Can the subaltern speak? *Marxism and the*

- interpretation of culture*. C. Nelson & L. Grossberg, eds. London: Mac Millan.
- Steedly, M. M. 1999. The State of Culture Theory in the Anthropology of Southeast Asia. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 28: 431–54.
- Tansman, A. 2004. Japanese Studies: The Intangible Act of Translation. *The politics of knowledge: Area studies and the disciplines*, D. L. Szanton, ed. 184-216. California: University of California Press.
- Thufail, F. I. 2011. Riding the postmodern chaos: A reflection on academic subjectivity in Indonesia. *Decentering and diversifying Southeast Asian studies*. Dalam G. Beng-Lan, ed. 277-292. Singapore: ISEAS.
- . 2014. The development of Area Studies, Paper presented on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in Research Center for Regional Resources LIPI Jakarta (unpublished).
- Trajano, J. C. I. 2010. Ethnic Nationalism and Separatism in West Papua, Indonesia. *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*, 16: 13-35.
- Trouillot, M. R. 1997. Between the Cracks. *Crosscurrents*, 4(2).
- Widjojo, M. S., A. R. E Amiruddin, C. Pamungkas and R. Dewi. 2008. *Papua Road Map: Negotiating the Past, Improving the Present and Securing the Future*. Jakarta: Indonesian Institute of Sciences.

Received: Mar. 16, 2015; Reviewed: May 29, 2015; Accepted: June 5, 2015



## A Historical Review of Japanese Area Studies and the Emergence of Global Studies



Shintaro Fukutake

### [ *Abstract* ]

This article will review the historical background of the development of area studies and the adoption of global studies in Japan. Global studies, which focuses on global issues such as migration, mainly developed in the United States and Europe, but more recently found home in universities in Japan. A characteristic of the development of global studies in Japan is that specialists in area studies have played an important role in institutionally establishing this new discipline. “Japanese area studies” has an affinity with the concepts of global studies contrary to the situation with area studies in the United States.

Conventional academic societies based on area studies in Japan, however, have been forced to change as a result of globalization and the establishment of global studies in Japan. I would like to point out that there is some discrepancy between the scholarship boundaries and the actual research and educational program in area studies. I will also discuss how we should reconsider the concept of “area” by tackling global issues.

**Keywords:** Japan, History, Area Studies, Global Studies, Methodology

## **I . Introduction**

The establishment and development of global studies has been a recent trend in the human and social sciences, and they have focused on global issues beyond the borders of nation-states. The discipline has developed mainly in the United States and Europe. The recent process of globalization since the end of the Cold War has prompted the need to change conventional forms of knowledge acquisition based on the boundaries of nation-states and has seen a new focus on global issues such as migration, global environmental problems, and religious conflicts. Some private universities in Japan, like Sophia University in Tokyo and Doshisha University in Kyoto, have established faculties and departments of global studies, and national universities have also established new research institutes under the banner of global studies in recent years.

A unique characteristic of the development of global studies in Japan is that specialists in area studies have played an important role in institutionally establishing this new discipline. Area studies, which emerged and developed after World War II in the United States, has declined since the end of the Cold War, and it seems that global studies has already replaced area studies. On the other hand, Japanese scholars of area studies have played a key role in accepting and establishing institutes of global studies in Japan.

In this article, I shall review the historical background of the development of area studies and the adoption of global studies in Japan. “Japanese area studies” has an affinity with the concepts of global studies, contrary to the situation with area studies in the United States. Several universities have held interdisciplinary and transborder research and educational programs within the field of global studies without causing any decline in existing institutes of area studies.

Conventional academic societies based on area studies in Japan, however, have been forced to change as a result of globalization and the establishment of global studies in Japan. I

would like to point out that there is some discrepancy between the scholarship boundaries and the actual research and educational program in area studies. I will also discuss how we should reconsider the concept of “area” by tackling global issues.

## **II. The Birth of Global Studies and the Decline of Area Studies in the United States**

In 1999, the University of California, Santa Barbara, established a Global & International Studies program. The new discipline named “global studies”, which explores transnational issues, such as human rights, environmental sustainability, refugees, and immigration, was designed in such a way that it could coexist with the existing international studies program. Consequently, the concept of global studies was not considered a “rival” of international studies. However, area studies” came under threat with the emergence of global studies. Many scholars of area studies have taken pride in the original approach based on “areas” that go beyond national borders, in contrast to international studies that mainly focuses on international relations based on nation-states and multi-national organizations. The field of global studies is similar to area studies in its exploration of transnational issues such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multi-national corporations, and migrant workers.

Global studies is similar to area studies in that research focuses on a certain geographical area. However, other aspects of global studies differ from area studies. For example, in contrast to area studies’ main focus on non-Western countries, global studies research starts from a macro perspective, and generally focuses on the situation of Europe and the United States. In the late 1990s, Cumings (1997) pointed out that people working in area studies sensed the emergence of global studies as rival for research funds.

Area studies emerged and developed in the United States during the Cold War. After World War II, the United States

government funded a number of studies on non-Western countries. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Department of State, and the Department of Defense played vital roles in pushing through research on socialist countries (Anderson 2009: 53). This reveals that area studies was born as a matter of public policy during the time of the Cold War. The U.S. government and several foundations invested heavily in the field in order to keep tabs on communist countries.

Several organizations, such as the Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Ford Foundations, invested in subjects that have not been of much concern to government interests (e.g., history, anthropology, and art). On the other hand, as Cumings pointed out, these foundations apparently worked with the government to launder CIA funding. For example, the Harvard Russian Research Center, established in 1947 with a \$740,000 grant from the Carnegie Corporation, was deeply involved with the CIA, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and other intelligence-gathering and military agencies. The Ford Foundation provided \$270 million to 34 universities for area and language studies from 1953 to 1966 (Cumings 1997: 11). These funds helped establish fellowships for young researchers to reside in non-Western countries for long-term research and language acquisition.

Many of these area studies programs became moot after the end of the Cold War. Since the early 1990s, foundations have reduced their financial support for the field of area studies. Instead, they have become more concerned with issues such as “economic development” and “democratization” (Cumings 1997: 8-9).

### **III. Adoption of Global Studies and the State of Area Studies in Japan**

By the end of the 1990s, some faculty members of Sophia University, Tokyo, started to discuss the idea of founding a new graduate program in global studies. Faculty members were affiliated with the three existing graduate programs (international relations, area

studies, and comparative cultural studies). Faculty from area studies played a central role in designing the joint research program for graduate education. In 2002, the university applied for a Ministry of Education grant and received approval to conduct a five-year project under the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Center of Excellence Grant Program.<sup>1)</sup> The project was entitled, “Area-Based Global Studies” (AGLOS). Global studies in the United States tended to be from a macro or Eurocentric perspective, but Sophia employed an area-based approach that took advantage of the university’s strength in Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, and Latin American studies. After the project was completed, the Graduate School of Global Studies (GSGS) was founded in April 2006 with three main programs: international relations, area studies, and global studies. GSGS uses an interdisciplinary, comprehensive approach to deepen the understanding of global issues and find solutions to food supply, population, environmental, and immigration problems.

Sophia University was not the only institute in Japan to establish a research and education program devoted to area studies-based global studies. In April 2010, Doshisha University in Kyoto also created a graduate program that emphasizes the importance of area studies. Similar to Sophia, Doshisha’s program comprises three clusters: American studies, contemporary Asian studies, and global society studies.<sup>2)</sup> In 2009, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies reorganized its existing graduate program of area studies and established its own Graduate School of Global Studies. University of Tokyo, Komaba, also reorganized several institutes related to area studies and established the Institute for Advanced

---

1) The Ministry of Education’s plan to create internationally competitive universities took shape in 2002, when the ministry began accepting applications to its new 21st Century Center of Excellence.

2) The American Studies cluster takes an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to the United States of America and to its global cultural, political, and economic interactions. The Contemporary Asian Studies cluster adopts an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to the many issues facing Asia, with a focus on China, the Korean Peninsula, and Japan. The Global Society Studies cluster aims for an interdisciplinary and integrated analysis of global issues that transcend national and regional boundaries, so as to seek ways to build international cooperation. For more information, see <http://global-studies.doshisha.ac.jp/e>.

Global Studies (IAGS),<sup>3)</sup> which comprises five research institutes: the Center for Pacific and American Studies (CAPS), Center for German and European Studies (DESK), African Studies Center, Sustainable Development Studies Center, and Sustainable Peace Studies Center.

A unique characteristic of the development of global studies in Japan is that area studies scholars have played an important role in establishing this new discipline. Several universities have conducted interdisciplinary and transborder research and educational programs within the field of global studies without causing a decline in existing resources devoted to area studies.

#### IV. History of Area Studies in Japan

Area studies specialists have played a central role in the design of the global studies programs that have emerged in Japan. After the end of World War II, Asian Pacific Studies (formerly known as *Nan-yo* [South sea] studies) entered an academic dead zone. Many scholars who focused on Asia Pacific Studies halted their research or simply retired. The government could no longer afford to support such research and many scholars came to regret the involvement in the invasion and military rule during the Asia Pacific War.

It was not until the mid-1960s that institutional area studies programs were established in Japan. In his autobiography, Benedict Anderson, a Japanese translator with a major in Southeast Asian studies, outlines the early days and peculiarity of area studies in Japan [Anderson 2009]<sup>4)</sup>. Kyoto University and Tokyo University of

---

3) It is important to note that the name of the institute in Japanese has a slightly different connotation in English. The name in Japanese, *Global Chiiki Kenkyu Kiko*, translates as Institute for Global Area Studies.

4) It was published only in the Japanese language. His friend as well as a Japanese scholar with a major in Southeast Asian Studies, Tsuyoshi Kato, requested him to write his autobiography for young students, and Anderson came to an agreement with the Japanese publisher to have it published in only the Japanese language. Kato not only translated it but also wrote a few chapters upon Anderson's request.

Foreign Studies were the first schools in Japan to establish research institutes devoted to area studies: The Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSAS) was founded in 1963 (approved in 1965 by the Ministry of Education) by Kyoto University, and The Research Institute for Languages and Culture of Asia and Africa (ILCAA) (*AA-ken* in Japanese) was founded in 1964 by Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. The Treaty of San Francisco (“Treaty of Peace with Japan”), which enabled Japan to gain membership into the United Nations in 1956, and reparation agreements with Burma and other Southeast Asian countries in the 1950s, paved the way for Japan to re-enter the Southeast Asian market (Anderson 2009: 219).

The Ford Foundation offered funds to establish CSAS in addition to area studies programs at Cornell University and Yale University (Anderson 2009: 219). Very little was known about area studies in 1960s Japan, as this was the time the U.S. military initiated bombing attacks on North Vietnam, and the public argued about the pros and cons of the Vietnam War. The chaotic situation in Southeast Asia made it difficult for a U.S. foundation to support the work of a Japanese university.

Area studies in Japan after the war featured independent research within the administrative structure of an educational institute. As independent research, international projects were able to solicit support from foreign funders. This positioning (i.e., outside the traditional structure of an educational institute) featured prominently in the development of area studies in Japan. Tsuyoshi Kato, translator and co-author of Anderson’s autobiography, points out that many Asian studies researchers might be “unsuccessful scholars” who could not obtain a teaching position with their alma mater (Anderson 2009: 220).

Sophia University established the Research Institute of Asian Cultures in 1982. The following year the Faculty of Foreign Studies established the Office of Asian Cultures to teach Asian culture, religion, and history, and subsequently instituted a formal Asian studies curriculum for undergraduate students in 1993. These offerings of Sophia University appear to differ from the

course taken by other national institutes.

The primary characteristic of Sophia's Asian studies research project is a practical commitment to actualities. For example, Yoshiaki Ishizawa, a historian of Cambodia, carried out a preservation project of cultural heritage sites like Angkor Wat. Yoshinori Murai, a scholar of Southeast Asian studies who focuses on Indonesia, criticized the development policy of the Japanese government in Southeast Asian countries, as well as the authoritarian regime of Indonesia. These interests—concern for local people and culture, advocacy against government—are unique to Sophia University's approach to area studies. The school's master and doctoral programs, founded in 1997 in conjunction with the Graduate School of Foreign Studies, appear to be the first graduate programs in Japan devoted to area studies.

Since the late 1990s, area studies programs have become gradually known in Japan. National universities began to establish their own graduate programs (e.g., Kyoto University founded the Graduate School of Asian and African Studies in 1998). However, there has been little discussion of the practical aspects of area studies in Japan. As we have seen, area studies developed outside the mainstream of Japan's foreign policy. Therefore, while area studies in the United States was waning after the end of the Cold War, there was no such decline in area studies in Japan. Rather, on the cusp of the era of globalization, area studies researchers were in a good position to tackle "global issues" because of their methodological strategies and understanding of global migration patterns and environmental problems beyond the constraints of national borders.

## **V. Methodological Features of Global Issue-oriented Area Studies**

Institutions for area studies in Japan have restructured their graduate programs and have rebranded them as global studies

since the early 2000s, taking the view that research in Japanese area studies can be pursued under the umbrella of global studies. However, institutional changes, including the change in name, may be inconsistent with the methodological tradition of area studies. Here I would like to propose some methodological features that researchers need to consider when dealing with global issues. These new “global issue-oriented” area studies have the following methodological features: (1) linking of research and practice, (2) the use of multi-site approach, and (3) the possibility of reframing the concept of “area”.

### ***Linking research and practice***

Researchers who tackle global issues such as human rights and environmental degradation need to consider the application of their findings. The Japan Consortium for Area Studies (JCAS) has already established a social networking arm that helps coordinate the efforts of academic institutions and NGOs in providing humanitarian aid for victims of natural disasters. The journal of JCAS, *Chiiki-Kenkyu* (Area Studies), explores links between humanitarian aid and area studies (Yamamoto 2012).

Many scholars of area studies have become involved in humanitarian activities via their personal fieldwork. However, there has always been an implicit separation between private efforts and professional work. What I would suggest is that we may need to reconsider the design of area studies to include a component of practical commitment. On the other hand, conventional knowledge of area studies is not sufficient to solve real-world problems, especially regional conflicts (Nakanishi 2014). Any researcher concerned with regional conflict may need to widen his or her geographical research field, and at the same time be flexible about the definition of “area” in accordance with the characteristics of particular issues.

### ***Multi-site approach***

Researchers who have the opportunity to travel and conduct

research in a country outside of their main field should consider themselves fortunate. In general, these experiences are regarded as private acts and findings are not published. Global issue-oriented area studies programs need to change this methodological tendency (i.e., of concentrating on a particular geographical region), and my suggestion is to reconsider the notion of “travel” as part of the private sphere. A multi-site approach, first proposed by anthropologist George Marcus, is a new research methodology where one works in multiple sites and situates the findings in a wider system (Marcus 1995). In this manner, the focus shifts from a single country or geographical area to illuminate an entire network of cultures and customs.

### ***Reframing “area” and reconstructing researcher identity***

Inevitably, global issues need to be reframed beyond conventional geographic conceptions such as “Southeast Asia” or the “Middle East.” Funding or communication problems can limit the scope of a research project—it is very difficult for a single researcher to work in sites that are thousands of miles apart—so we need to organize joint research units that consist of various investigators working in different geographical areas. At the moment it is difficult to present findings from such joint research projects in a conventional academic setting, given that universities cling to the authority associated with conventional academic societies. Trends point toward further expansion of research around global issues, which may necessitate a reorganization of existing academic societies devoted to area studies.

### **Conclusion: Reframing Area Studies**

In contrast to the situation in the United States, area studies in Japan has a good chance to survive as an effective and insightful branch of social science. The fate of area studies in the two countries has much to do with historical background. While the birth and development of area studies in the United States were closely linked to national security, the development of area

studies in Japan had little relation to foreign policy.

“Japanese area studies” has an affinity with the precepts of global studies, which is also contrary to the situation in the United States. It is possible to translate “Japanese area studies” as “global studies” rather than “area studies”—a name that, for some, has a negative connotation with state policy. However, this current trend could be a challenge for existing academic societies devoted to area studies. Firstly there is a matter of changing mindsets, in that researchers tend to think of themselves as “a specialist” of a certain country. In the future, researchers will need to understand multiple countries beyond the basics of language and history. Second, it is becoming more important for area studies researchers to make a practical commitment to global issues, and not only to aim to make a contribution to national policy. This trend requires researchers to travel to multiple countries and tackle global issues such as immigration, war, and environmental sustainability. Finally, it could be argued that this trend begs for a reorganization of existing academic societies devoted to area studies. The global movement of people, money, goods, and mores beyond the existing concept of “area” undercuts the foreign policy strategy of the United States after World War II. Moreover, existing academic societies developed based on rigid conceptions of area. In the future, it will be more important to be flexible and customize research agendas to reach beyond existing national borders and academic societies.

## References

- Anderson, Benedict. 2009. *Yashigarawan no Soto e* [in Japanese], translated by Kato Go. Tokyo: NTT Publishing.
- Cumings, Bruce. 1997. Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International Studies During and After the Cold War. *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 29(1): 6-26.
- Yamamoto, Hiroyuki. 2012. Atarashii Chiiki-Kenkyu o Mezashite [Toward New Area Studies in Japanese]. *Chiiki-Keknyu [Area Studies]*, 12(2): 6-15.

- Marcus, George E. 1995. Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24: 95-117.
- Nakanishi, Hisae. 2014. Heiwa-Kouchiku to Chiiki-Kenkyu [Peace Building and Area Studies. In Japanese]. *Chiiki-Kenkyu [Area Studies]*, 14(1): 106-121.

Received: Mar. 16, 2015; Reviewed: May 29, 2015; Accepted: June 5, 2015



## Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies: Beyond the “Comfort Zone”



Mala Rajo Sathian

### [ *Abstract* ]

Over the last decade, the field of Southeast Asian Studies has been inundated with issues of its “territory” (or the definition of what comprises Southeast Asia), relevance and future. The methodology of approaching Southeast Asian Studies has also come under constant scrutiny providing much fodder for debate. One significant suggestion was that the field of Southeast Asian Studies should “break out of the comfort zone” (Van Schendel, *Bijdragen*, 2012:168(4)). This paper will explore some of the ways of approaching Southeast Asian Studies beyond that comfort zone by examining other/alternative units of studying Southeast Asia in place of the traditional (or statist) perspectives that tend to confine the field within the scope of the national/ nation-state boundaries. The paper will also provide some personal observations of the author on the current state and limitations to teaching and researching Southeast Asian Studies in the region.

**Keywords:** Southeast Asian Studies, methodology, units of analysis, relevance, limitations

## **I . Is Southeast Asian Studies relevant?**

At a Roundtable Discussion on the Future and Shape of Southeast Asian Studies organized by the Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program (SEASREP) in Bangkok in June 2013, Indonesian scholars Muhadi Sugiano and Bambang Purwanto argued that Southeast Asian Studies was a “baggage of colonial construct while ASEAN Studies was more locally engineered.” The following discussions at that meeting referred to the decreasing relevance of the field of Southeast Asian Studies to and in the region, especially under the present scenario of universities undergoing restructuring and/or facing reduced budgets. Some of the often cited reasons contributing to this notion include, (1) the exogenous nature of the origins of Southeast Asian Studies ; (2) that most of the early centers of teaching Southeast Asian Studies were located in Europe, the US and Australia; and (3) that most of the scholars teaching and researching Southeast Asian Studies are “outsiders” (i.e. non-native Southeast Asians) or resident scholars (non-natives residing in Asia). The increasing numbers of centers devoted to teaching ASEAN Studies in Southeast Asia may partly counter points (1) and (2) above. It may also reflect a growing trend, as in the case of Thailand where “there seems to be a shift from Southeast Asian Studies to what we call a ‘trendy’ ASEAN Studies, a kind of brand change” (Kasetsiri 2013: 15).

The third point above was discussed at length by Ariel Heryanto, a “native” Southeast Asian who was then teaching and researching on SEA in the region. Heryanto’s essay, “Can there be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies?” (2002) put Southeast Asian Studies on the spot and sparked numerous academic debates over the teaching and learning of Southeast Asian Studies, exposing the challenges and weaknesses in the field. There were numerous other papers, conferences, and collected essays that attempted to “locate Southeast Asia” (Kratoska et al, 2005), “know Southeast Asia” (Sears 2007), “decentre Southeast

Asian Studies” (Goh 2011) as well as many other suggestions to rethink, revisit, and reorient Southeast Asian Studies and area studies more generally. Added to this long list was Willem van Schendel’s *zomia*—the essay that triggered a “think outside the box” vis-à-vis the Southeast-Asian space/territory and to a lesser extent, the politics of Southeast Asian Studies. *Zomia* clearly underscored the reality of territorial boundaries being in a state of flux, extending this to a robust debate on the methodologies involved in the teaching and practice of Southeast Asian Studies.

The very fact that there has been so much attention and debate over the area called Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies as a part of Area Studies is testimony to its relevance, to say the least. While interest in Southeast Asian Studies in the West vanished after the fall of the economic miracle of Southeast Asia (Thum 2012: 12), in the Southeast Asian region—home to Southeast Asian Studies—there has been a significant growth in the subject/area. Immediately after the economic bubble burst, there was much soul-searching at both the national and regional levels. There was a need to unpack, understand, and “de-myth” Asian Values and the process of decolonization. The wave of democratization and decentralization processes, the security concerns post 9/11, the rise of China and India as economic powers, the numerous bilateral issues amongst ASEAN countries, and the increasing role and presence of Plus 3 (China, Japan, Korea) dialogue partners in ASEAN Summits, served to enhance the relevance of Southeast Asian Studies or conversely, tended to overshadow or subsume Southeast Asian Studies under ASEAN Studies. However, Southeast Asian Studies should not be confused with ASEAN Studies, although there are overlaps between the two.

Most importantly, there is a growing awareness that the field of studies *should not be* determined by the agendas of funding agencies and national interests. Similarly, the field has been inundated with issues of its “territory” (or the definition of what comprises Southeast Asia and where is the “area” in area studies) and if the field should be explored beyond the geographic national-nation-state boundaries. Knowledge of the

region too should be disseminated through conferences and journals not necessarily confined to Southeast Asian Studies. Essentially the field needs to “break out of the comfort zone”, to quote Schendel (*Bijdragen* 2012: 503). While Southeast Asian Studies remains relevant albeit far more challenged than before, it is essential to ponder some other ways of approaching Southeast Asian Studies and attempts to break out of the traditional spatial realm that constitutes Southeast Asia.

## **II. Breaking out of the “comfort zone”: *Other ways (units) of approaching Southeast Asian Studies***

The focus on state spaces (mostly centered in the lowlands) and statist perspectives in the field of Southeast Asian Studies has been well noted. James Scott has argued persuasively for the large, “if not the largest” upland areas, otherwise also known as the *Southeast Asian massif* (or *zomia*- more recently) (Scott 2009: 13). This large territory that transcends territories of multiple nations from China, India, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, and the Greater Mekong Sub-region incorporating Laos and Vietnam, is argued as best studied as a “single object of study”. (Scott 2009: 14). The uplands non-state territory has since received much attention from scholars, giving rise to research and conferences devoted to these areas. The huge participation at the annual Asian Borderlands Conferences is a case in point.

Transborder or transnational zones located between states/nation-states and cultural-economic zones, for instance, the area between Northern Malaysia and Southern Thailand, can be studied as a single cultural area/zone. The transborder Malay world (Kahn 2006) located between Malaysia and Thailand or between the Malay-Thai world is indeed peculiar and distinct from the core areas of their respective countries. The transnational dynamics of this region presents the area as part of a cosmopolitan zone—with a developed economy/market place, established networks, distinct identity and multiethnic citizenry etc.—rather than the traditional view of the region as a backward periphery alienated

or remote from the core. For example a study on the economy and culture of the people of the Malay provinces of southern Thailand should ideally include and extend to cover the states of Kelantan and Upper Perak in the northern part of Malaysia because the social and economic networks operating in this region were both connected and belonged to a “center” that was neither Kuala Lumpur nor Bangkok. The southern Thailand-northern Malaysia region indeed belonged to a similar cultural-economic zone.

Similarly, the Thai-Burma-China economic/cultural zones and the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) all provide alternative and feasible units of study. Transborder trade zones are also intimately connected to migrant networks, and in the case of Southern Thailand-Northern Malaysia, includes also an Islamic trade network that incorporated areas from Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, and India to Pakistan. A study on Pathan (Pashtun) traders operating along the Thai-Malaysia border can be located beyond the area of Southeast Asia for the traders were constantly connected and engaged with people, cultures, and networks that extended to South Asia and beyond as far as Afghanistan (Sathian, forthcoming). Cribb (2012: 504) rightly points out that studies of Southeast Asian areas not strictly confined territorially, albeit “messy”, reveals new insights into the internal complexities of the region and its external connections. Some of these studies use a multi-site approach based on more than one discipline (e.g. history, anthropology, linguistics).

Some scholars have focused on the oceans or seas as units of study in approaching the study of Southeast Asia, for instance, the writings on the Sea of *Malayu* (Andaya 2014) and the Java Seas (Houben 1992). Some others have focused on networks such as the Hajj network, smuggling and secret trade networks (Tagliacozzo 2005) across the Indonesia-Malay world. Tim Barnard’s study on Malayness provided a huge contribution in terms of understanding Malay identity across Southeast Asia (Barnard, 2004).

Apart from the seas, the forests, for example, The Heart of

Borneo, incorporating Kalimantan, Sabah, Sarawak, and Brunei can also be viewed as a useful unit of analysis in studying the region. More recently, studies on diaspora including Cham, Chinese, Indian Muslims, and Hadramaut Arabs have provided much insight into the dynamics of the lived realities of diaspora communities in Southeast Asia transcending nation-state boundaries. A study on the Cham diaspora for instance can extend over the territories of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Malaysia. Therefore, studies that locate the region beyond the scope of the respective nation-state or post-colonial geographical area might be more representative of the region. According to van Schendel (2012: 502),

New transnational and trans-area connections are shaping today's world. For area specialists everywhere this means that there is an urgent task ahead: to develop a firm practice of jointly employing their knowledge beyond their area, if only to work out what can actually be considered to be truly particular to each region.

Meanwhile, research on ASEAN and the ASEAN Community has also served to strengthen "connectedness" among countries in the region. Scholarship on ASEAN will hopefully "rescue" Southeast Asian Studies from national governments and locate it in a more inclusive multilateral dimension. There has also been a shift towards "non-country specific themes" in the departments teaching Southeast Asian Studies in Southeast Asia.

In the early years of Southeast Asian Studies in the University of Malaya (UM), themes such as modernization, anti-colonialism, and nationalist movements were popular. Most of the research was historical in approach, using colonial office documents. There was also a country focus, largely on Malaysia and Singapore. Few of the early department members read any other Southeast Asian language apart from Bahasa Melayu, so there was a strong reliance on teaching and research materials in Bahasa Melayu and English. A country focus approach limited the sense of Southeast Asia as a larger community, and in many ways, Southeast Asia was indeed a "cold concept" at this point (Sutherland 2001). The same could be said of Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand,

although the country focus here is on mainland Southeast Asian countries. Exchange students from Thammasat University studying at the Department of Southeast Asian Studies, the University of Malaya are quick to note that unlike their program, the program in the University of Malaya offers more case studies and references to the island world of Southeast Asia. Taking the example of Southeast Asian Studies in both the University of Malaya and Thammasat, one discovers the binaries are not merely insider-outsider but also island-mainland Southeast Asia. This could be related to what Diokno claims as familiarity with proximity, referring to students' preferences to study a locale closest to their home/place of origin.

### III. The Language Conundrum: *Teaching Southeast Asian Studies in Southeast Asia*

The early centers offering Southeast Asian Studies were all outside the region. This subsequently led to efforts to “decenter” Southeast Asian Studies from US/Europe, as well as to move the direction away from the North American models, such as that of Cornell University's, which pioneered Southeast Asian Studies in the 1960s (Jory 2010). The first school devoted to teaching Southeast Asian Studies in Southeast Asia started at the University of Malaya in 1979, followed quickly by others in neighboring Singapore and Thailand. By 2000, Centers of Southeast Asian Studies had been established in almost all the Southeast Asian countries except Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and almost all were located in central capital cities, with the exception of Walailak University in Nakhorn Sithamarat, Thailand. However, these schools for Southeast Asian Studies in the region tended to adopt and adapt the North American model in the teaching curricula of the Southeast Asian Studies program. Compulsory vernacular language teaching was one of the crucial components of the western model adopted by Southeast Asian Studies programs in the region.

Although the study of other Southeast Asian languages was encouraged or institutionalized into Southeast Asian Studies

programs from the very beginning, scholarship from the region remained largely written in the national languages of respective countries, with the exception of Singapore and to a lesser extent, the Philippines.

Diokno, founding member of the Southeast Asian Studies Research and Exchange Program (SEASREP) rightly points out that most of the writings, especially at the MA and doctoral levels, produced in schools or Centers of Southeast Asian Studies in the region, are in local/national languages resulting in limited dissemination of the findings and knowledge. Even grantees under the SEASREP who learned the language of their neighbors and used/read materials written in that local language, wrote their dissertations/essays either in English or their respective national languages (*Thai, B. Melayu, Viet*). With the exception of works from Singapore and the Philippines, few of the works from other Southeast Asian countries get noticed or cited, both globally and regionally. Diokno laments that “indigenous scholarship is hardly disseminated within the region, given the multiplicity of languages” (Diokno 2010: 5).

Given this limitation, the alternative to reading about the region was mainly through works written in English and to a lesser extent those produced in the local languages. Goh claims that there is a flip side to writings in English compared to local/national languages, the chances of the writings in English to engage with theories from the West is higher (Goh 2011). Amidst the attempts to decenter and diversify, the debate over language continues to divide Southeast Asian Studies.

Research in Southeast Asian Studies is also generally focused in core areas namely, the centers of power and economies and the seats/institutions of administration, the so-called “hot spots in research (Schendel 2012: 499). Peripheries for instance, tend to be neglected. In Malaysia, works on Sabah and Sarawak are far less compared to Peninsular Malaysia. Despite increasing decentralization in Indonesia and the significance of regions such as *paknua/tai/Isan* (northern, southern, and northeast regions) in Thailand, the center/*khlang* remains largely the focus of most

studies. Construction of Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies from the vernacular point of view is lacking, at present, and is still more state centric and less community centric.

#### IV. Limitations in Southeast Asian Studies in the region<sup>1)</sup>

Laws that threaten academic freedom and the general “fear” of the state in some countries in the region serve to restrain scholars from challenging the status quo. It took Duncan McCargo, a scholar and observer of Thai politics to write on *network monarchy*, underscoring the political challenges facing Thailand (McCargo 2005) and the revelation of the cooptation of *Imams* (religious teachers/leaders in southern Thailand) (McCargo 2008) to prompt a series of other similar writings and spark a debate on these subjects. While McCargo is nevertheless a Southeast Asianist, the fact that he is “non-native” may have been an advantage. With draconian laws in some Southeast Asian countries, scholars from the region are indeed wary of challenging the status-quo. There are also instances where the Thai government banned books and non-native authors examining the role of monarchy in Thai politics from entering the country. Academic activists have become persona non grata in Sarawak, Malaysia for their critical writings of the state government. Some scholars have been reprimanded or given “counselling” by the state for the kind of research they produce. However, when there are no laws, what is inhibiting native scholars from “challenging” the *master narrative*/nation-state narrative, to quote Thongchai Winichakul.

The above situation may be partly a result of limited exposure and a general reluctance of students to engage in theoretical issues because these are largely seen as “Western in origin” and serving no practical purpose in the context of the region. Most of the research outputs at the undergraduate and MA levels are often narrative studies of micro topics that have detailed

---

1) Mostly, my personal observation as a researcher and teacher of Southeast Asian Studies in Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore for the last 15 years.

information but somehow are less appealing to the reader because they do not contextualize within the larger debates/concerns, as they also lack elements of comparison. In contrast, the study by a Thai Davisakd Puaksom (2007) on Javanese *Panji* compared with a similar genre in Thailand, written in English and submitted to the National University of Singapore, used Malay and Thai sources is very well received and was extensively referred to and cited. This work has both details and elements of comparison. The multidisciplinary element in Southeast Asian Studies should be reflected not just by the case study but also through contextualization, and engagement with other disciplines and other forms of knowledge that would make a particular study more meaningful.

In addition to inhibiting state laws, I note that there is a prevailing *krengjai* (Thai) or *hutangbudi* (Malay) culture among researchers that may be a limitation to scholarship on Southeast Asia by scholars from the region. Researchers are reluctant to upset or implicate the funding/donor agency supporting the study (private or government). This may be entrenched in the *krengjai* or *hutangbudi* culture i.e. to be grateful to the hand that “feeds”. Indeed the dilemma in writing research projects that serve the state or/and the community can be a double-edged sword.

Finally, I am of the opinion that compulsory vernacular language training in Southeast Asian Studies programs should be reviewed. One of the reasons for the declining numbers of students over the years at the Department of Southeast Asian Studies, the University of Malaya, where I teach is the compulsory Southeast Asian language module, a requirement for the Degree in Southeast Asian Studies. In a cursory survey with students, I was rather disturbed at this revelation, when in most instances, knowledge of an extra language is always viewed as an advantage. Compared to Mandarin, Japanese, and German students do not see the “economic importance” of languages such as Burmese, Thai, and Vietnamese. In fact the most popular language in my department is Filipino, particularly favored by students from Sabah who among other things mentioned that they could easily understand Filipino often spoken and heard in many parts of

Sabah. Of no less importance was that the ability to understand Filipino allowed them to enjoy watching Filipino teleseries. How do we make learning a Southeast Asian language “economically’ attractive”?

## V. ‘Failure’ to develop a distinct methodology

Southeast Asian Studies is alleged to be “aping from the West/Euro-centric approaches”. Heryanto claims the field has not been able to translate the lived realities of the people or prioritize local concerns because it is “locked” in Western scholarly traditions and does not treat the area of study as one unit of study. The focus has been rather on individual countries. Victor King defends the country approach claiming that the region offers the place for anthropologists, sociologists, historians and so on to test their hypotheses or to gain empirical evidence to support their case study.

Unlike East Asian Studies and South Asian Studies, Southeast Asian Studies too is seen as a field where the method is determined by the scholar/researcher and guided by his basic training (history/archival, anthropology/ethnography, geography, economics, cultural studies and so on). As pointed out by numerous other scholars, the entry point to studying Southeast Asian Studies is really the self (Diokno 2010; Crib 2012)—both the disciplinary training of the researcher and the place of origin are significant factors that determine the methodology in one’s research.

This has often led to either a particular discipline-based approach or mixed approaches from the social sciences employed in conducting research on Southeast Asian Studies. Not having a distinct methodology but a combination of methods based on the appropriateness of the case/subject of study, as well as availability of resources in my opinion is indeed an advantage. It allows for the entry of many disciplines and experts, making knowledge production truly multi-disciplinary. This may also reflect an ongoing

methodological quest, a constant exercise in the field of Area Studies.<sup>2)</sup>

## **VI. Sustaining Southeast Asian Studies**

Networking and cooperation among centers offering Southeast Asian Studies may be an avenue for sustaining the field. For instance, CSEAS Kyoto has set up a Consortium of Southeast Asian Studies for schools and institutions to share information/database, conferences, and special publications. Knowledge on Southeast Asian Studies should also be shared or highlighted in conferences outside the region and not confined to the field of Southeast Asian Studies. Regular conferences on Southeast Asia held in the region such as the bi-annual International Conference on Southeast Asia (ICONSEA) by the Department of Southeast Asian Studies, the University of Malaya, can be a platform for the exchange and dissemination of research and knowledge about the region among scholars from within and outside the region.

Outsourcing the teaching of languages to partly address the lack of “market value” for Southeast Asian languages may be an alternative. The experience of learning these languages in the country where the language is spoken (Thai in Thailand, Burmese in Burma etc.), might add experiential value to the students, in terms of exposure to the society and cultures of that country. This will provide lived experiences in the study of that specific country, one that will trigger further interest to embark in graduate studies or in writing final year long essays on the countries being studied.

I would also propose outsourcing courses/modules to other departments/visiting lecturers. For instance, a visiting Professor in Cultural Studies might be invited to teach/or partly teach a course on Communities and Cultures in Southeast Asia—giving his insights from a different field. Alternatively students in

---

2) The many books and articles published on the subject of methodology in Area Studies reveal this scenario.

Southeast Asian Studies can be encouraged to take a module in Media Studies or East Asian/South Asian Studies. This will “kick start” cross-disciplinary knowledge and methods, in the process enriching Southeast Asian Studies.

## VII. Conclusion: *Rebranding Southeast Asian Studies*

With most universities in the region going through restructuring, downsizing, and mergers it is difficult to foresee departments teaching specifically Southeast Asian Studies to remain without any changes. This is the crisis facing most Southeast Asian Studies programs (not only in the US and Europe, where the field is critically determined by funding and policy interests). Its lack of origins in a discipline is a convenient excuse to close down or merge these departments and rebrand these as Asian Studies or in the case of Japan as Global Studies (Fukutake 2015). Declining student numbers hasten the process.

The Departments/Schools/Programs of Southeast Asian Studies might be restructured. I see research clusters (incorporating researchers working on a wide array of topics under an umbrella school such as Humanities and Social Sciences Cluster) as a way out to retain the element of Southeast Asian Studies but under a larger rubric. Specific research clusters, for instance Border Studies, and Diaspora Studies can also be a way for new generations of Southeast Asian scholars to operate and continue to contribute knowledge in the field.

I close with a quote from Pingtjin Thum:

*“Southeast Asian Studies for a long time lacked its own academic hinterland”.*

It might not be inappropriate to ask, at this juncture, where is the heartland of Southeast Asian Studies?

## References

- Andaya, L. Y. 2014. The “Sea of Malayu”: An Ocean Perspective of Malay History. *Discovery and Praxis: Essays in Asian Studies*. Jones David, Marian Michele, eds. 207–20. Albany.
- . 2010. *Leaves of the Same Tree: Trade and Ethnicity in the Straits of Melaka*. Singapore: NUS Press.
- Chou, C., ed. 2007. *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Cribb, Robert. 2012. Southeast Asia: A good place to start from. *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land-en Volkenkunde*, 168(4): 503-505.
- Daidsakd Puaksom. 2007. The Pursuit of Java: Thai Panji Stories, Melayu Lingua Franca and the Question of Translation. Ph.D. Dissertation. National University of Singapore.
- Diokno, Maria S. 2010. Expedition of Knowledge: Supporting Southeast Asian Studies in the Region. *JATI* (Journal of the Department of Southeast Asian Studies, UM). Special Issue. 5-17.
- Fukutake, Shintaro. 2015. A Historical Review of Japanese Area Studies and the Emergence of Global Studies. Proceedings of the International Conference of ISEAS/BUFS. April 2015. Korea.
- Goh, B. L., ed. 2011. *Decentring and Diversifying Southeast Asia: Perspectives from the Region*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia.
- Heryanto, Ariel. 2000. Asians Studying Other Asians in Asia: What Different Does It Make?. *SEAS Bulletin*, 26-27.
- . 2002. Can there be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies. *Moussons*, 5: 3-30.
- Houben, V. J. 1992. Java and the Java Sea: Historical Perspectives. *Looking in Odd Mirrors: The Java Sea*. V. J. H. Houben, H. M. J. Maier and W. van der Molen, eds. 212-240. Vakgroep Talen en Culturen van Zuidoost-Aziëen Oceanië, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden.
- Jory, Patrick. 2010. Some Remarks on the Current State and Possible Future of Southeast Asian Studies. *JATI* (Journal of the Department of Southeast Asian Studies, UM), Special Issue 2010: 27-35.

- Kahn, Joel S. 2006. *Other Malays: Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in the Modern Malay World*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Kasetsiri, Charnvit. 2013. Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand. Special Feature: Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity, Center for Southeast Asian Studies Kyoto University, *CSEAS Newsletter*, 68: 15-17.
- Kratoska, P. H. et al., ed. 2005. *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- McCargo, Duncan. 2005. *Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy In Southern Thailand*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008. Network Monarchy and legitimacy Crises in Thailand. *The Pacific Review*, 18(4): 499–519.
- Schendel, W. van 2010. Geographies of Knowing, Geographies of Ignorance: Jumping Scale in Southeast Asia. *Environment and Planning: Society and Space*, 20: 647.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012. Southeast Asia: An idea whose time is past? *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 168 (4): 497-510.
- Scott, James C. 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Sears, L. J., ed. 2007. *Knowing Southeast Asian Subjects*. Singapore: NUS Press.
- Thum, Pingtjin. 2012. Southeast Asian Studies as a form of power. *The Newsletter*, IIAS, 62:12.

Received: Apr. 18, 2015; Reviewed: May 30, 2015; Accepted: June 1, 2015



# Articles





# The Mother Goddess of Champa:

## Po Inâ Nâgar



William B Noseworthy

### [ *Abstract* ]

This article utilizes interdisciplinary methods in order to critically review the existing research on the Mother Goddess of Champa: Po Inâ Nâgar. In the past, Po Inâ Nâgar has too often been portrayed as simply a “local adaptation of Uma, the wife of Śiva, who was abandoned by the Cham adapted by the Vietnamese in conjunction with their conquest of Champa.” This reading of the Po Ina Nagar narrative can be derived from even the best scholarly works on the subject of the goddess, as well as a grand majority of the works produced during the period of French colonial scholarship. In this article, I argue that the adaption of the literary studies strategies of “close reading”, “surface reading as materiality”, and the “hermeneutics of suspicion”, applied to Cham manuscripts and epigraphic evidence—in addition to mixed anthropological and historical methods—demonstrates that Po Inâ Nâgar is, rather, a Champa (or ‘Cham’) mother goddess, who has become known by many names, even as the Cham continue to re-assert that she is an indigenous Cham goddess in the context of a majority culture of *Thành*

---

Ph.D. candidate in History, University of Wisconsin-Madison, United States,  
noseworthy@wisc.edu

*Mẫu* worship.

**Keywords:** Hinduism, Localization, Goddess worship, Champa civilization, Vietnam, Cham

## I . Scholarly Positioning and Introduction

There has been rising trend of popular *Thành Mẫu* goddess worship in Vietnam during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Thanks to this trend, the mother goddess of the classical Champa civilization [II-XIX c.], known as Po Inâ Nâgar, has been well researched in an ever deepening scholarly literature published in French, Vietnamese, and English. Before the reunification of Vietnam in 1975, research on Po Inâ Nâgar appeared mostly in turn-of-the-century French works, such as those by Etienne Aymonier (1880; 1891; 1893), Antoine Cabaton (1901), MP-EM Durand (1903), and Henri Parmentier (1902; 1906; 1909). Scholarly production slowed during the First World War and the global economic crisis of the 1920s, although the goddess was featured in the studies of RC Majumdar (1927) and Paul Mus (1931). The Second World War, decolonization, as well as the First and Second Indochina Wars then stunted scholarly production again, although the goddess was featured in the work of premier French Art Historian, Jean Boisselier (1963). However, after 1975, the scholarly audience of the goddess broadened. She appeared in works by American, Japanese, Korean, French, Vietnamese, and Cham scholars, such as: David and Dorris Blood (1976; Dorris Blood 1981), Inrasara (1994), Nguyễn Thế Anh (1991; 1995), Rie Nakamura (1999), Phan Quốc Anh (2004; 2010), Ngô Văn Doanh (2011), and Sakaya (2004; 2010; 2013; 2014).

The above summarized body of literature is quite interdisciplinary. It includes studies of literature, archeology, art history, philology, religion, history, and language. Despite this broad disciplinary base, there appears to be little printed acceptance that multi-disciplinary approaches are necessary to future scholarship on the goddess. Furthermore, there is little attempt to revise the

accepted “historical trajectory” of the goddess. In too many studies, Po Inâ Nâgar is portrayed as “simply a local adaptation of Uma”. In too many studies she is just “the wife of Śiva.” She is too frequently portrayed as “abandoned by the Cham”, “adapted by the Vietnamese” with the a strong implication that the goddess is a “prize” for the historical victory over Champa. In this article, I will adapt the literary strategies of “close reading”, “surface reading as materiality,” and the “hermeneutics of suspicion” as I explicate Cham manuscripts and epigraphic evidence—while at the same time using anthropological and historical methods—to argue that Po Inâ Nâgar is rather a Champa (or ‘Cham’) mother goddess, who has become known by many names, even as the Cham continue to re-assert that she is an indigenous Cham goddess in the context of a majority culture of *Thành Mẫu* worship. Therefore, this article begins with a close reading of the Cham manuscript *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar*.

## II. Close Reading *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar*

“Close reading” has been adapted from literary studies into such fields as Anthropology, History, and Religious Studies. It has frequently been used as a means to turn assumptions on their heads. To perform a close reading of a Cham manuscript an individual needs the following: a high degree of knowledge of Cham language, culture and history, as well as knowledge of the genre being read. In the case of Cham manuscripts, the genre of the manuscript is always indicated by the first word of the title. A *damnây*<sup>1)</sup> is an ode to deity, whereas a *dalikal*<sup>2)</sup> is a short story.<sup>3)</sup> Both may have their historical, semi-historical, mythic, and religious tropes. The difference, however, lies in how the genres are performed. *Damnây* are meant to be performed in devotion. *Dalikal* are generally preformed, by contrast, in more mundane settings. The

၁) နှစ်စဉ်

၂) ဖုလုံကုတ်

3) The phrase may be a truncated version of a similar Malay phrase: *dahulu kala*, meaning 'once upon a time' (Marrison 1985: 48).

indication, from the title of this manuscript, therefore, is that it is intended to be devotional.

When Cham manuscripts are titled, the genre of the manuscript is then usually followed by its main character. In this case: Po Inâ Nâgar. We can't assert much from the name of the character, except that "Po"<sup>4)</sup> is a Cham honorific title used for earthly and heavenly figures, "Inâ"<sup>5)</sup> is an archaic Cham word for "mother" and "Nâgar"<sup>6)</sup> is a Cham word for "country, land, or earth", derived from the Sanskrit word *nāgara*. In other words, even though we cannot derive much from the title of the manuscript, we can at least assert that it is intended as a hymnal for the Cham mother goddess. These hymnals can also be called *adaoh yang*<sup>7)</sup> in Cham. In her contemporary form, the Cham mother goddess is unquestionably Indic influenced, as with mother goddesses in other Southeast Asian cultures (Thai, Khmer, Balinese, Dayak, and even Vietnamese).

The version of the *Po Inâ Nâgar* manuscript I studied most closely was collected during a Toyota Foundation research project on Cham manuscripts in the early 2000s. Since that time, this sample manuscript had been used in Cham language programs for urban youth in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. In 2012, I first began to study language in a "traditional" fashion. The setting was a "home-school" (C.: *sang prasit*)<sup>8)</sup>, one-on-one with a teacher (C.: *gru*).<sup>9)</sup> First the manuscript was hand-copied, studied slowly, and translated into Vietnamese and then eventually into English. In conjunction with studying a collection of Cham manuscripts in this fashion, I visited Cham communities to build my vocabulary. As it turns out, the very manuscript under consideration, is in fact *not* a hymnal. It is too prosaic, and fits the exact form of the *dalikal* genre (Inrasara 1994; Sakaya 2010; 2013; 2014).

---

4) ဝဉ်

5) ဣဉ်

6) ဘာဉ်

7) ဣဉ်ဉ် ဝဉ်

8) ဝဉ် ဣဉ်ဉ်

9) ဣဉ်

*Dalikal* themselves are possibly one of the oldest forms of Cham literature and were revived in the 1950s and 1960s, intimately linking Cham sources to the larger, global “folk revival” of visual art, music, and literature. In other words, the global trend influenced the relatively large number of *dalikal* that were reproduced at the time. Another possibility is that the conditions of the Second Indochina War created a preference for short stories that were easy to memorize. Regardless, it follows that by naming the manuscript a *damnây* rather than a *dalikal*, the manuscript maintained some of the devotional connotation despite the shift in genre. But, how devotional was the actual manuscript in question? What follows is a glossed translation of the *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar* manuscript, as a sample of the *dalikal* genre:

Allow us to introduce the story of a man and a woman who had no children. They were chopping trees down for an *apuh* farm on Galeng Mountain, in the countryside of Aia Trang, on the side of a hill that the Vietnamese now call Đại An. At that time they planted watermelon every year.

One night, while they were sleeping, they heard a noise. So, they went to investigate the watermelon. They found some of the stems had been broken and some of the fruits had been smashed. There were footprints in the earth, but there was no one to be found in the garden. They wondered: “How is this possible?” Then, in the clear light of the full moon they saw a young woman who drifted downward from the moon to the earth and walked into the *apuh* garden. She could have been just twelve years old and wore plain clothes. This young lady, she picked up a watermelon and tossed it in the air! Just for fun!

The man and woman were very happy and stepped forward slowly to catch the young lady. So, they grabbed hold of her and brought her home to raise as their child. The couple loved her more than anything. So, she lived with them and two or three years passed. But, in the fourth

year, there was a tremendous storm in Aia Trang—and each day the young lady took stone brick to play as if building a *kalan bimong* Cham temple tower.

The man and woman began to scold her, but she didn't listen. So, they lectured her harshly. She began to sulk and ran away along the seashore where the waves crashed. Suddenly a piece of *gahlau* driftwood landed on the shore. The young lady felt sorry for herself and sat down on the *gahlau* and drifted away to the land of *Laow* [China].

The *Laow* people crowded three to four hundred people around the piece of wood. As they talked so much about it, their prince heard the news. He went to investigate the *gahlau* wood and found the crowd there, totally silent.

There was a starting of the heart. Fluttering up and down as a small flame grew.

The prince tried to go home to meet his father, as he was to receive a promotion. But he began counting the days and months. Time passed them without food, without sleep, and without peace. He asked a fortune teller to give him a reading. The fortune teller alerted the house of the king to the coming of a princess.

Every night when the prince slept, there was beautiful singing and the prince found fortune weighing on his heart as he waited each day, all day, for the sound of that song. Upon hearing the song, he could no longer hold himself back and the two began to whisper together.

As the two [the prince and the princess] began to grow closer and closer together, the prince tried to talk to his father. His father witnessed the thousands of beautiful expressions in the faces of the young lady and his son. So, they became husband and wife and gave birth to two children: a son, name Cei Tri and a daughter named: Kuik. The prince followed the path of that Po Nai [the princess], but she always remembered the mother and father who had raised her. She brought her two children and the

*gahlau* back to the mountain of Galeng at nightfall. But she could not find her parents planting watermelon where the tower was built nearby Đại An. So, [the princess] made [her own] tower in her parents' memory.

At that time the Cham did not know how to plant or cultivate [rice]. They found this Po Nai [the princess] planting vegetables, weaving and farming...all these important skills were taught [by her] for twelve years and the Cham people began to have enough to shelter themselves. The community was happier [than ever] and since that time, the Cham people built towers and for her [Po Inâ Nâgar], for the children of the people to worship [her] at Aia Trang.

[At this time] her husband then returned, but could not find his wife. With his heart filled with love, he [still] did not know when she would return to the land. So, he ordered his men to look for her. When they arrived to the territory of Aia Trang, near the mountain of Gelang where she was born and raised, there was a sense of a spirit that followed the soldiers, making more problems for the prince. Po Nai [the princess] then created a spell of protection, sinking the boats of his [the prince's] men.

She [Po Inâ Nâgar] found solace in the sinking of the boats, as there were rocks that appeared [suddenly] out of the water and *Akhar Cam* appeared on the rocks. Occasionally she would read these writings with her husband and her two children. She wanted to return to the paddy of Hamu Janah in the village of Yok Yang (for the Vietnamese: the village of Bình Thủy).

After the Cham and Bani, the Vietnamese were in this land. [But] Po Nai [the princess] and the children had enough sense to give the Cham people enough of a livelihood, and they remember her for this, even though they now worship Po Nâgar in a different place.

Even at the most basic level the *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar*

manuscript teaches about the Cham language, agricultural practices, culture, and religion, and offers an important revision to the history of the mother goddess of Champa. Key terms in the text that fall within the theme of these categories are: *apuh*,<sup>10)</sup> *gahlau*,<sup>11)</sup> *kalan*,<sup>12)</sup> *bimong*,<sup>13)</sup> *Aia Trang*<sup>14)</sup> and *Akhar Cam*.<sup>15)</sup>

*Apuh* is a Cham word for a plot of light farming. It is a term that is also common to the Churu and Roglai ethnic minority languages (Churu: *apuh*; Roglai: *apu*). *Apuh* is frequently translated into Vietnamese as the term *rẫy*, meaning “swidden agriculture”. More importantly, the cultural context of contemporary Roglai villages seems to fit the Vietnamese connotations of *rẫy* quite closely. Meanwhile, the Churu word *apuh* has been translated as “garden” (Vn.: *vườn*) and seems to fit the Cham context more closely. Contemporary *apuh* are generally small vegetable and fruit gardens out front of a Cham house, close to the road. *Apuh* are also generally contrasted with *hamu*<sup>16)</sup> or rice paddy land. This does not mean that Cham methods of traditional farming do not incorporate the “controlled burn” methods of swidden agriculture. To start a new *apuh* plot, particularly on a mountain side, such as in the vicinity of Đại An, Khánh Hòa province, one would have to begin by cutting down all the trees in the area. The remaining brush and roots would then be turned up and burned to create ash fertilizer. Next, fruit and vegetable crops would be planted, such as the watermelon (C.: *tham-makay*)<sup>17)</sup> crop of the old couple. In contemporary contexts, both the Roglai and the Cham have shifted away from creating *apuh* in previously forested areas. Regardless, *apuh* farming remains popular today, even though it is being threatened by the introduction of small scale commercial

---

10) ခမ္မာ

11) ကမ္မာ

12) ကမ္မာ

13) ဗမ္မာ

14) ခမ္မာ

15) ခမ္မာ

16) ကမ္မာ

17) ဗမ္မာ

farming that prefers the use of pesticides and large scale mechanized farming of cash-crops, such as rice, dragon fruit, grapes, and corn.

Related to the agricultural context of terms such as *apuh*, an examination of the Cham term *gahlau* illuminates a history of Champa-highland trade relations and socio-religious importance. The term is most closely used to indicate either “eaglewood” or specifically “aloeswood”. In the *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar* manuscript, the *gahlau* driftwood that appears seems to be mystical. The *gahlau* is driftwood, but it is able to carry the protagonist all the way to China! Here, we can hypothesize that the “*gahlau* carrying her to China” is a metaphor. *Gahlau* trade was critical to the Champa polities. Harvested from the highlands, *gahlau* quickly became an internationally recognized incense product and an essential element of Cham religious rituals. *Po Gahlau* is a Cham royal title that was associated with Po Romé’s [r. 1627-1651] Churu-Cham-Malay creolized lineage that he left behind in the courts of Kelantan, but *gahlau* itself would have travelled much further, from Japan to Arabia, as it were (Aymonier 1981; Maspero 1928; Sakaya 2010). As such, *gahlau* would have been traded with the Chinese courts, and “riding the *gahlau*” can simply be taken to be the same as “riding the trade winds”.

As with *gahlau* another cultural symbol of the Cham are the Cham *kalan bimong* temple-tower complexes. These *kalan-bimong* dot more than fifty archeological sites, strewn along the coast of Vietnam and trace into the highlands of the Annamite Chain. The *kalan bimong* were constructed from the seventh through the seventeenth centuries and include such archetypically “Cham” sites as Po Romé, Po Klaong Garai, Mỹ Sơn, Trà Kiệu, Po Dam, and Po Sah Inâ. At the largest of these towers, the *kalan* refers only to the central worship hall, which often includes a decorative *sikhara* constructed on the top. Also, *Kalan* only has one entry way. Meanwhile, the *bimong* refers to the “second tower” in the construction. A *bimong* is usually smaller in height and has two doorways. It is possible to have *kalan* without a *bimong*, but the reverse is not possible. Colloquially, some individuals also use

*kalan bimong* to refer to the entire complex. Normally, these towers were explicitly constructed for the purpose of the veneration of an individual, as was eventually the case with the *Kalan Bimong Po Inâ Nâgar* that was constructed for the goddess at Nha Trang, Khánh Hòa province, Vietnam (Schweyer 2004; Ngô Văn Doanh 2011; Ngô Văn Doanh 2002; Amonier 1891). However, in the narrative of *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar* we are confronted with a problem: Po Inâ Nâgar herself was constructing towers “just for fun”! The differentiation between constructing the *kalan bimong* for cultural and religious purposes, versus constructing them for “fun,” is a demonstration of the supernatural nature of Po Inâ Nâgar, in that she is not bound by the expectations of “normal” Champa (or Cham) society. Furthermore, before the end of the narrative, we learn that she had a reading knowledge of *Akhar Cam* or Cham[pa] writing systems, which would have further elevated her status. Finally, that she is able to raise a storm to sink the Chinese princess’ ships, as well as teach the Cham weaving and rice agriculture, which gave her attributable “traits”, confirm her status as a deity.

The final category of terms that can be drawn from *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar* are geographical and of particularly socio-historical significance. For example, the Galeng Mountain is recorded as in the vicinity of the contemporary Vietnamese settlement of Đại An. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese city “Nha Trang” originates from the Cham name *Aia Trang*. Tonalization shifted the pronunciation of the Cham *Aia*<sup>18)</sup> to the Vietnamese *Nha. Trang*,<sup>19)</sup> however, can be well represented in the natural phonemes of both languages. In Vietnamese, the meaning of the name is ambiguous. In Chamic languages, however, *trang* is a location where either, hot and cold water mix, or, where sweet and salt water mix. In fact, many local toponyms have been transferred from old Cham words into simple Vietnamese approximate pronunciations of these words. Nha Trang is just one example. Regardless, this process in the manuscript is indicative of a longer history of Vietnamese appropriation of the territory of the former peoples of

---

18) ချာ

19) 𑜋𑜨

the Champa civilization, including the Cham.

Preliminary Vietnamese incorporation of former Champa territories in the vicinity of Khánh Hòa province may have begun as early as the sixteenth century. The 1594 “Map of the Pacified South” (Vn.: *Bình Nam Đồ*) labels the *Kalan Bimong Po Inâ Nâgar* as the “Tower of the Pearl Princess” (Vn.: *Chúa Ngọc Tháp*).<sup>20)</sup> The map suggests that as early as the sixteenth century, Vietnamese who were new migrants to the area began to re-interpret Po Ina Nagar as “the Princess Pearl”. The label “Princess Pearl” or “Lady Pearl” has since stuck with Vietnamese representations of the tower’s goddess. *Aia Trang* had been a center in the Champa *negara* polity of “Kauthara” [7<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> century]. The first Nguyễn lord, Nguyễn Hoàng conquered a portion of Kauthara in 1611 and renamed it “Defense of the Frontier Province” (Vn.: tỉnh Trần Biên). Almost immediately afterward, this portion of the “frontier province” was renamed “Phú Yên”. However, it seems that the local Cham and Bahnar (highland Austroasiatic) peoples would not accept Vietnamese rule so close to the Po Inâ Nâgar temple. They revolted in 1629 and attempted to retake the control of the area, although the Vietnamese quickly put down this revolt and used it as a pre-text for another assault on Champa polities further southward from the late 1640s through 1653. Several of these assaults occurred during Po Romé’s reign, although he did fend them off until his capture, leading to his imprisonment and eventual death in Quảng Nam province in 1651. The last two years of battles, then, fought under Po Romé’s successors, led up to the further incorporation of the remaining areas of what are now Phú Yên and Khánh Hòa provinces. Nevertheless, Sakaya (2013) has suggested that Cham records indicate significant Cham worship of Po Inâ Nâgar in *Aia Trang* through the time of the Tây Sơn rebellion at the end of the eighteenth century. According to Nguyễn Thế Anh (1995), the governor Nguyễn Văn Thành then dedicated a local shrine at nearby Diễn Mountain to the “Lady

---

20) There was a historical precedent for this. A Hán Việt inscription dedicated to Thiên Mụ in 1601 can be found in the vicinity of the former Champa polity of *negara* Indrapura (Lê Đình Hùng & Tống Nữ Khánh Trang 2014: 529)

Princess Pearl” in 1797, in exchange for “eliminating tigers” in the area. It is not clear if these “tigers” were literal, or metaphoric, but it is clear that the Vietnamese had begun their process of adapting Po Inâ Nâgar into “Thiên Y A Na.” Thiên Y A Na was interpreted by French scholars to be a Vietnamese approximation of *Deviyana*, who, when conflated with Po Inâ Nâgar, the Daoist mother of the Fairies Xi Wang-Mu, Queen of Heaven Tian-fei and Tian Hou Sheng Mu, became very popular. Based on readings of the nineteenth century Gia Định Nhất Thống Chí, Thiên Y A Na was even more popular than the Vietnamese goddess Liễu Hạnh from Quảng Bình province southward. Mandarin Phan Thành Giản even dedicated an 1856 inscription to “Thiên Y A Na Diển Phi Chúa Ngọc Thánh Phi” at Nha Trang. As the process of intentional conflation continued, Thiên Y A Na was later blended with Liễu Hạnh and some authors have argued for her influence on the image and worship of Bà Xứ in southern Vietnam (Po 1988: 62; Po 1989: 128-135; ĐNNTC 2012: 63-86, 125-159; Nakamura 1999: 90; Phan Khoản 2001 [1967]: 296-299,303,321; Phan An 2014; Phan Thị Yến Tuyết 2014).<sup>21)</sup>



<Figure 1> Cham priest at the tower in Nha Trang, Vietnam (April, 2014). Photo by author.

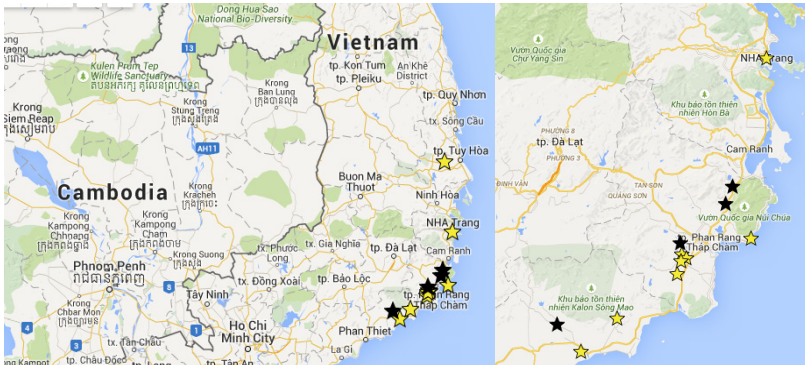
Harsh Nguyễn Vietnamese restrictions on Cham travel were in place throughout much of the mid-nineteenth century. So, it is not surprising that while the late nineteenth century Cham scholar Hợp Ai did seem to recognize the importance of the cosmological geography of Nha Trang in his epic travelogue poem *Ariya Po Pareng* (1885), he

did not record Cham worship of Po Inâ Nâgar at the tower site. The adoption of Po Inâ Nâgar, and intentional conflation of her

21) Sakaya (2014: 517) argues that she was also blended into the worship of Hò Chén in Huế; Bà Thu Bồn in Quảng Nam province; and Cổ miếu thờ Thiên Y A Na in Bình Thuận province.

image, much later, with Liễu Hạnh was a factor in the *Vietnamization* cultural processes described by historian Nguyễn Thế Anh (1995[1991]). Phan Đăng Nhật (2013) has also demonstrated that the Cham worship of local village deities in Vietnam has been strongly influenced by Cham practices. It seems this *Chamization* of the local Vietnamese population was also a way of reinventing Vietnamese identity for settlement populations as they moved into what were deemed as “frontier territories”. At the same time, based upon our close reading of the *Damnây Po Inâ Nâgar* manuscript, in combination with hundreds of pages of other Cham manuscripts, the removal of Cham lands from Cham hands, particularly spiritually potent lands, was a critical factor in the construction of a theme of “dispossession” in Cham socio-historical memory. Meanwhile, there has never been an archeological dig that has been able to locate the supposed “original site” of the tower that Po Inâ Nâgar is thought to have built at Galeng Mountain (Vn.: Đại An). The manuscript does indicate that both Hindu oriented “Cam” and Islamic oriented “Bani” populations used to live in this area, but “now”, the Cham worship Po Inâ Nâgar is “in a different place.”

Given my own initial travels to Nha Trang in 2008 and later field work in Southeast Asia between 2012 and 2015, it is clear that there is a need to update on the existing, rather detailed, scholarly outline of the Po Inâ Nâgar narrative above. Indeed, Po Inâ Nâgar seems to be worshipped, still, at Nha Trang, by not only by Vietnamese and Chinese populations, but also Cham, Bahnaric peoples, Rhadé, and many other “non-locals” who travel to visit the sacred site of Po Inâ Nâgar during the festival dedicated to her, roughly in April, each year (photo above: Cham worship of Po Inâ Nâgar at Nha Trang in April, 2015). There are also no less than thirteen sites of Po Inâ Nâgar worship throughout Cham and Roglai communities in Phú Yên, Khánh Hòa, Bình Thuận and Ninh Thuận provinces. In this map, Cham sites are set in gold stars and Roglai sites are set in black stars:



<Map 1> Sites of Cham goddess worship marked by yellow stars. Sites of Raglai goddess worship marked by black stars. Map made by author using google.maps.

The above map was compiled through the works of Vietnamese Anthropologist Phan Quốc Anh (2010), then later corrected and confirmed, mostly by the work of Cham Anthropologist Sakaya (2013) and my own work. Two important but commonly ignored points were raised by this study: 1) both Cham and Raglai communities are still worshipping Po Inâ Nâgar throughout Bình Thuận and Ninh Thuận provinces at a number of locations, more than as mapped above; and, 2) Cham are still worshipping Po Inâ Nâgar in Khánh Hòa province, although there has been some controversy about this lately. According to “Cham law” (*Adat cam*), the worship of Po Inâ Nâgar should occur four times a year in accordance with the Cham calendar (C.: *sakawi*).<sup>22)</sup> The largest ceremonies are in the fall (*Katé*), winter (*Chambur*), and spring (*Rija Nâgar*). There is also a fourth, smaller ceremony in the spring. The most popular location for worship is usually in Palei Hamu Tanran (Vn.: làng Hữu Đức, tỉnh Ninh Thuận). Individuals who critically informed Phan Quốc Anh’s (2010) work suggested that he confused the Cham villages of Hamu Ram (Vn.: Mông Đức) and Hamu Tanran (Vn.: Hữu Đức). However, Vietnamese and Cham divisions of space are not always in agreement with each other. Cham space is measured by terms of

22) ရာဇာနိ

proximity to the “village center” or “sacred space” of the community, while Vietnamese governmental officials have attempted to impose modern (and/or contemporary) understandings of border divisions on land. Additionally, many families from Palei Hamu Ram and Palei Hamu Tanran intentionally intermarried with each other, attempting to build communal relations, increasing the size of the two small villages to small towns, and eliminating the tract of forest that used to divide them. Nevertheless, following contemporary standards, in the above map, I equated the town of Palei Hamu Tanran with Hữu Đức and the town of Palei Ram with Mông Đức, as Sakaya and most contemporary local Cham officials have agreed to do. As a final note on this process, using the Roglai worship of Po Inâ Nâgar as a spring board,<sup>23)</sup> it is possible to hypothesize a future exploration of “earth goddess worship” among Churu, Rhade, Koho, and Jarai cultures. However, not much work has been done on this to date, in direct connection to Cham studies. To prepare for a deeper scholarly examination of the subject, it is helpful to adapt the strategy of *surface reading as materiality*.

### III. Surface Reading as Materiality: Periodizing the Production of Po Inâ Nâgar Manuscripts (19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries)

Anthropologist Rie Nakamura (1999: 155) has argued that “Cham intellectuals place ultimate authority in the texts...” where “... real, original Cham culture is only found in the texts, and if one is seeking ‘correct’ cultural information of the Cham people, one should learn to read the Cham scripts.” An emphasis on literature likely increased through contact with Indic, Chinese, Arab and French cultural influences, although, “knowledge of manuscripts” has not remained the penultimate value of Cham scholars in the decades after Nakamura’s work. Travel, education, level of professional training, and work experience, became equally prized

---

23) See: Trần Kiêm Hoàng (Chamaliaqriya Tiếng) (2011: 166-172) provides a description of rice ceremonies that may be linked to ‘mother goddess’ worship among the Roglai of Khánh Hòa province.

means of asserting the cultural authority. Knowledge of the Cham script has become a “given”, for individuals who claim status, although it may fade entirely as a “requirement”. Still, Nakamura’s observations highlight the important role that priests and cleric classes maintained for centuries in Cham communities, even as the nature of the manuscripts produced on the goddess Po Inâ Nâgar changed.

Adapting the methodology of *surface reading as materiality* from literary studies is helpful in analyzing changes in manuscript production. This does not mean, literally, reading the material of the manuscripts, although these details are also important. For example, the oldest and highest quality Cham manuscripts, influenced by Indic-Hindu traditions, are manuscripts made of palm leaves (C.: *agal bac*).<sup>24</sup> The oldest Arabic-Islamic influenced manuscripts tend to be produced on composite paper, bound with goatskin. Cham royal chronicles were often produced on Chinese paper, which was popular in the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. By the French colonial period, the *cahier* notebook became increasingly popular.

*Surface reading of materiality* is more concerned with the following: the author, date, title, and genre of the text. These data can be used to write a history of pieces of literature, a group of authors, a group of texts, or even a script (Best & Marcus 2009: 1-21). Using the strategy of *surface reading as materiality*, and combining it with bibliographic information of Cham manuscripts available in French, Cham and Vietnamese, I was able to further break down the periodization of the majority of existing Cham manuscripts into essential five categories: 1) those composed before the collapse of Panduranga; 2) those composed from the fall of Panduranga through the time of the Cham scholar Hợp Ai [c. 1832/1835-1880s]; 3) those composed between the time of Hợp Ai and Bớ Thuận [1880s-1920s]; 4) those composed by Bớ Thuận and his contemporaries [1930s-1960s] and 5) those composed by late contemporaries of Bớ Thuận, his students and their students [1960s-present]. Combining

---

24) អ្នកសិល្បៈ ប្រាសាទ

these periods with Nakamura's findings adds weight to the theory of a transfer of cultural authority. As the Cham royal lineages were losing power, cultural authority shifted more completely into the priestly-scholarly class.

References to the goddess Po Inâ Nâgar do not appear frequently in manuscripts that can be dated in their origins to the time before Hợp Ai. Hợp Ai is most famous for his epic travelogue *Ariya Po Pareng* (1885), which is a proto-ethnographic text that records the journeys of the Cham scholar all the way from the south-central coast to Hải Phòng, nearby Hà Nội, where the Red River meets the sea. Hợp Ai's contemporaries Kau Tai, Ja Mul Cak and Cei Mah, recorded similar texts, although Cei Mah's text was recorded in the Western Cham (Cambodia) variant of the Cham script. Hợp Ai was also a contemporary of Etienne Aymonier, although the revolt at Huế in 1885 halted Aymonier's travels up the coastline. Hợp Ai's travels continued despite this. Hợp Ai was able to provide a record of the *Kalan Bimong Po Inâ Nâgar* temple-tower complex, where he also mentioned that his party arrived on the "sixth day of the first month in the year of the rooster" [1885] (CAM 172; Inrasara 2006). The manuscript indicates that Hợp Ai was unable to read the old Champa script on the temple walls, although his collections indicate that he was able to read Cham standard script (Akhar Thrah) and the Cham Indic script used to inscribe amulets (Akhar Rik) (CAM 168; Inrasara 2006). A third Hợp Ai manuscript (CAM 30) records the history of Cham communities from the 1830s onward in considerable detail, and that from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the Roglai living in the area took care of several objects associated with the worship of Po Inâ Nâgar during ceremonies in the fourth month of the Cham calendar (*Ni Akhar di tapuk...tok ricauw balan pak*). This manuscript was apparently completed in Bình Chủ, an old Cham community on the coast (CAM 30). Bình Chủ was evacuated during the times of Minh Mệnh. Today, the area is little more than a beach strip of restaurants, shops, and hotels just outside of Phan Rang, Ninh Thuận province.

Some manuscripts produced by contemporaries of Hợp Ai were collected by the missionary scholar MP EM Durand during his research in Cham areas between 1900-1907. They were used, along with ethnographic observations and consultations with Cham scholars, to write publications for the journal of the School of the Far East [*BEFEO*]. Two manuscripts in particular were dedicated to the worship of a form of Po Inâ Nâgar at Palei Hamu Ram (Vn.: Mông Đức) the first is on Po Dara (alt. sp. Bho Dara), the “goddess of the students” (CAM 22; CAM 23). The second indicates that the scholar who penned it was orphaned and divorced. He invoked the goddess Po Dara to bless the students as well as grant long life (CAM 23). The evidence seems to indicate that the goddess of Po Inâ Nâgar at Palei Hamu Ram during the French colonial period held additional importance as Po Dara, a facet of the being of Po Inâ Nâgar that has been restored to the temple at Aia Trang in contemporary times. The evidence of CAM 22 and CAM 23, combined with Hợp Ai’s analysis, suggests that during the French colonial period, Cham travel and worship to Nha Trang remained relatively sparse, compared to the regular worship of the goddess at Nha Trang today. This view is complicated by the manuscript MEP 1189/6, which was penned by [P]o Phak Tho, who gave offerings to the goddess Po Kuk (alt. sp. Po Kok) at Nha Trang in the year of the dog [1898]. A fourth manuscript is a record of Po Nâgar Taha, who is worshiped in the village of Palei Hamu Tanran (MEP 1190/4). There is a fifth one, a general chronicle of Po Inâ Nâgar, which was used by MP-EM Durand in an 1907 article. (Durand, *BEFEO* 1907). This last manuscript refers to Po Inâ Nâgar in the context of the Cham holy book, “the book of Noursirvan”, a Cham treatise influenced by Sufi Islam, and predominantly mystical and astrological in content. Nevertheless, there are elements of this story that similar to the contemporary “standard” Po Inâ Nâgar narrative, such as the detail where she spent “three years in China and married a Chinese prince” (Durand 1907: 339-345; Po, Vija & LaFont 1977: 215). In summary, by the early twentieth century, Sufi influence was being blended with Indic culture in the localized worship of Po Inâ Nâgar in at least three forms: Po Kuk at Nha Trang, Po Dara at Hamu Ram,

and Po Nâgar Taha at Hamu Tanran. The evidence suggests an emergence of multiple forms of Po Inâ Nâgar in the Cham community at the turn of the century, all increasingly localized.

While turn of the century *Po Inâ Nâgar* manuscripts indicate an emphasis on devotional material, new genres appeared in historical records dating to the period of Bồ Thuận's collections and the collections of his contemporaries [1930s-1960s]. Bồ Thuận was the Cham son of Etienne Aymonier and the research partner of Paul Mus. The clearest collaborations between Bồ Thuận and Mus were in the early 1930s, when Mus was a young man, travelling in Cham areas and nearby uplands. At least two manuscripts penned by Bồ Thuận, dating to 1931 and 1932, made their way to Paris. The first of these manuscripts (CAM 113) includes a *Damnây Po Dara*, or a hymnal to Po Inâ Nâgar in the form of the "goddess of the students" worshipped at Palei Hamu Ram at the turn of the century, and is now worshiped at the *Bimong Kalan Po Inâ Nâgar* in Nha Trang today. However, by the 1960s, a new version of the narrative seems to have appeared: a *Dalikal Po Inâ Nâgar*, penned in collaboration with Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ in the 1960s, during Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ's significant research among Cham populations [1950s-1960s]. However, it is not clear what differences the two manuscript versions had, besides that *dalikal* manuscripts tend to be generally shorter than *damnây* hymnals, and are more prosaic in nature.

There were at least four manuscripts describing the worship of the goddess Po Kuk, all of which were contemporaneous with works of Bồ Thuận and collected by Paul Mus. The first two were penned by scholar Mbian [A]puei (CAM 56) and Ranik Ki Kumbar Pajuh (CAM 101). There were also versions of the "creation of the world according to Po Kuk" by Po [A]car Nai and Po [A]car Baih Wa, called *Ariya Po Kuk* (CAM 138; CAM 143). The version by Po [A]car Wa also began with the Arabic: *bismillahi r-rahman r-rahim* and included a legend of Po Inâ Nâgar, as an element of *Ariya Po Kuk*. Two other manuscripts collected by Paul Mus were an *Ariya Po Dara* (CAM 62) and another *Damnây Po Nâgar* (CAM 142[2]). All these suggest that

by the 1930s, forms of Po Inâ Nâgar, Po Nâgar, Po Dara, and Po Kuk were worshipped as various elements of the “mother goddess” among Cham populations.

Perhaps due to the period of wars in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, no versions of Po Inâ Nâgar manuscripts were penned and preserved between the 1940s and 1959. Although we do presume Cham manuscripts were still penned during this time, we assume that they were destroyed by wars, weather, or some other reasons. Additionally, it appears that as the story continued to be passed on, it continued to change, though very slightly. Despite this, there was at least one version of *Dalikal Po Nâgar* that can be dated to 1960, another version of the narrative in Dã Trường Vi's three-page *Legend of the Betel Nut of the Cham People* (1973). Văn Đình Hy penned a two-page *Po Inâ Nâgar* manuscript in 1979 while Bạch Cúc penned a six-page *Nai Muk Juk* manuscript (1987).<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, oral recountings of the story have also been recorded and transcribed in Cham script, such as Kim Xuân Kết's *Dalikal Po Inâ Nâgar* (Nguyễn Thị Thư Vân 2005: 87-90; 280-291). Nguyễn Thị Thư Vân (2005) argued that from the time of the Bồ Thuận manuscript (1960) through the present, though details of the story may vary, the general outline was quite similar. A research team working with the UNESCO Center for Research and Preservation of the Cham Culture transcribed one version of the manuscript in 2012, before translating it into Vietnamese and English. Then, a comparative language assessment was made upon the manuscript that we worked on with the transcribed oral version of Nguyễn Thị Thư Vân from (2005). The two were found to contain virtually the same plot points, although they were quite different in word choice. To determine the potential source of our manuscript version, we examined the *Catalogue of Cham Manuscripts in Vietnam* (Thành Phần 2007), reproduced and studied through Toyota Foundation Anthropological grant research funding that was funneled into the Cham community in the early 2000s.

---

25) Muk Juk is also conflated with the Vietnamese Bà Đền and the Khmer Neang Khmau goddess, all of whom are representations of Kali (Sakaya 2014: 520-522).

Using this catalogue, we compiled a list of existing Cham manuscripts for the variations of the “mother goddess” in the forms of Po Inâ Nâgar, Po Kuk and Po Dara.

Based on the analysis of the collection of Thành Phần’s (2007), we found the variant forms Po Dara, Po Dara Nai Anaih, Po Nâgar Taha, Po Nâgar, Po Nâger, and Po Kuk, although all appear to have been closely linked in worship. The manuscript version that we received was paginated 142 to 147 in the Ong Quảng Văn Đại manuscript (C: Palei Baoh Dana, Panrang, Panduranga; Vn.: Chắt Thường, Phước Hậu, Ninh Phước, Ninh Thuận). The majority of manuscripts I studied matched the pagination and style of Ong Quảng Văn Đại’s manuscripts— and seem to have been widely copied because his collections have few errors. Ong Quảng Văn Đại is the older brother of internationally-acclaimed Cham historian Po Dharma. It seems that using *surface reading as materiality* enables a retracing of the intellectual heritage of Cham scholars up to the present. At the same time, when the above analysis was completed, a relationship between Po Inâ Nâgar and Po Kuk was established, contrary to initial understanding that the later was simply another manifestation of the former. All throughout the process, we consulted with Cham scholar Ja Tu di Hamu Liman, who directed a reading of the *Dalakal Po Kuk* manuscript.

#### IV. *Dalakal Po Kuk di Ja Tu di Hamu Liman*

The *Dalakal Po Kuk di Ja Tu di Hamu Liman* manuscript differs substantially from Nguyễn Thị Thư Vân’s (2005: 347-353) thesis. The Ja Tu di Hamu Liman manuscript was photographed in the fall of 2013 (No. 4005 to 4080) and may be divided into three parts: 05-30, with 30 being an illustration of Po Kuk (pictured at right); 31 – 37, with 34 being a repeated (and deleted) photograph, 37 being a visual depiction of mystical invocations, and 38-80. What follows is a glossed translation of selected content from the first two sections:



<Figure 2> Po Kuk

*Ariya Mâkal lak Cam mâk Danaok padieng Po Kuk:*

*"This is an ariya about the goddess of creation: Po Kuk. Before there was Po Uwluah and before there was Po Sapilai... before there was the spirit of the water and the spirit of the rocks...before there was the spirit of the sky and the spirit of the earth... before there was the spirit of the sea and the spirit of the mountains...before there was Po Inâ Nâgar and before there was Po Lingik... before there was the sun and the moon and the sky and the stars...before there was Po Uwluah and before the sang magik...before there was the Ahier and the Awal priests... before there was the Bani and before there was the Cham...before there was the Rhade, the Churu and the Lao and the Laow and the*

*Jawa and the Kur...before all of this...there was Po Kuk – and Po Kuk created all of these things, as Po Kuk is the creator, the goddess who creates everything..." (05-14)*

In these sections of the manuscript, several "*wa suk*" phrases may be noted intermittently throughout. Reconstruction from Austronesian Cham into Arabic is difficult, but it is possible that these are references to *tawassul* or the concept of "drawing near to Allah". However, the manuscript is also discernably not "Muslim", and certainly "Indic" influenced, although the emphasis on goddess worship harkens back to the days of pre-Vedic culture. Nevertheless Po Uwluah (from "Allah") is understood to be the "creator" of the "Bani"—or Islamic-influenced—elements of Cham culture, while Po Nâgar—the shortened form of Po Inâ Nâgar—is understood to be the creator of the Indic elements of Cham culture. Nevertheless, the manuscript maintains that the supreme creator is the goddess Po Kuk.

After establishing the role Po Kuk as creation goddess, the manuscript goes on to defining the *act* of creation, in a section titled *Ariya ngap piéh Adam krân thun bilan*. It begins with the creation of all of the units of time, days, months, years, the sun

and the moon, the earth and the heavens, the ground and the human realms, as well as the animals, followed by lines indicating the creation of the entirety of the universe. The human realm was then divided in terms of responsibility between Po Uwluah and Po Nâgar. However, there are some notable details of the manuscript. For example, Po Nâgar has four daughters in this manuscript, rather than two or three, as seen in the other versions of the Po Nâgar narrative. Finally, a distinction between Po Inâ Nâgar as being secondary to Po Kuk was not necessarily clear in other manuscript versions. However, it is clear that in this manuscript, Po Kuk and Po Inâ Nâgar are two different figures. A researcher may discern these characters, or gods, as different, even if some believers would not. To be discerning with this sort of vision requires an application of the *hermeneutics of suspicion*.

## V. Hermeneutics of Suspicion: Questioning linkages between Po Inâ Nâgar and Uma

As drawn from the field of literary studies, the *hermeneutics of suspicion* implies that the study of the text must be critical of the content (see Felski 2009: 28-35). In this article, I am applying the *hermeneutics of suspicion* to the idea that the Champa/Cham goddess Po Inâ Nâgar as may be corresponding to Uma. We have already established that in the cosmology of the Cham, Po Inâ Nâgar has many names: Po Nâger, Po Nâgar Taha, Po Nâgar Dara, Po Nâgar Hamu Nih, Po Nâgar Hamu Mârau, Po Nâgar Hamu Mârom, Po Nâgar Hamu Kut, Po Nâgar Hamu Ram, Po Nâgar Hamu Tanran, Po Nâgar Hamu Nai, Po Nâgar Hamu Gin, Po Dara. She is possibly even linked to Po Kuk. However, the standing scholarly assumption is that Po Inâ Nâgar is simply a version of “Bhagavathi Uma” or “Bhagavathi”. This presumption can be found in a number of English, French, and Vietnamese language studies. In order to explain the complete lack of evidence for a link between the two goddesses, most scholars have inherited their arguments from French colonialists who concluded that the

Cham “do not know Uma” or “have forgotten her”. The deepest studies make mention of an “older” or likely “forgotten” version of the Po Inâ Nâgar story, where the goddess has ninety-seven husbands and thirty-nine daughters (Cabaton 1901; Sakaya 2013). During my years of research, I never encountered a single individual who did not recognize the name “Uma”—and consequently equate Uma with Po Inâ Nâgar. In the most complex explanations, individuals viewed Po Inâ Nâgar as a local *avatar* of Uma, who had descended to earth in historical times, lived through the events of the *Dalikal Po Nâgar* narrative, and then re-ascended to the heavenly realm upon her death. What is the most surprising is that scholarship on the topic, as a whole, has been perfectly content to create pejorative assumptions of Cham culture, without rigorously pushing for better scholarly explanations of the linkages between Po Inâ Nâgar and Uma.

What is most notable about pre-colonial evidence on Cham religion, is that there appears to be no indigenous mention of Uma at the Nha Trang temple. One potential mention of Uma in epigraphic records would be the name “Uroja”, which many scholars take to be a “Chamization” of Uma as worshiped in the vicinity of Mỹ Sơn. Meandering through possible reconstructions, perhaps “Uroja” is a truncation of *Umaraja*, although this seems only “possible” at best, without further evidence. Furthermore, through an examination of the temple tower complex at Nha Trang, it appears that there were not even hints at the explicit mentions of “Uma”. There were however mentions of a Śrī Satya Mukhalinga [709 śāka, 787 CE], “Bhagavathi” [739 śāka, 972 śāka], Ya Pu Nāgara [1082 śāka], Pu Nāgara [1155 śāka, 1178 śāka, 1179 śāka, 1189 śāka], Bhagavathi Matrilingeśvari [1178 śāka, 1256 CE], and Matrilingeśvari [1189 śāka, 1267 CE] (Sakaya 2004: 196-219; Ngô Văn Doanh 2011, Parmentier 1902; Majumdar 1963[1927]; Sakaya 2014: 518). It is important to note that contrary to the popular use of the term “Bhagavathi” in scholarship (and in Vietnam), the term does not necessarily always equate to Uma. Bhagavathi is a title that simply indicates “the goddess” in Sanskrit. There are many Bhagavathi, which include: Bhagavathi Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu; Bhagavathi Kali, goddess of

destruction; Bhagavathi Saraswati, Brahma's consort and goddess of wisdom. There is also Bhagavati Durga, the buffalo slayer (Monier-Williams 2005[1899]: 743-744). Coincidentally, there is a "buffalo slayer" who appears to be pictured on the outside entry way of the *Kalan Bimong Po Inâ Nâgar* central tower in Nha Trang (Parmentier 1909).

With the multiple meanings of "Bhagavathi" in mind, we may begin to question such influential commentaries by Paul Mus that argued about a wave of Indic influence that swept over the Champa civilization and then receded in antiquity, with the end result that his contemporary Cham "...were quite content to make her [Po Ina Nagar] the spouse of Śiva, to call her Uma or Parvati..." (Mus 1933: 52-53). Mus's commentary is intended to refer to classical times. However, he was in close partnership with Cham scholars in the years before his famous 1933 lecture and the evidence suggests that the collaboration between French and Cham scholars contributed to a "re-Indianization" of the Cham population at an intellectual level, through recasting history with an Indic filter on top, blocking out other possible cultural influences (from China or Arabia). Looking back further, Etienne Aymonier may have been the first French scholar to equate the worship of Po Ina Nagar with the worship of Uma via the record of Bhagavathi Matrilingesvari [1178 śāka] and Matrilingesvari [1189 śāka], and hence, by proxy, Śiva worship. However, Po Inâ Nâgar, in Aymonier's research, also had the ability to take on the form of the Cham goddess *Muk Juk*, which Aymonier saw as an incarnation of Bhagavathi Kali (Aymonier 1891: 35). The evidence raises three points that should be taken into account with the analysis of Aymonier and others. First, his audience was already biased towards religions with substantial institutions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism. Second, his audience was biased against local traditions, viewing them as pagan-like and backward. Third, there is some substantial, non-textual, evidence that suggests that the Cham would have more readily equated Po Inâ Nâgar with Kali or Durga (both consorts of Śiva) than with Uma or Parvathi, while Saraswati may have been well represented through the form Po Dara (Marrison 1985: 52; Sakaya 2014).

Today, Vietnamese administrators in Khánh Hòa province have restricted access to the towers at Nha Trang, but not in a way that benefits Cham worshippers. Contrary to Cham traditions, the goddess is clothed and viewable at all times, for a small fee. Traditionally the goddess would have only been ceremoniously bathed, clothed, and may be viewed during religious ceremonies. Contemporary circumstances are not amenable with Cham and Chamic minorities in the area. These same circumstances also prevent scholars from making any assessments of the statue from the perspective of Art History. It seems that as early as 1901, Antoine Cabaton was able to fully photograph the statue. Although it is difficult to make out the objects held in each of the goddess' hands—a typical means of identifying Indic deities—the photograph does appear to resemble more “standard” portrayals of Kali, and not Uma. Henri Parmentier (1909: 127-128) nevertheless described the statue as a beautiful representation of Uma (see also: Parmentier 1902; 1906). However, he was careful to initially qualify his conclusion as an “assumption” (Parmentier 1902: 45), a detail that has been overlooked by researchers ever since.

## **Conclusion**

This article has highlighted the scholarly assumption of a rather simplistic transition between Uma, Po Inâ Nâgar, and the Vietnamese goddesses Thiên Y A Na and Liễu Hạnh. Up to the end, the paper also highlighted that the initial stance by French scholars regarding the association between Uma and Po Inâ Nâgar was merely an assumption. Indeed, the peoples of Champa likely worshiped many “mother goddesses” by many different names, some equated with Parvati-Uma, while others with Durga, Kali, or Saraswati. In particular, the potential association between Po Dara and Saraswati may warrant further examination in light of localizations of Saraswati worship that have occurred in the Hindu-influenced cultures of Bali and Borneo.<sup>26)</sup> Additionally, the

---

26) Marrison (1985) also believed that this comparison was necessary, and could begin with an analysis of the works of Antoine Cabaton and C. Hooykaas. However, to date, the only comparative work between Cham culture and Bali that

continued examination of epigraphic records may well reveal new conclusions about the complexities of Indic influence in pre-colonial Champa, just as the continued examination of Cham manuscripts highlight the complexities of Cham versions of the Po Inâ Nâgar goddess, as well as her relationship to the goddesses Po Kuk and Po Dara. Utilizing certain reading strategies such as the *hermeneutics of suspicion*, *surface reading as materiality* and *close reading* helps scholars gain a better picture of the history of Po Inâ Nâgar worship over time, as well as help demonstrate that just as Champa religion transformed over time, Cham religion since the 17<sup>th</sup> century has also been 'changing,' as new interpretations of gods and goddesses are frequently developed. To that end, the intermingling of religious content with history also makes it possible to write histories of the elements of the Cham religion, and better understand how forms of Po Inâ Nâgar have proliferated over time, continuing to influence Vietnamese populations, which led to a recent revival of Cham worship of the goddess Po Inâ Nâgar at the original tower site in Nha Trang. The contemporary ceremonies have all been conducted in accordance with the protection granted to ethnic and religious minorities under Vietnamese law. Thus, there is no reason to assume that these ceremonies will not continue to grow in popularity. Continuing to research on this subject can only shed more light on the understanding of localization of Indic tradition in Southeast Asia, goddess worship in Vietnam, and the complex history of religion in Southeast Asia.

## Bibliography

### Cham Manuscripts:

- Anonymous. nd. *Dalakal Nao Magru*. Manuscript from Dharbhan Po Dam's private collection. Read: Fall, 2012.
- Anonymous. nd. *Dalikal Po Anit*. Manuscript from Dharbhan Po

---

has been undertaken is Toshiko Shine and Sayaka's joint study of palm leave manuscript production.

- Dam's private collection. Read: Fall, 2012.
- Anonymous. nd. *Da Lakal Po Romé Angan Ja Saot [The Dalikal of Po Rome When He Was Called Ja Saot]*. Manuscript from Dharbhan Po Dam's private collection. Read: Fall, 2012.
- Anonymous. nd. *Dalakal Po Kuk*. Manuscript from Ja Tu di Hamu Liman's private collection. Read 2014. Photographed: 2013.
- Anonymous. nd. *Damnuy Po Inu Nagar*. Manuscript from Dharbhan Po Dam's private collection. Read: Fall, 2012.
- Hợp Ai. 1885. Ariya Po Pareng. 430-450 in Inrasara. 2006. *Ariya: Trường Ca Chăm*. TP. Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam: Văn Nghệ [Arts Press].

**Vietnamese Gazetteer:**

- Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí: Tập 1. (2012). (ĐNNTC). *Bản dịch mới của Hoàng Văn Lâu In lần thứ nhất*. Lao Động: TP Hồ Chí Minh.

**Published Materials:**

- Aymonier, Etienne. 1890. *Légendes Historiques Des Chames [Historical Legends of the Cham]*. *Excursions et reconnaissances*, XIV (32): 145-206.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1891. *Les Tchames et Leurs Religion*. Editeur: Ernest Leroux. Paris, France: EFEO.
- Best, Stephen & Sharon Marcus. 2009. Surface Reading: An Introduction. *Representations* (Fall): 1-21.
- Blood, Dorris. 1981. Aspects of Cham Culture. In *Notes from Indochina on Ethnic Minority Cultures*. Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)-Museum of Anthropology Publication. No. 6, Dallas, Texas.
- Boisselier, Jean. 1963. *Le Statuaire de Champa: recherches sur les cultes et l'iconographie*. EFEO 54: Paris, France.
- Cabaton, Antoine. 1901. *Nouvelles Recherches Sur Les Chams Vol. 2*. Paris, France: Ecole Française de l'Extrême-Orient.
- Durand, R.P. - E.M. 1903. Le Temple De Po Rome A Phanrang [The Po Rome Temple of Phan Rang]. *BEFEO*, III: 597-603.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1907. La chronique de Po Nagar. *BEFEO*, VII: 339-45.
- LaFont, P.B., Po, D. & Vija, N. 1977. *Catalogue des Manuscrits*

- Cam des Bibliothèques Francaises*. Paris, France: EFEO.
- Lê Đình Hùng & Tôn Nữ Khánh Trang. 2014. Thần nữ Thiên Y A Na trong đời sống cư dân vùng Thuận Hóa. In ed. Võ Văn Sen – Ngô Đức Thịnh – Nguyễn Văn Lân. *Tín Ngưỡng Thờ Mẫu ở Nam Bộ: Bản Sắc và Giá Trị*. Trường Đại Học Khoa Học Xã Hội và Nhân Văn – ĐHQG – TP. HCM Trung Tâm Nghiên Cứu và Bảo Tồn Văn Hóa Tín Ngưỡng Việt Nam, Sở Văn Hóa Thể Thao và Du Lịch tỉnh An Giang. TP Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam: NXB Đại Học Quốc Gia. 527-535.
- Inrasara. 1994. *Văn học Chăm*. Văn hóa Dân tộc học: Hà Nội.
- Majumdar, R.C. 1985 [1963[1927]]. *Champa, History and Culture of Indian Colonial Kingdom in the Far East 2nd –16th Century A.D. The Inscriptions of Champa. Book III*. Ins Calcuta Publisher.
- Marison, G.E. 1985. The Chams and Their Literature. *Journal of the Malay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. 58(2) 45-70
- Monier-Williams, Sir Monier. 2005[1899]. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Delhi, India: Motilal. Tr. 743-744.
- Moussay, Gerard. et. al. 1971. *Dictionnaire Chăm-Vietnamien-Français*. Phang Rang, Vietnam: Centre Culturel Cam.
- Mus, Paul. 1933. L'Inde vu de l'est : cultes indiennes et indigenes a Champa. *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, XXXIII.
- Nakamura, Rie. 1999. *Cham of Vietnam: The Dynamics of Ethnicity*. PhD Dissertation, University of Washington.
- Ngô Văn Doanh. 2011 [2002]. *Văn Hóa Cổ Chămpa*. Hà Nội: Văn Hóa Dân Tộc. 416-417.
- Nguyễn Thế Anh. 1995[1991]. The Vietnamization of the Cham diety Po Nagar. *Essays into Vietnamese Pasts*. K. W. Taylor and John K Whitmore, ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Previously printed in the *Asia Journal* 2(1), The Center for Area Studies, Seoul National University.
- Noseworthy, William. 2014. Hình ảnh nghiên cứu Po Ina Nagar theo phương pháp đa ngành. In ed. Võ Văn Sen – Ngô Đức Thịnh – Nguyễn Văn Lân. *Tín Ngưỡng Thờ Mẫu ở Nam Bộ: Bản Sắc và Giá Trị*. Trường Đại Học Khoa Học Xã Hội và Nhân Văn – ĐHQG – TP. HCM Trung Tâm

- Nghiên Cứu và Bảo Tồn Văn Hóa Tín Ngưỡng Việt Nam, Sở Văn Hóa Thể Thao và Du Lịch tỉnh An Giang. TP Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam: NXB Đại Học Quốc Gia. 539-549.
- Parmentier, Henri. 1902. Le sanctuaire de Po Nagar Nhatrang. *BEFEO* 2: 17-54.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1906. Nouvelles notes sur le sanctuaire de Po Nagar à Nhatrang. *BEFEO* 6: 291-300.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1909. *Inventaire Descriptif des Monuments Cams de L'Annam*. Paris, France : Imprimerie Nationale. 2 vols.
- Phan An. 2014. Tính tích hợp và dung hợp trong tín ngưỡng thờ Mẫu của người Việt Nam Bộ. In eds. Võ Văn Sen – Ngô Đức Thịnh – Nguyễn Văn Lân. *Tín Ngưỡng Thờ Mẫu ở Nam Bộ: Bản Sắc và Giá Trị*. Trường Đại Học Khoa Học Xã Hội và Nhân Văn – ĐHQG – TP. HCM Trung Tâm Nghiên Cứu và Bảo Tồn Văn Hóa Tín Ngưỡng Việt Nam, Sở Văn Hóa Thể Thao và Du Lịch tỉnh An Giang. TP Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam: NXB Đại Học Quốc Gia. 13-16.
- Phan Đăng Nhật. 2013. So sánh tục thờ thần làng của người Chăm và người Việt Nam. *Tập Chí Văn Hóa Chăm*, No. 01: 13-17.
- Phan Khoáng. 2001 [1967]. *Việt Sử Xứ Đàng Trong: 1558-1777: Cuộc Nam Tiến Của Dân Tộc Việt Nam*. Hà Nội : Văn Học
- Phan Quốc Anh. 2010. *Nghi Lễ Vòng Đờn Của Người Chăm Bà La Môn (Chăm Ahier) ở Ninh Thuận*. Đại Học Quốc Gia Hà Nội. Hà Nội.
- Phan Thị Yên Tuyết. 2014. Hệ thống nữ thần biển trong tín ngưỡng thờ Mẫu và nữ thần ở vùng biển Nam Bộ. In ed. Võ Văn Sen – Ngô Đức Thịnh – Nguyễn Văn Lân. *Tín Ngưỡng Thờ Mẫu ở Nam Bộ: Bản Sắc và Giá Trị*. Trường Đại Học Khoa Học Xã Hội và Nhân Văn – ĐHQG – TP. HCM Trung Tâm Nghiên Cứu và Bảo Tồn Văn Hóa Tín Ngưỡng Việt Nam, Sở Văn Hóa Thể Thao và Du Lịch tỉnh An Giang. TP Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam: NXB Đại Học Quốc Gia. 69-84.
- Po Dharma. 1989. Les Frontières Du Campa (Dernier État Des Recherches). In *Les Frontières Du Vietnam*. Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan. 128-135.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1988. Etat Des Dernières Recherches Sur La Date De

- L'absorption Du Campa Par Le Vietnam. In *Actes du Séminaire sur le Campa*. Ed.: ACHCPI. 59-70.
- Sakaya (Trương Văn Món). 2014. Bàn Thêm Về Hình Tượng Muk Juk (Bà Đen) – Một Hóa Thân của Nữ Thần Po Ina Nagar, Người Champa trong Tín Ngưỡng Thờ Mẫu của Người Việt ở Nam Bộ. In ed. Võ Văn Sen – Ngô Đức Thịnh – Nguyễn Văn Lên. *Tín Ngưỡng Thờ Mẫu ở Nam Bộ: Bản Sắc và Giá Trị*. Trường Đại Học Khoa Học Xã Hội và Nhân Văn – ĐHQG – TP. HCM Trung Tâm Nghiên Cứu và Bảo Tồn Văn Hóa Tín Ngưỡng Việt Nam, Sở Văn Hóa Thể Thao và Du Lịch tỉnh An Giang. TP Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam: NXB Đại Học Quốc Gia. 517–526.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. *Tiếp Cận Một Số Vấn Đề Văn Hóa Champa [Approaching Some Problems of Cham Culture]*. Hồ Chí Minh City, Việt Nam: Tri Thức Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. *Văn Hóa Chăm: Nghiên Cứu Và Phê Bình*. TP. Hồ Chí Minh : Phụ Nữ.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. Po Ina Nagar Chăm- Thần mẹ xứ sở in Ngô Đức Thịnh (ed.), *Đạo mẫu và hình thức Shaman giáo của các tộc người Việt Nam và Châu Á*, Nxb KHXH, Hà Nội, tr. 196-219.
- Schweyer, Ann Valerie. 2004. 'Po Nagar de Nha Trang' *Aséanie*. No. 14.
- Trần Kiêm Hoàng (Chamaliaqriya Tiếng). 2011. *Tri Thức Dân Gian Của Người Raglai*. Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam: Văn Hóa Dân Tộc.

Received: Feb. 15, 2015; Reviewed: Apr. 15, 2015; Accepted: May 1, 2015





# The Pluralism of Ethnic Cultures and Inclusive Development in the Philippines



BAO Maohong

## [ *Abstract* ]

The relation of culture and development is complicated and multilayered. Inclusive development has been the national strategy of the government of President Benigno Aquino III. However, the role the culture is scarcely mentioned. This paper will try to contextualize development in Philippine history to further show the importance of national consciousness, ethnic cultures, indigenous cultures and modern culture,. This paper concludes that inclusive development of the Philippines will be achieved through glocalization, based on the creative reconstruction of cultures in and out of the Philippines.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Development, Ethnic Cultures, Economic Nationalism, Modernity, Philippines

Inclusive growth is an economic and social concept offered by the Asian Development Bank in 2007 as a solution to the world's development problems. It promotes social equity and sustainable

---

Professor of Department of History, and Director of Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Peking University, People's Republic of China. baomh616@pku.edu.cn

development without sacrificing economic growth. Simply speaking, it is a mixture of economic growth, development, and sustainable development within the discipline of development economics. In contrast to simply pursuing GDP growth, it is a form of economic development that synthesizes economic growth and social development. In comparison with anthropocentric and unsustainable development, sustainable development harmonizes humanity and the environment. In this context, inclusive growth is equal to inclusive development. Inclusive development is not only the goal pursued by developing countries in Asia; the effort also involves the need for development of cultural diversity.

The Philippines is a country that seeks to unite various ethnic cultures under a national consciousness. This social engineering, on the one hand, basically supports economic development. On the other hand, it limits sustainable and equal development to some extent. This paper looks at inclusive growth as it is reflected in the *Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016*<sup>1)</sup> of the Philippine government through a historical lens, arguing that it should be the development orientation of the Philippines.

## **I . The pluralism of ethnic cultures in the Philippines**

The Philippines consists of over 90 ethnic groups, over a hundred local languages and a population of 98 million. The ancestors of most ethnicities migrated to the Philippines from outside. The earliest were the Malays and Negritos who arrived via the Asian land bridge. Both of them hybridized and multiplied into several native groups.<sup>2)</sup> Influenced by Indian culture and Islamic culture,

---

1) The Philippine Development Plan (PDP), based on President Benigno Aquino III's "social contract with the Filipino people", aims for inclusive growth. This means that growth is shared by all. Inclusive growth includes: high and sustained economic growth, equal access to development opportunities, effective and responsive social safety nets. It is the government's blueprint for the next six years.

2) There are two dominant theories explaining the origins of the Filipino people: migration theory and local development theory (Oliveros 2011: 12).

these groups developed their own unique cultures. According to studies by Philippine scholars, some characters of ancient Philippine languages were from India, while 25 percent of Tagalog words were from Sanskrit (for example, Francisco 1963). Islam spread into the southern Philippines in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, where it was embraced by Philippine Muslims, later called Moros by Spanish colonizers. The Chinese were migrating to the Philippine islands since the 7<sup>th</sup> century brought with them Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, although the process was haphazard and at times bloody. Catholicism spread in the Philippines with the arrival of Spanish colonizers in the sixteenth century and soon became the dominant religion in the Philippines. During the long period of Spanish and American colonial domination, some Whites and Mestizos came to identify with the islands and regarded it as their land. Under democratic system introduced by Americans as well as the germinal free market economy, English language and American popular culture were introduced to the Philippine archipelago. These successive ethnic migrations and cultural transplantations made the Philippines a melting pot for various ethnic groups and cultures. It also finally formed the pattern where pluralism contented with the need for a unified national consciousness.

The ethnic cultures in the Philippines are plenty and diverse. In the countryside, especially in mountainous areas such as the Cordilleras, some minorities still practice animism. This may be considered primitive. However, from the viewpoint of postmodernism, it evokes an environmental consciousness that recovers whatever has been destroyed with the estrangement of nature and humans after modernity. These minorities work for their subsistence without a strong sense of the market economy. Chinese-Filipinos in general practice Confucianism; many of them also practice Buddhism. In their adopted home, overseas Chinese could accumulate wealth rapidly, depending on their hardwork and frugality. However, they generally do not like to participate in politics and culture because of pressure and outsidership. The Moros were linked to a Muslim trade network in Southeast Asia. Since the Spanish era, and during the period of the establishment of the Philippine Republic, this economic relation was interrupted (Warren 1981; Abinales

2000). The central government, mainly controlled by Christians, implemented a national integration plan that aimed at creating a national market and pushed for economic growth and social progress in the Moro region. However, to some extent, it intensified the contradictions between Christians and Muslims and exacerbated the cause of Moro separation. In the Philippines, 92.6% of the population is Christian, most are Catholics. Prolonged colonial domination allowed Christianity to penetrate into various aspects of Philippine life. Before independence, religion was certainly influential in society. After independence, religion continues to play an important role in Philippine development, politics, economy and society, even if there is a separation of church and state.

Although there is a plurality of ethnic cultures in the Philippines, national consciousness was shaped in the process of nation-state building. The Filipino is satisfied with his fertile and productive physical environment even while he endures the frequent disasters that occur in the tropics. In this kind of environment, the Filipino came to be optimistic and easily satisfied. Under colonial rule, Filipinos responded with indolence in order to resist the exploitation that oriented the islands to the world market and metropolitan state.<sup>3)</sup> When it came to nation-building, the pursuit of national unity and prosperity became the norm. The approach to it was to build the market economy system, based on private ownership, which paralleled the democratic system. This system took root in the plains area, and ensured that the country would not turn toward the Socialism, even under the authoritarian regime of Marcos, and the constant threat of guerrilla warfare by the New People's Army in Luzon Island.

Filipinos in general are very sensitive and very tolerant in human relations. Before the colonial period, the Philippines thrived in "barangay" societies, where the basic social unit was the clan. Living in kinship and affinity, the head and subordinate in the barangay formed a patron-client relation, where the head protects

---

3) This viewpoint is from Jose Rizal. "When the small farmer sees himself exploited by all kinds of persons in authority..., it is not surprising to find him unwilling to exert himself in the cultivation of lands only to have others reap the benefits of his sweat and toil (Veneracion 2001: 193)."

the subordinate as the subordinate supports the head (Scott 2004). This is really a very stable social network from which no one could escape. The Spanish colonialist added religious kinship to this structure, which recalls the divine relationship of the Christian god the father and god the son. This kinship became all the more holy than the secular one. Although the nationalist government made an effort to revise this social structure, it remained to be the case even after a “New Society” program was introduced by Marcos.

Despite inheriting aspects of American political culture—including the aspiration for human rights, liberty, democracy and equality—the current Philippine political culture is still mainly rooted in its traditional culture (Scott 1972; Anderson 1998). Although the Philippine government practices the American system of separation of three powers (judicial, legislative, and executive) and holds general elections where every person of age has a right to vote, it is superficial. According to the Center for People Empowerment in Governance, a nonprofit group that advocates more grassroots participation in politics, there are an estimated 250 political families nationwide, with at least one in every province, occupying positions in all levels of the bureaucracy. Of the 265 members of Congress, 160 belong to these clans, the group reported. At least, 12 of the 14 presidents elected after independence belonged to these clans (Conde 11/05/2007). Due to the serious disjunction between system and reality, pragmatic culture is so popular in the Philippines. So, there are so many strange things happening in the Philippine political scene, such as party members changing their membership easily,<sup>4)</sup> corrupt officials being reelected,<sup>5)</sup> etc.

---

4) For example, Ferdinand E. Marcos, a prominent member of the Liberty Party, in order to be nominated for president, joined and ran as the Nationalist Party standard-bearer against the one fielded by the Liberals in 1965. Surprisingly, he succeeded smoothly.

5) The typical example is former President Joseph Estrada. He was deposed in 2001, and later on arrested and imprisoned for six years. Although he failed in 2010 presidential election, he succeeded in the 2013 election when he ran for Mayor of the City of Manila.

The Philippines is a state with plural ethnic cultures and a high happiness index. Its national consciousness is a complex contradiction that mixes modernity and tradition, family forces and democratic principle, enjoyment of life, and special dynamics of economic development.

## **II . The fluctuation of economic development in the Philippines and its cultural roots**

The Philippines was once the second most developed Asian country in terms of industrial base, just next to Japan. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the Philippine economy has grown slowly and even became the “Sick Man of Asia”. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it rebounded and seemed to grow rapidly.

Before the Spanish invasion, the Philippines was a subsistence economy that consisted of hunting, gathering, simple agriculture, limited handicraft industry, and commerce. After the establishment of Spanish rule, the economy was characterized mainly by extensive agricultural cultivation on Haciendas, Estancias, and Encomienda. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Philippine economy was integrated into the world market and shaped the plantation economy where cash crops were planted. During the American period, sugar, coco, abaca, and tobacco became the main export products. The commercial economy and free market system was initially established as well in urban areas. However, the development of an export economy restrained grain production to some extent and further resulted in the shortage of food in some areas. Overly dependent on American and international markets, the Philippine economy fell into a periodic fluctuation cycle, and failed in forming an integral domestic economic system (Pomeroy 1970; 1974;1992).

After independence, the nationalist government of the Philippines practiced an import substitution industrialization strategy, as well as agrarian reform plans, in order to change the economic dependence and maintain its hard-won political independence. Based on a partial import control and foreign exchange control, the administration

of President Elpidio Quirino restrained the surge in imports from the US and obtained the balance between income and expenditure in 1956. President Carlos P. Garcia's administration practiced the "Filipino First" economic policy that aimed at supporting Filipino businesses by using foreign exchange and supporting Filipino enterprises to enter the industries monopolized by foreign companies. The Marcos regime pushed the national economy forward by increasing export to get foreign exchange for industrialization, absorbing foreign investment, and borrowing large sums of foreign currency, especially on infrastructure in Metro Manila. Land reform and support service made Philippine agriculture dynamic and the Philippines achieved food self-sufficiency in 1976, becoming even a grain exporting country in 1977. However, import substitution strategy, practiced in the Philippines for over 30 years, did not result in sustainable economic growth. On the contrary, it made economy fluctuate. From a rapid growth in the 1950s, the country experienced slow growth in the 1960s, which accelerated once again in the 1970s, only to slow down in the 1980s and 1990s.

The sustained economic downturn and political corruption in the 1980s led to the 'EDSA (people power revolution)' in 1986 that deposed Marcos and sent his family fleeing to Hawaii. After adapting the post-Cold War neoliberal framework, the Philippines' economic development strategy was repositioned to an export-oriented one, while hounded by an unstable political climate. Because the Philippine Senate rejected the Military Base Agreement signed with the United States in 1947, the US military had to withdraw from the bases in the Philippines in 1992. Some parts of Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base were reconstructed to become export processing zones and special economic zones. The Philippines activated its economy by opening its financial market and introducing foreign investment. Although the economy did not grow rapidly in the 1990s, it underpinned the speedy growth of the economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. On March 18, 2014, Arsenio M. Balisacan, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and Philippine National Economic Development Authority Secretary-General said:

“The Philippine economy has been one of the bright spots in the region. Just last year, our real GDP expanded by 7.2 percent, improving from the 6.8 percent achieved in 2012. These results were realized despite the uncertain global environment, as well as natural disasters that the country has experienced since 2011. On the demand side, the 7.2 percent growth was mainly contributed by household spending, followed by fixed capital formation. This is primarily due to stronger growth in investments in durable equipment and construction. Moving on to the supply side, we see that while services continue to be the major contributor to growth, the contribution of Industry has been increasing over the years. In 2013, it was responsible for 3 percentage points of the total 7.2% growth rate” (Balisacan 18/03/2014).

Beside advantageous international economic relations, these results came from pro-economic elements in its culture, such as nationalism, the tradition of market economy, etc. In the initial stages of independence, being at the forefront of Cold War in Asia, the Philippines got economic assistance and opportunities for market opening in the West. After the Cold War, Philippine democracy found favor in the value-oriented diplomacy of western countries. In the American strategy of rebalance in Asia-Pacific, the Philippines remains to be an important partner in Asia. All these enabled the development of Philippine economy. Philippine nationalism played a role in national economic development just after independence. In order to get rid of economic dependence on the American market, the nationalist government facilitated national enthusiasm to practice an import substitution strategy and push economic development. After the EDSA revolution, the Philippines adjusted its economic development strategy where the market played a greater role in resource allocation and economic growth. During American period, the free market economic system was transplanted to the Philippines (Giesecke 1987). Although it was not completely successful, the Philippines began to be acquainted with the principle of market economy and its operating mechanisms. This helped the Philippines avoid the impact of Asian financial crisis and support the latest economic growth. It is the economic nationalism and idea of market economy in national consciousness that contributed to Philippine economic growth and takeoff once

again.

However, high growth rate of GDP does not easily equate to sustainable economic development. The cost of Philippine economic growth was natural resource exhaustion and environmental damage. As an archipelago, its most important resources are land and sea. The timber export catapulted Philippine industrialization. However, some of the export value was siphoned by crony families in different ways. The increasing deforestation not only destroyed the diversity of Philippine ecology and cultures, but also weakened the country's environmental base for economic development and progress of civilization (Bao 2008). The Philippines is one of the richest countries in marine biodiversity. It was estimated that its coral reefs could contribute US \$ 1 billion a year to its economy. However, its marine biodiversity has been reduced largely since the 1980s. Due to marine pollution, overuse and siltation from the land, its coral reefs were damaged seriously. In the context of international environmentalism and internal environmental consciousness, the Philippines launched reforestation and marine conservation that recovered or improved deteriorating environments. However, some damaged environments may never be reversed. Clearly, environmental destruction as a consequence of economic development is disastrous for both the Philippines and the world.

Environmental destruction was brought to the Philippines by modern culture introduced by the West. Prof. Lynn White wrote in his well-known paper that ecological crisis is culturally rooted in the bible where everything God created served man's purposes (White 1967). The cultures introduced by Spain and the US displaced indigenous connection to nature and made it only valuable only when it was useful. After independence, the Philippines insisted on this modern knowledge as guide to its economic development.<sup>6)</sup> In the context of catching up with modernization, this paradigm was extensively practiced. Developed countries and the wealthy benefit from this prejudicial practice while Filipinos suffer ecological deterioration.

While growing economically, the Philippines in the process

---

6) Actually, there is a continuity of colonial modernity and nationalist modernity.

became starkly polarized. The polarization intensified whenever economy grew or stagnated. Growth did not trickle down to the majority. According to statistics by *Forbes Asia*, the 40 richest individuals in the country saw their fortunes increase faster. Their collective wealth grew over \$13 billion to \$47.4 billion (Nam 20/06/2012). Their collective growth accounted for 76.5% of the Philippines GDP growth, while the income gap was so large that the Philippines was listed first in Asia in terms of income inequality. From 1962 to 1986, the average population growth rate was 2.7%, while the growth rate of per capita national income was only 2%. The income ratio of the 20% highest income population increased from 48.5% in 1957 to 53.9% in 1991; the income ratio of the 20% lowest income population decreased from 6.5% in 1957 to 4.7% in 1991. The Gini coefficient increased from 0.461 in 1957 to 0.468 in 1991, beyond the international recognized warning mark of 0.4. The rate of unemployment was 34% by the 1980s. The number of poor families increased from about 50% in the beginning of 1970s to about 60% in the beginning of 1980s (National Statistical Coordination Board 09/12/2013). According to Asian Development Bank, of the 90 million Filipinos, about 26% lived below the poverty line. The Second Quarter 2013 Social Weather Stations Survey fielded between June 28 to 30, 2013, revealed that 22.7% or an estimated 4.9 million families experienced involuntary hunger at least once in the past three months. This is 3.5 points above the 19.2% (est. 3.9 million families) in March 2013, and almost 3 points above the 19.9% four-quarter average of 2012. From March 2013 to June 2013, overall Hunger rates (i.e. Moderate plus Severe) rose from 25.5% to 33.4% among the Self-Rated Poor. It also rose from 12.2% to 12.6% among the Not Poor/On the Borderline over the same period.<sup>7)</sup> Although the growth rate reached 7.8%, many are yet to feel its benefits.

Although economic problems mainly stem from economic

---

7) Moderate Hunger refers to those who experienced hunger "Only Once" or "A Few Times" in the last three months, while Severe Hunger refers to those who experienced it "Often" or "Always" in the last three months (Social Weather Stations 2013).

actions, the cultural aspect should not be ignored. The rising population in the Philippines may be traced with of the strong influence of the Catholic Church in society. The Church has strongly opposed divorce, abortion, and artificial contraception. In Filipino families, the fertility rate of every woman is 3.1. The poorer the family, the higher the fertility rate, and this impoverishes many. The large income gap is a result of both the market economy and the serious culture of corruption rooted in the traditional patron-client culture. Due to corruption, the Philippines lost 30% of its fiscal expenditure. Officials in different ranks misappropriated state property in different ways. Under the Marcos dictatorship, relatives and cronies misappropriated or pocketed 5 to 10 billion dollars (Aquino 1987: 14). According to a study by the World Bank in 2008, corruption in the Philippines is considered to be the worst in East Asia. The Philippines ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> among 180 countries included in the 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index published by global watchdog Transparency International. Corruption exists in all levels of the government. This widespread corruption enlarged the gap between the rich and the poor. The other reason why the Philippines is impoverished is its low savings rate that stems from the populace's mentality of instant gratification. The savings rate was pegged at just 18% of the GDP, lower than other Asian countries. In East Asia, the Philippines is exceptional, because its consciousness is shaped by nationalism, Christianity, and American consumer culture of the USA.

### **III. Working hard for inclusive development in the Philippines**

Faced with serious an economic challenges, as well as international and internal pressures, the Philippine government began to adjust its goals for economic development, pursuing anew economic development model that harmonizes economic growth with social justice and environmental protection. On August 20, 2010, the World Bank promulgated the report titled "Philippines: Fostering More Inclusive Growth" (World Bank 2010). In this report, the World Bank suggested that the Philippines could improve its

sustainable development only if it fostered more inclusive growth projects that benefited the poor. On March 28, 2011, the Philippine government released the *Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016*, where inclusive growth was underlined as the main aim (National Economic and Development Authority 2011). On June 20, 2013, the President Benigno Aquino III announced that the Philippines is projected to reach inclusive growth, where economic development will be more felt by the poor, by way of socialized housing, expanded employment opportunities, developed tourism and agriculture, and comprehensive poverty alleviation. Concretely speaking, the average growth rate of GDP should reach 7-8% from 2011 to 2016; the poverty incidence by 2015 should decrease by half in 1991.

The key to alleviate poverty is to improve income in relation to employment. Aquino III promised that unemployment will be decreased to 6% when he steps down in 2016. The preconditions of full employment are expected to develop the labor industry and control population growth. On December 29, 2012, President Aquino III signed the law providing for free access to contraception and family planning. Though the law intends to decrease maternal mortality rate and help reduce poverty, the Catholic Church and its political allies expressed their disagreement. Several bishops threatened to contest the bill's legality in the Supreme Court. More than 80% of the population in the Philippines is Catholic, and the Church has had the support of many politicians, media commentators, and businessmen (BBC News 29/12/2012). The Catholic Church insists on its traditional doctrine, while compromising the quality of life of the public. Valuing life, the Church advocated natural family planning. This option however could not decrease the current fertility rate. The literacy rate among females aged 10 years and over in 2010 was 97.6 percent. Among males of the same age, literacy rate was at 97.4 percent. School attendance was higher among females than males. Females aged 5 to 24 years who attended school during the school year 2009-2010 comprised 65 percent of all females in this age group. In comparison, 64.1 percent of all males aged 5 to 24 years old attended school in the same period (National Statistics Office 27/12/2013). This implies that while Philippine women still adhered to conservative views

about reproductive health, they were significantly literate. Secularizing education and improving its quality must be prioritized in reforms.

While controlling population growth, it is most important to expand employment opportunities. In reforming the industrial structure, the Philippine government has set its sights on the service sector and capital-intensive industries. In this regard, what should be emphasized is that agriculture and labor intensive-industries could play a positive role in improving employment and speeding up economic development. Although Philippine agriculture improved, its development was actually slow. Agricultural development could be instrumental in stabilizing rural areas, as well as improving the chain of agricultural production (grain and cash crop cultivation), agricultural services (logistics, transportation, and credit), industrial investments (fertilizer, pesticides, and mechanics) and farming industry. This will enable the strengthening of the agro-industrial complex produces value-added commodities. This agricultural program is sure to employ locals and to balance the increasing city-countryside gap and disparate regional economies. In manufacturing, the Philippines should follow the example of the Japanese who developed micro businesses that create jobs, as suggested by Japan International Cooperation Agency. These small enterprises mainly thrive on labor-intensive production, where raw materials are purchased and processed for domestic consumption. This kind of industry could absorb rural surplus labor, but also move them into migrant labor and urbanization. Additionally, tourism is a small-investment and labor-intensive industry. In the Philippines, there are so many tourist spots to develop and this industry can certainly be prosperous.

Although agriculture, primary manufacturing, and tourism are labor-intensive, they need investment to be pushed forward. Traditional culture characterize the Philippines as embodying vigorous private consumption that result in underinvestment. Under saving meanwhile means that banks and individuals could not accumulate enough to invest. In this context, consumption culture of the Philippines is causing it to overdraw its economic future according to the consumption model of the developed countries. In the current international economic system, the Philippines has

to change its consumption culture for it to prosper.

Philippine economy should be sustainable. Environmental damage weakened the resource and environmental base of its economic development. Today, the Philippine government and environmental NGOs are working hard to reverse the deterioration and use resources efficiently. On the one hand, the economic growth model should shift to one that promotes recycling. Buying, processing, sale, and consumption of materials should consider ecological limits. On the other hand, the positive meaning of traditional culture should be reintroduced and the indigenous should be empowered. Eurocentrism considers uplanders as backward and a hindrance to development. This is clearly a misunderstanding. It is necessary to empower uplander cultures and sustain their communities (Utting 2000). The Philippines has launched a social forestry plan and marine conservation that attempt to practice this idea.

Aiming at inclusive development, the Philippine government should pay more attention to reforming the distribution system, and balancing efficiency and justice. Corruption must be eradicated. These reforms take time to accomplish, but President Aquino has accomplished a lot by taking the first steps towards reform.

#### **IV. Brief Conclusion**

The Philippines is a hybrid culture that combines national consciousness with plural ethnic and external cultures. Because of these cultural underpinnings, the Philippine economy has followed a long and tortuous way towards development. It is very difficult to distinguish clearly which culture is helpful for economic development and which one is not. We could assert that the economic growth in the Philippines was not sustainable and inclusive. With help from the Asian Development Bank and World Bank, the Philippine government under the Aquino III administration realized and tried its best to make Philippine economy more sustainable and inclusive. In this process, it is

necessary to selectively reconstruct the ethnic cultures and national consciousness of the Philippines. In this sense, the inclusive development of the Philippines will definitely be the result of globalization that harmonizes the global and the local in development discourses and practices.

## References

- Abinales, Patricio. 2000. *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the formation of the Philippine Nation-State*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1998. *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World*. London: Verso.
- Aquino, Belinda A. 1987. *Politics of Plunder: The Philippines under Marcos*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines.
- Balisacan, Arsenio M. 18/03/2014. Philippine economic briefing. <http://www.neda.gov.ph/?p=2715>(Accessed July 07, 2014).
- Bao, Maohong. 2008. *Forest and development: the deforestation in the Philippines, 1946-1995*. Beijing: China Environment Science Press.
- BBC News. 29/12/2012. Philippines contraception law signed by Benigno Aquino. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-20863691> (Accessed July 07, 2014).
- Conde, Carlos H. 11/05/2007. Family dynasties bind politics in Philippines. *New York Times*. <http://carlosconde.com/2007/05/12/family-dynasties-bind-politics-in-philippines/>(Accessed July 05, 2014).
- Francisco, Juan R. 1963. Indian influences in the Philippines, with special reference to language and literature. *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, 17: 1-3.
- Giesecke, Leonard F. 1987. *History of American Economic Policy in the Philippines during the American Colonial Period, 1900-1935*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc.
- Nam, Suzy. 20/06/2012. The Philippines richest 2012. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/suzynam/2012/06/20/the-philippines-richest-2012/>(Accessed May 07, 2014).

- National Economic and Development Authority. 2011. *Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016*. Pasig City: National Economic and Development Authority.
- National Statistical Coordination Board. 09/12/2013. 2012 full year official poverty statistic. <http://www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/dataCharts.asp> (Accessed July 07, 2014).
- National Statistics Office. 27/12/2013. School Attendance is Higher Among Females than Males (Results from the 2010 Census of Population and Housing). <http://www.census.gov.ph/content/school-attendance-higher-among-females-males-results-2010-census-population-and-housing>(Accessed July 06, 2014).
- Oliveros, Reynaldo D., Ma. Concepcion M. Galvez, Yolanda R. Estrella and John Paul E. Andaquig. 2011. *Philippine: History and Government*. Quezon City: IBON Foundation, Inc.
- Pomeroy, William J. 1970. *American Neo-colonialism: Its Emergence in the Philippines and Asia*. New York: International Publishers.
- Pomeroy, William J. 1974. *An American Made Tragedy: Neo-colonialism & Dictatorship in the Philippines*. New York: International Publishers.
- Pomeroy, William J. 1992. *The Philippines: Colonialism, Collaboration, and Resistance*. New York: International Publishers.
- Scott, James C. 1972. Patron-Client politics and political change in Southeast Asia. *The American Political Science Review*, 66(1).
- Scott, William Henry. 2004. *Barangay: Sixteenth-Century Philippine Culture and Society*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Social Weather Stations. 2013. Second Quarter 2013 Social Weather Survey. <http://www.sws.org.ph/>(Accessed July 07, 2014).
- Utting, Peter ed. 2000. *Forest Policy and Politics in the Philippines: The Dynamics of Participatory Conservation*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University.
- Veneracion, Jaime B. 2001. *Philippine Agriculture during the Spanish Regime*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines.
- Warren, James Francis. 1981. *The Sulu Zone, 1768-1898: The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery, and Ethnicity in the Transformation*

*of a Southeast Asian Maritime State*. Singapore: National University of Singapore Press.

White, Lynn Jr. 1967. The historical roots of our ecological crisis. *Science*, 155: 3767.

World Bank. 2010. Philippines: Fostering More Inclusive Growth (Main Report). Washington, DC: World Bank.

Received: May 19, 2014; Reviewed: Nov. 7, 2014; Accepted: Dec. 5, 2014





## A Study on Kyaikkatha: An Early Urban Settlement in Lower Myanmar



Lei Lei Win

### [ *Abstract* ]

Sittaung-Thanlwin region in Lower Myanmar is an ecological niche for human settlement. Evidences of human activities in the region are seen through various archaeological sites or settlements along the coastal area between the rivers Sittaung and Thanlwin (Salween). In Lower Myanmar, scholar, U Aung Myint, discovered one major site Kyaikkatha and other small scale sites, namely, Sittaung, Kawhtin, Kadaikgyi, Kadaikkalay, Katkadit, Kelatha (little Zothoke), Ayetthama, Winka, Zothoke (big Zothoke), Lagonbyi (Sampannago), Wagaru, Laming and Ye in present day Mon State. In 1980, U Aung Myint undertook an exploration program at Kyaikkatha. After the exploration, an excavation team conducted systematic digging at Kyaikkatha in March 1986. Excavation continued occasionally at Kyaikkatha throughout the years between 1995 and 2000. It is known that Kyaikkatha, the old city, reveals a kind of monumental civilization exposing four religious structures (a stupa and three monasteries). This essay looks into the distribution of features within Kyaikkatha and infers on its social, political, and religious organization.

---

Deputy Director, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Ministry of Culture, leileiwin65@gmail.com.

This essay is also about a new discovery of an early urban settlement located at the apex of the Gulf of Muttama (Martaban) where a lost city of *Suvarṇabhūmi* flourished in the ancient days. By means of aerial photographic observations, the site had been noticed recently, which was by followed some excavations. More systematic and detail surveying may be needed to know more about the site and its features for comparison to other similar settlements of through-out mainland South East Asia.

**Keywords:** Ecological Niche, Urban Settlement, Monumental Civilization, Aerial Photographic Observations

## I . Introduction

Ancient civilizations in Myanmar are known to have arisen in three distinct areas: in central Myanmar in the greater Ayeyarwady and Mu River valleys; in Rakhaine on the west coastal alluvium; and on the Southeast coastal alluvia of the Sittaung and Thanlwin river valleys. In these distinctive areas, the Pyu, the early Rakhaine and the Old Mon civilizations existed in Myanmar (Myint Aung 1977: 41-53). Archaeological research has disclosed a pattern of settlement and artifacts that suggest the former existence of these Kingdoms. Their origins may be ascribed to increase long-distance exchange, access to productive rice lands, control of strategic resources such as salt and iron ore, and the expansion of population in restricted river flood plains. The Pyu settlements are known respectively as Beikthano, Halin, Sriksetra, Maingmaw (Panle), and Wadi, which controlled central Myanmar. Early Rakhaine settlements of Dhanyawati and Vesali controlled coastal valleys of Rakhaine and the Old Mon city of Thaton was located on the northern shore of Tanintharyi coast where Sittaung and Thanlwin meet the sea in Lower Myanmar (Aung Thaw 1972: 1-117).

The Sittaung-Thanlwin Region, a coastal plain of the Gulf of Muttama in Lower Myanmar, lies in between (16° 25' and 17° 27' North and 96° 50' and 97° 40' East), and forms part of the present day Mon and Kayin States. The ancient sites extended to

a neighboring region along the same coast in the south to reach the Ye, Dawei and Thanintharyi river in the Peninsula (Tanintharyi Division) - bordering the Andaman Sea in the west and the Thailand border on the east.

About the Mon Civilization of Lower Myanmar, this is what we know from the writings of G. H. Luce:

*Rāmaññadesa*, "Country of the Mons" doubtless included Pegu (Bago) at the head of the Gulf of Martaban (Muttama), 54 miles north-northeast of Rangoon (Yangon); but the purer Mon region began after the crossing east of the mouth of the Sittaung. Here was the ancient *Suvannabhumi*, "land of gold", around Mt. Kelāsa, the 1100 ft., 30 miles north of Thaton, where Asoka's missionaries, the *theras* Sona and Uttara, are said to have landed, in 253 BC (?) after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Buddhist Council (*Dipavamsa* VIII 12. *Mahavamsa* XII 6, 44-54). For centuries before and after Christ, this coast had been infested by Malayan Pirates, whose main centre was Sumatra. The local Mons and Indians called them *Rakṣa*, "cannibal monsters" and doubtless they enlisted many of the aborigines, Semang Negritos and Australoid Besis, to join their sea-raids. The coastline, from Twante' east and south-wards, is still dotted with forts, built near the mouths of rivers against Raksaattack. Not very long before the time of Aniruddha they had been expelled from Thaton, where, after a spell of Brahmanism, Buddhism triumphed, and the city was renamed Sudhamma (= Thaton), "City of the Good Law" (Luce 1970: 21).

According to G. H. Luce we can trace the early settlements in lower Myanmar, namely *Rāmaññadesa* where the capital city called *Suvannabhumi*, "land of gold" and Sudhammapura (=Thaton), "City of the Good Law" flourished at a up to the reign of King Aniruddha of Bagan (11<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.).

Previously, archaeological discoveries could not prove the existence of old Thaton as a center of the region: some doubts were thrown on Thaton as an Imagined Center. Now, thanks to aerial photographic reading conducted by U Aung Myint of the Forestry Department, we are able to locate many new town sites, large and small, dotted along the coastal plain in the Sittaung-

Thanlwin Region. Kyaikkatha is one of the newly discovered early major settlement sites of lower Myanmar located at the northern part of Thaton region where some minor settlements, such as Stiitaung and Kawhtinare also located. Their existence supports the traditional and local idea of the existence of Ramaññadesa and Thaton in Lower Myanmar.

Very little is known of the inhabitants of the Sittaung-Thanlwin valley in early times. But there is reason to believe that a primitive people of Upper Paleolithic or Neolithic times found their home on the river terraces and in the limestone caves. Their implements made of stone, called "Thunderbolts", are occasionally found in the area since the colonial era (Page 1917: 9). Scholars thought that these stone tool makers were of the Negrito race that gradually migrated southwards to Malaya or elsewhere fleeing better-armed invaders (Aung Myint 1978: 57-60).

The last five to ten years saw area being surveyed for prehistoric and historic site explorations. Many archaeological findings documented by U Aung Myint in last twenty-five years were studied by a team from the Universities Historical Research Centre. In its observation of prehistoric artifacts, many Neolithic settlements were recorded at Kyaikkatha, Mayangon, Hsinbyukyun, located about two miles north-west of Thaton, Kawpayan in Mudon and Thagara in Dawei.

An aerial survey carried out over Myanmar by the Survey Department of Burma (Myanmar) in 1958, disclosed a large number of earthworks in Lower Myanmar. They are irregular in shape, mostly concentrated in the coastal region. They aroused the interest of Forestry Conservator U Aung Myint, who published *Myanmar Ancient Cities from Aerial Photos*.

In 1980s, U Aung Myint undertook an exploration program at Kyaikkatha and later published the results in the *History Journal*, Yangon University (Aung Myint 1985: 131-144). He and his student San Win continued to explore more sites, such as Zokthoke, Taikkala, Thaton, Sanpannago and some other small scale site. The latter reported a preliminary survey report, to the Department of History, Yangon University (San Win 1986: 168).

The Kyaikkatha, exploration continued and in December, 1982. U Aung Myint prepared a preliminary report regarding the site. He circulated it among his colleagues. An excavation team, from the Department of Archaeology was consequently developed to conduct systematic digging at Kyaikkatha in March 1986. Excavation continued occasionally at Kyaikkatha throughout 1995 to 2000.

This paper focuses on the Pre-Bagan culture and civilization of Lower Myanmar by tracing newly observed archaeological sites such as Kyaikkatha, Zokthoke, Kadaiketc; in the region, and comparing them with other Pyu sites of Upper Myanmar and Dvaravati sites of the Lower Maenam basin in Thailand.

## II . Background History

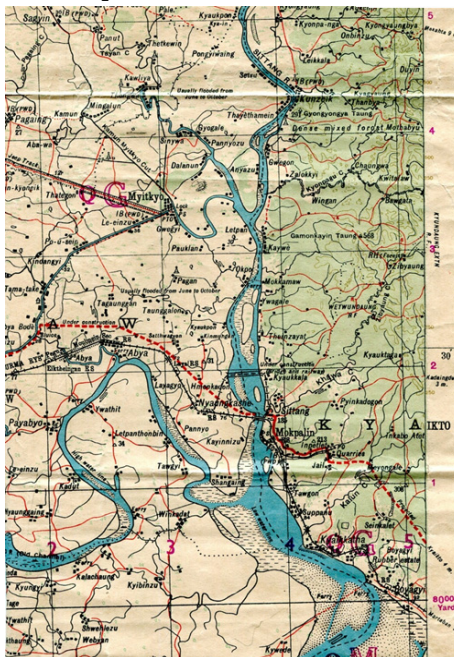
Kyaikkatha is a Mon word which means “the pagoda of Atha Prince.” According to the legend, Wimala ascended the throne of Pegu (Bago) after he had killed Thamala, his elder brother and king, and took the latter's queen to be his wife. At this time she was pregnant and fearing for her offspring, she went into the jungle, where she gave birth to a son. This son, Atha Prince was miraculously cared for by a herd of buffaloes and grew to great strength. Some years later, when his step-father's Kingdom was threatened by the king of Vizianagaram, he came down and defeated the enemy's champion single-handedly. The king honored the prince which made the courtiers to envy him and plot to kill him. Upon hearing this, the prince left the town with his foster-mother, Nan Karaing (Mi-Nan-Gluin) the queen of the buffaloes, and came to a place where he founded the town to be known afterwards as Kyaikkatha, from the pagoda with the same name. A mermaid, Marimingala, fell in love with him and, assuming human form, married him. Atha Prince became more known for he is being the only descendant of the gods (his grandmother was the queen of the dragons) left among human beings. A Princess of Cambodia determined to go to him, and with 1,000 Knights, dressed in gold, set out for Kyaikkatha. But this did not please Marimingala, and as soon as the Princess approached the town, the mermaid killed Atha Prince to prevent him marrying another queen. The

Princess of Cambodia, Ma San Myaing, refused to be comforted, and having built a town close by called Mosomyo (widow), resided there and founded the thousand pagodas in memory of Atha Prince (Tin Gyi 1931: 27-28).

## 2.1. Location, Size and Shape

Kyaikkatha in the Kyaikhto township is located at 17° 21'30" N Latitude and 96° 55" E Longitude. The Sooppanu and Khalon streams flow on its north and the railway line that runs parallel to the Malaw stream is to be found on the southeast. Along that railway line, there lie the villages of Mokekhamu, Bo Yer Gyi and Kwat Htin. By railway, Kyaikkatha is six miles south of Mokepalin and seven miles of Kyaikhto. The village of Kyaikkatha is situated in the west of the railway line, with Kawtsan in its east. Kyaikkatha is just on the shore line near Gulf of Muttama.

<Figure 1> Map of Burma, 94-C-15, one inch map

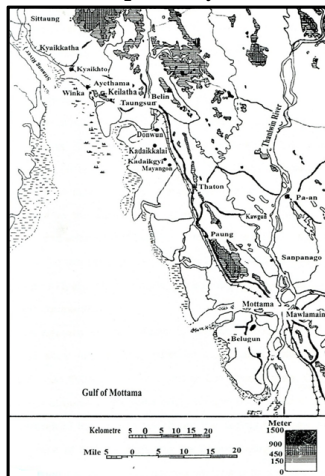


Source: Map of Burma- 94- C – 15

However, Kyaikkatha is as big as Thaton but circular in shape. Within the city there existed a big lake called Ingalaing. The old site is called Kyaikkatha<sup>1)</sup> Village. Guided by an aerial photograph U Aung Myint explored the area in January 1981.

Kyaikkatha is almost the same size with the old Bago, Hmawbi (Campānagara) and the Thaton. Two outer walls surrounded it. Because the walls were almost circular, Kyaikkatha might have been built earlier than Bago and Thaton. It is notable too that it was flanked by several forts, namely, Sittaung, Kawthtin, Kakadid, KadikeGyi, KadikeHka Lay, Kelasa, Ayetthama, Winka, Zokethoke and DonWun. The presence of several forts flanking Kyaikkatha supports the fact that Kyaikkatha was an important town (Than Tun 2001: 17-18).

< Figure 2> Map of Kyaikkatha Region



Source: Thin Kyi 1985, Old Thaton Town

- 1) The name Kyaikkatha comes from Mon words KyākAssa; (Kyāk= pagoda; Assa=:a legendary hero of Hanthawaddy – Bago Mon Kingdom) meaning the Pagoda of Prince Assa who was born and who had grown up in the frontier area between Bago and Muttama (Martaban). There is an ancient Pagoda (ceti) called KyākAssa at the South-west corner of the old-town, which suggests why the town was named Assa; this still exists in Mon; village in Mon. Later the new Myanmar settlers called it in their language as Kyaikkatha. In the list of Hanthawaddy 32 Myos (town sites), it is mentioned as Katha-SittaungMyo, adjoining a nearby town site located on the east bank of River Sittaung.

The presumed inner wall has the Kyaikkhanon pagoda in the centre. The enclosed area is not an exactly square in shape, but each side measures approximately half a mile (0.8 kilometer). There are seven walls encompassing the inner wall. It is unlikely that the walls are to protect the Pagoda in the centre. That suggests that the pagoda is not contemporary. All the important people like the chief and his subordinates including armed guards would use it as their residence. In size, the enclosed area is bigger than a similar area in Zokthoke. A strong outer wall, doubled in some places, completely encircled the inner town, leaving a space of nearly a mile between the two walls. The west outer wall is so close to the shore line that one would mistake it for an embankment. Actually these were also used for defense. With the diameter on the south, the outer wall forms as almost semicircular. The south wall is about one and a half mile (2.4 kilometer), with the maximum width of three quarter mile (1.26 kilometer) long. The whole site covers an area of 667 acres (269 hectares). The area within the inner wall is 90.5 acres (36.6525 hectares) (Aung Myint 1998: 110).

< Figure 3> Aerial Photo View of Kyaikkatha



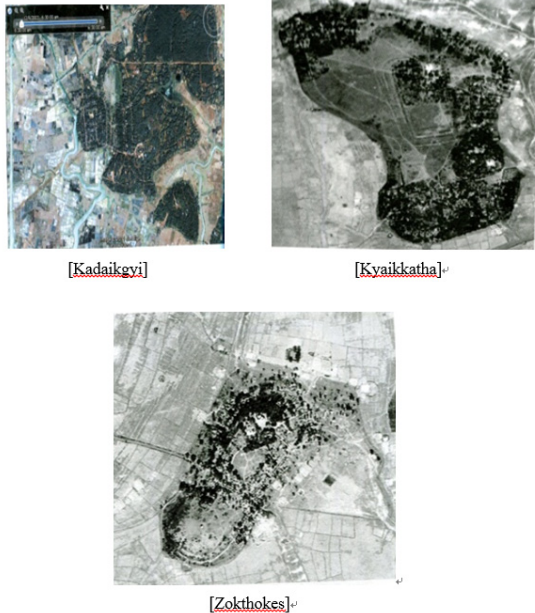
Source: Google Earth

The eastern part of the town is largely laterite highground. Some of the laterite hillock seemed to have been made into forts which are probably the first east outer wall. With the sea forming a natural defense on the west, the people of this town probably expected the enemy coming only from the east (Than

Tun 2001: 17-18). That explains why they had put up scattered forts on the north, east and south of this city.

Typologically, Kyaikkatha and Thaton are the biggest ones in the region, Zothoke (by combining the bigger Zokthoke and the smaller Zokthoke-Kyaikhtisaung), Sanpanango, Sittaung and Ye are medium in size. The rest are smaller. Their patterns are also varied; they may be built in circular form, or may be in oblong with rounded corners - sometimes, one is bigger than another, some rectangular in shapes. This rectangular shape may be seen in the middle part of the bigger oblong ones.

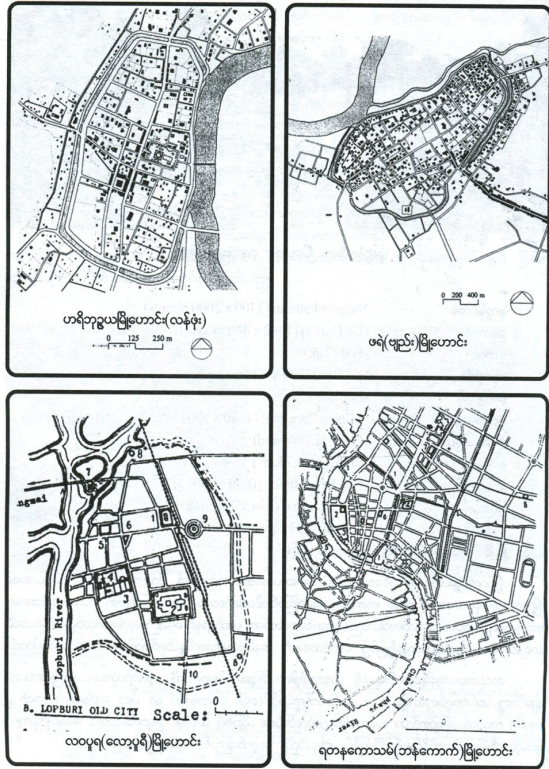
< Figure 4> Comparison Kyaikkatha Old City Plan with Others  
Neighboring Town Sites



Source: Google Earth

They form inner enclosures for palace sites or citadel area with double, triple, or more walls and moats. These significant features are extraordinary and may be distinguished with other Pyu settlement sites of upper Myanmar and Old Mon settlement sites of Dvaravati (Old Thailand).

< Figure 5> Dvaravati period town sites in Thailand

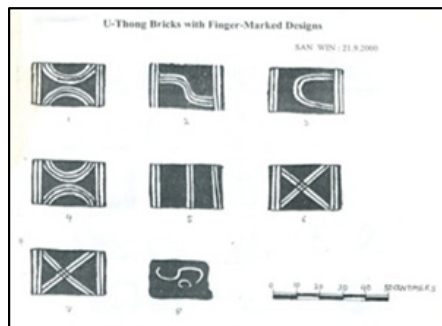
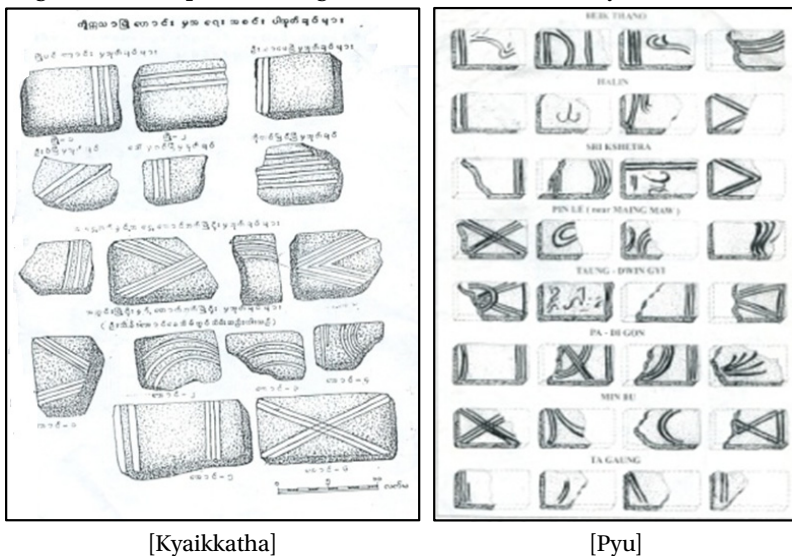


Source: San Win 2010, Suvannabhumi Research

As for Kyaikkatha and Zokthoke one can trace about seven earthworks in the middle, while Kadaikgyi has more than three walls within. Even the smallest town site of Kakadit located at the Mouth of Belin has these three earthworks. At Thaton, six earthworks are visible in the northern part of the old city. The middle part consists of one or two enclosure walls. The outer walls of Thaton, with two or three earthworks forming a rectangle with rounded corners, are very similar in shape with that of Kadaikgyi inner rectangles. Thus, in typology, a tradition of town building patterns is obviously recognized in Thaton region that can be distinguished in patterns that were discovered so far in Upper Myanmar Pyus and central Thailand Dvaravati (Lei Lei Win 2010: 1-42).

The Kyaikkatha wall is made of earth, laterite and bricks (Ko Ko 1987: 1-33). There were fairly big bricks with finger marks, which is the characteristic mark of the Pyu brick- making tradition in Upper Myanmar. Using, two or three fingers, the straight lines, curved or crises- crossing are drawn on both sides of the brick which is about 14"× 2.5"×7". Pyu sites like Maingmaw, Visnu, Halin, Sriksetra, Wadi, Thegon, Taungtwin etc., all have bricks made by Pyu (Aung Myint and Moore 1991: 81-102).

<Figure 6> Comparison Finger-Marked Bricks with Pyu and Dvaravati



[U – Thoung]

Source: After San Win 2000 (A report on visit to U Thoung Suphanburi Province)

Similar bricks (F.M.B)<sup>2)</sup> are to be found from major Dvāravati sites in Thailand such as U- Thong, Si Mahosot, Prachin-buri Province and Si Thep, Phetchabun Province in Central Thailand (San Win 1999: 1-10; 2000: 1-9). In the north of Thailand the same may be found in Ban Wangdaeng, Thap Khlo District, Phichit Province. In the south, bricks are reported from Dvārarati sites as far as Mookkhalan, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province (Phasook Indrawoot 2011: 72) (See Figure 6). Early Buddhist sites in India and Nepal also have marked bricks, for instance, in Bihar at Vārānasi (Sārṇāth), Kosambi, Rājagriha, and Vaisali; in Uttar Pradesh at Kusinara and Sravasti; and in Kapilarastu (Phasook Indrawoot 2011: 75). In a number of cases the marked bricks were kept as relics, and were believed to have protective power (Moore 2004: 5). Scholars are of the opinion that these bricks are associated with the adoption of the Theravada practice at sites throughout India, Myanmar (Pyu and Mon) and in Thailand (Mon Dvāravati) (Moore 2004: 6).

## 2.2 Topography

Topographically it stood on a laterite high ground about 100 feet in its height and slopping down to the alluvial plain of Sittaung valley, reaching 25 feet towards in the west. The Khalon stream flows along the rice fields in the north. In the west, another small stream called Malaw Chaung flows from the southeast near Phayata Htaung highground now covered by jungle. All sources of water cascade down the eastern slope of the town site, and drop at the mouth of Sittaung in the west. Some flow down from the south-east direction near the old town that stands across the big lake. There are numerous swamp areas, along the Upper reaches of Malaw Chaung called Inngyi (big lake). They are the Seinkalet Inn, Kalatchat Inn, Kyibin Inn, Aing ma (mother lake) and Inhnama (sister lake) in the south east. They are water sources for the ancient Kyaikkathahydraulic system. Traces of man-made canals are also found around Kyaikkatha.

---

2) F.M.B is Finger Marked Brick. F.M.B here means artifact which is marking on the burnt brick.

### III. Archaeological Observation

#### 3.1 Exploration

In recent years archaeologists have become increasingly aware that a whole process of cultural formation shaped both the way finds came to be buried and what happened to them after they were buried. They also tried to distinguish between process of cultural formation and non-cultural or natural formation processes and their transformations. In discovering archaeological sites and features, they used the Reconnaissance Survey Method in locating sites and in reconstructing the full human use of the landscape. They sought to study settlement patterns and the distribution of sites across the landscape within a given region. This entailed the exploration of the whole region, involving a survey program (Renfrew and Bahn 2004: 56-78). In the last few decades, surveys have developed from being simply a preliminary stage in field work (for instance, in looking for appropriate sites to excavate) to a more or less independent kind of inquiry, an area of research in its own right which can produce information quite different from that achieved by digging. In some cases excavation may not take place at all, for example, due to permit issues, or because of the lack of time or funds excavation. Survey is cheap, quick, relatively nondestructive, and requires only maps, compasses, and tapes. Usually, however, archaeologists deliberately choose a surface approach as a source of regional data in order to investigate specific questions that interest them which excavations could not reveal (Renfrew and Bahn 2004: 78-82).

Reconnaissance survey encompasses a broad range of techniques: it no longer just offers the identification of sites and the recording or collection of surface artifacts, but also enables the study of spatial distribution of human activities, variation between regions, changes in population through time, and relationships between people, land, and resources (Renfrew and Bahn 2004: 82). Since surface survey has vital place in archaeological work, and continues to grow in importance, it is usually supplemented (and often preceded) by reconnaissance from the air, one of the most important advances made by archaeology this century. The

availability of air photographs can be important for surface surveys (Renfrew and Bahn 2004: 83).

A comprehensive knowledge of the ways in which sites appear from the air is essential. Those who use aerial photographs must understand the means by which the evidence is made visible in order to determine the type of features recorded. Conventionally, features photographed from the air are often described according to the way they are revealed, rather than by the archaeological reality they represent. Thus, we have "earthworks", "Soil marks", or "crop-marks". It is more helpful to extend these descriptions, as in, "earthworks" showing the ramparts of an enclosure", or "the soil mark of a leveled burial mound," or "crop-marked ditches of a probable settlement". Interpretation is the process by which features photographed from the air like soil-marks are analyzed in order to deduce the types of archaeological structures causing them (Renfrew and Bahn 2004: 85).

Aerial photos can also be employed to produce a map of known features within a region (for example, Thaton, Sriksetra, Beikthano and Hanlin in Myanmar). Many such records are drawn into transparent sheets that are overlaid on to maps showing topographical or other information, though more up-to-date systems have converted such information as part of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) (Renfrew and Bahn 2004: 85).

In Myanmar, the first major archaeological application of this technique occurred at the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century with photographs of Pyu town sites such as Maingmaw (Panle), Beinnaka, and Waddi in Upper Myanmar region. U Aung Myint started to use them to provide their town plan and view of prehistoric monuments. In Lower Myanmar, U Aung Myint, discovered the major site Kyaikkatha and other small scale sites, namely, Sittaung, Kawhtin, Katkadit, Kadaikgyi, KadaikKalei, Kelatha (Little Zokthoke), Ayethama, Winka, Zokthoke (big Zokthoke), Lagonbyi (Sanpannago), Wagaru, Laming and Ye in present day Mon State. As for Thaton, the late professor Dr. Daw Thin Kyi, Department of Geography, Yangon University (a member of Myanmar Historical Commission) prepared a town

plan map in 1958 tracing from the aerial photograph.

### 3.2 Surface Findings

Neolithic stone tools and implement are commonly found by farmers working on upland garden plots at Sein Kalat the northeast of the site, but other tools have come up in a laterite rich area within the walls of Kyaikkatha (See Figure 7).

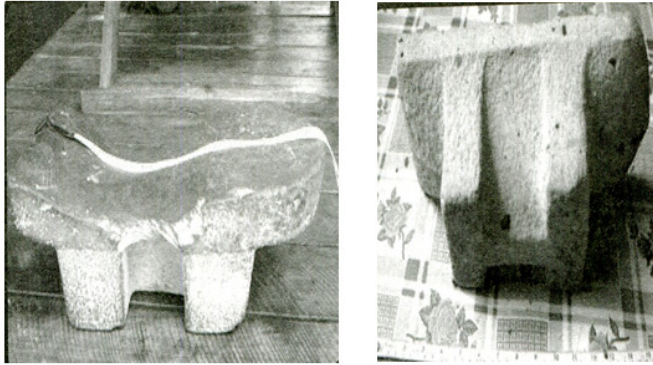
<Figure 7> Neolithic Earthen Bead and Stone Implements Found at Kyaikkatha



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph.D. Dissertation

Saddle querns and rollers are utilitarian stone objects that are well represented both in Kyaikkatha and Kadaikgyi (See Figure 8). A good number of them have been found in most Dvaravati sites in Thailand. These are domestic appliance which would also be found four fictive feet, often scarcely disengaged from the stone body of the quern which has four feet in lower structure and a carve shape in upper structure. They closely resemble those so commonly found in the Mekong delta, in Champa, and indeed wherever these may be found traces of early Indian influence exit. It is right to consider them to be derived from an Indian prototype which has functional feet, if they have feet at all. They were accepted as an improvement on the old grinding-stone of the Neolithic Culture (San Win 1986: 74-75).

<Figure 8> Saddle Querns Found at Kyaikkatha and Kadaikgyi



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

At Kyo Bin Kon Kyaung, where the horde of silver coins was found, five bronze images of the Buddha were also recovered although kept today at another monastery, the Don LanKyaung (See Figure 9). The images, ranging in height from 15-25 centimeters, probably date to the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Century AD (San Win 1986: 74-76). Three of the images stand with their right hands in the *Abhayamudra*, and with broad shoulders and a ribbed belt holding the undergarment, recall pieces from Haripuñjaya and late Sukhothai (Moore 2007: 205-206). The head were modeled with strong brow lines, noses, and small knobbed *unisha*, and similar to the closest parallel to two of the images is a seated Buddha found near Maung Di Pagoda at Twante (Luce 1985: 165, Figure 76d). Kyo Bin KonKyaung Monastery also houses a squat Pillar-like stone circa 1 meter in height with a sloping top which has carving of four large faces in the style of a *mukhalinga*. The smiling mouths on these recall 14<sup>th</sup> century Pinnya images of the Buddha though the carving may be recent -the top is painted gold as the piece is venerated today (Moore 2007: 205-206).<sup>3)</sup>

---

3) According to San Win, the original carving of the four faces was covered with modern cement by villagers and made it look like a modern monk's faces.

<Figure 9> Bronze Images of the Buddha and Silver Coins Found at Kyaikkatha 1970s



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

An important document was found in 1970 by U Mg Mg Thaik of the Burma Historical Commission, at a village called Kunzeik, 15 miles north of Kyaikkatha. This stone inscription, 60 centimeters by 40 centimeters in size, bears 19 lines on the obverse and another 4 lines on the reverse. The lines are extracts of *Abhidhamma- Pitcasamuppāda* with a southern Indian scripts of Pali Language. It is comparable with that of Maunggan gold plate inscription of Hmawza (Sriksetra) (Maung Maung Thike 1970: 1-7). Kunzeik is situated on the east bank of Sittaung River right along Kyaikkatha. The two places are closer and assessable by water than that of Sriksetra, the Pyu capital city.

Not far from Kyaikkatha in the south about 15 miles lies Mt. Keilatha, where Taikkala or ancient *Golamattikanagara* (Suvannabhūmi) was located. By 1978 excavation is this site in (WK-6) in Winka village yielded some terracotta votive tablets bearing old Mon writings of 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Myint Aung 1977: 22-40).

These finds from the sites near Kyaikkatha and its surroundings stimulated scholarly interests of U Aung Myint in exploring future. On the 1980s, he and his colleagues made many trips to Kyaikkatha in the Kyaikhto town ship, Mon state. They found the old site occupied by of two separate villages, Kyaikkatha and Kawsan, and divided by the railway line passing through the old city from northwest to southeast. The north-eastern part of

old city has no village but a bare laterite high ground where laterite quarry pits are numerous. On one of their exploration trips U Aung Myint and his colleagues found two small sculptures; one made of terracotta and another one made of stone. Both represented horse-riding. The terracotta carving, is a fragment, and has a fully-dressed man riding a horse. He wore a princely garment (San Win 1986: 74-76) (See Figure 10).

<Figure 10> Fragment of Terracotta Carving Found at Kyaikkatha, Depicting a Man Riding a Horse



Source: San Win 1986, M.A. Thesis

The next one is a stone carving, also a fragment showing a horse with two riders, a man and woman. The man on the back side seems to be holding a lance with his right hand and while the left holding the reins. The reverse side has a line of inscriptions which cannot be read anymore (San Win 1986: 74-75) (See Figure 11). However, the exploration teams attempted to decipher it. Without knowing any other information, they determined it to be old writing similar to that of Pyu scripts. Accordingly, one of the team members, Sayagyi U Maung Maung Tin suggested that Kyaikkatha must be a Pyu city. The suggestion was supported by another artifacts found at Kyaikkatha, the Pyu type silver coins associated with other artifacts such as the five bronze Buddha statues, old terracotta votive tablets, precious stone beads and finger marked bricks. Finger-marked bricks are

found at to be found in various Pyu old cites of Upper Myanmar such as Vishnu, Hanlin, and Sriksetra so on. The discovery of finger- marked bricks at Kyaikkatha was a pioneering work by U Aung Myint. It was the first discovery in Lower Myanmar town sites. The record of finger-marked brick continued not only from walls and other ruins but also at Zokthoke, Ayetthama, Winka, Kaw Htin, Thaton, and many other sites scattered along the coastal area on the Gulf of Muttama. Further documentation is also needed of Hpaya Tataung (Malawchaung), the one thousand Pagodas' to the east of Kyaikkatha (Tin Gyi 1931: 27).

<Figure 11> Fragment of Terracotta Carving Found at Kyaikkatha, Depicting a Man and Woman Riding on Horseback.

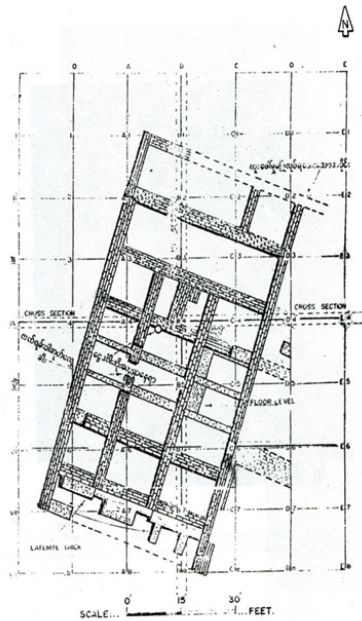


Source: San Win 1986, M.A. Thesis

### 3.3 Excavation

The Department of Archaeology has conducted excavation at seven sites (K.K.T-1 to 7) within Kyaikkatha. Kyaikkatha excavated mound K.K.T.1 is a rectangular brick structure, with three big rooms and nine small rooms, measuring (100 feet x 50 feet) (See Figure 12).

<Figure 12 > Plan of Exposed Structure at Mound, No: (1) KKT



Source: Ko Ko 1986, Kyaikkatha Report

A big room (hall no.1) measures  $27\frac{1}{2}$  feet x  $13\frac{1}{2}$  feet, while the small rooms average to 12 feet x 10 feet. The burnt bricks are large, 18" x 9" x 3" in sizes, while the small ones measures 12" x  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " x 2". Most of the bricks have finger-marked lines indicating that this structure may be traced to the pre-Bagan or Pyu period. In some part of the brick courses use laterite bricks at the base level, while some laterite bricks are shaped like the Kalasa pot. Small terracotta votive tablets (four complete, six broken and 13 incomplete) are unearthed from this brick structure (K.K.T.1). The four complete votive tablets are comparable to that of U Mya's votive tablets part 1 figures 58 , 59 and 112 showing a type of Buddha-gaya with a *sikhara* mounted on top of the sitting Buddha (See Figure 13). Another religious artifact is a torso of terracotta Buddha sitting on a low pedestal. The left arm of this statue is also broken. The body measures two feet and one inch in height and similar to Bagan period's Buddha statues,

highly influenced by the India, Pala-Sena workmanship of East Bangel. Of the presence of the Buddhist tablets and statues as well the seven pieces of earthen begging bowls, 17 spouts of earthen jars and some pottery vessels, suggests that the structure is a religious building. As an added discovery, the excavator unearthed a pot of silver coins containing 1054 pieces from (K.K.T.1), buried beneath a brick course of a small room. The coins contain the same Sriviitsa and Conch Shell emblems as in previous discoveries of 1970 at Kyaikkatha. Typologically, Kyaikkatha coins are more akin to Dvaravati and OcJEothan Pyu (Coe 2004: 67). Another indication of this structure is an old brick course beneath the square structure show ingits previous function from pre-Bagan period. (Ko Ko 1987: 18-23).

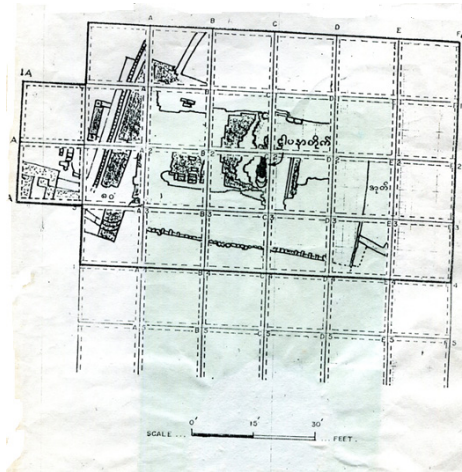
<Figure 13> Buddha Gaya Type Votive Tablet Found at Sittaung, Kyontu, Kyaikkatha and Thaton.



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

K.K.T.2 is a ruined stupa which has several terracotta votive tablets of early Bagan type inside its chamber cell. While three sides of it are damaged the western sector is in fact, with an entrance and seven terraces of a stupa. The chamber was found in the middle of the structure, about 30 feet from the western entrance, where burnt bricks and laterite bricks of various sizes were used above the compact lateritic ground (See Figure 14).<sup>4)</sup>

<Figure 14> Plan of Exposed Structure at Mound, No: (2) KKT



Source: Ko Ko 1986, Kyaikkatha Report

Votive tablets found in the chamber are similar to that of BaganAnawrahta and Kyansittha period mentioned in U Mya's Votive Tablets Volume I. containing "Yedhamma" stanza with old Nāgari script at the base (See Figure 15).

<Figure 15> Two Votive Tablets are from Kyaikkatha.

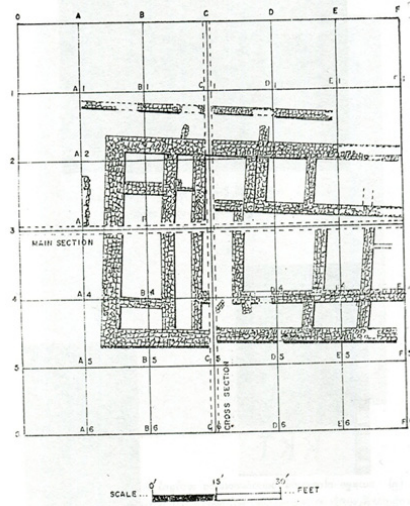


Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

4) The excavation were conducted by U Myo Min Kyaw for the first half of the season. Daw Ngwe Ngwe Soe handled the second half of the season.

K.K.T.3, mound was excavated in the western part of Kyaikkatha old city and a brick structural building with thirteen rooms had been unearthed. It measures 70 feet from east to west and 45 feet from north to south (See Figure 16). The brick walls are about 3 feet in thickness and the bricks are laid well. Average bricks sizes used in this structure are 14" x 7.8" x 2½". Laterite bricks are very few in use in this rectangular structure whereas the brick courses were laid without foundation. An average size of the one big room is 21 feet in length and nine feet in width. The bricks are of finger-marked similar to that of K.K.T.1 and 2 (Ko Ko 1987: 18-25).

<Figure 16> Plan of Exposed Structure at Mound, No: (3) KKT



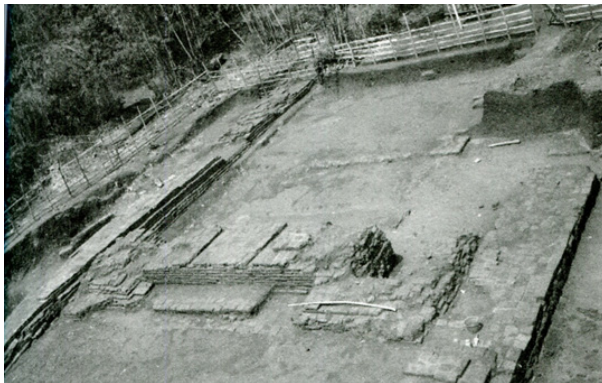
Source: Ko Ko 1986, Kyaikkatha Report

From the potsherds which number to 358 pieces there are 40 glazed ware shreds indicating that the later period habitation continued in K.K.T. (3). Other findings includes sprinkler knots, pottery cover, anvils, broken begging bowls, stone rollers, terracotta snake heads, head-less human figure, and embossed Buddha figures made of lead. This rectangular structure of K.K.T. (3) might also be a religious building. Stratigraphy and archaeological findings show that K.K.T. (1) may be dated not later than the

early Bagan period. The structure seems to be rebuilt three times thus the first phase of construction might have been during the pre-Bagan (Pyu) period. The other two structures, K.K.T. (2) and K.K.T. (3), were not built earlier than early Bagan period (11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) (Ko Ko 1987: 29).

Another rectangular structure (K.K.T.7) was unearthed during 2000 the excavations of 2000 (Ngwe Ngwe Soe 2001: 6-7). The mound is extend to 45 meters in length from east to west and 30 meters in width from north to south, exposing a brick structure of 40.6 meters 134 feet in length and 21.5 meters 71 feet in width. The structure orients towards the True North. The structure still remains at the highest part of its brick course about 1.6 meters about the base level with 22 brick courses. It has two corridor rooms outside and two main apartments in the middle divided by a wall of 3.15 meters and 10'4" in thickness (See Figure 17). The corridor wall has traces of post-holes and it is also exposing many terracotta plaques depicting human figures, (See Figure 18) elephant figures (See Figure 19), a crocodile and floral designs. A bronze Buddha statue in sitting posture about 30 cm high was also found from the middle part of the structure. The terracotta reliefs measure 90 cm x 45 cm and 25 cm x 32 cm respectively while their thickness varies from 8 cm to 10 cm. This huge brick structure might have also been used for the religious purpose (Ngwe Ngwe Soe 2001: 13).

<Figure 17> Brick Structure Unearthed during Excavation of 2000



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

<Figure 18> Terracotta Human Figure from Excavated Site, (KKT-7)



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

<Figure 19> Terracotta elephant head (fragment) found at (KKT-7)



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

The bricks used in this building vary 18 x 19 x 3 in to 15 x 6½ x 3½ in and contain finger-marked indications. The excavator suggested that this (K.K.T.7) building might have been 1200 years during the late Pyu period in age (Ngwe Ngwe Soe 2001: 13). This relative dating is based not only stratigraphy analysis but also on the archaeological findings like terracotta spouts (See Figure 20) such as terracotta relief, pottery vessels, terracotta oil lamps (See Figure 21), glazed sherds (Celadon), stone rollers in black-slate, grinding platform in black-slate, finger-marked bricks and red-slipped potter sherds. Some sherds of glazed pottery (Celadon) may indicate the later Hanthawaddy and Muttama periods (Ngwe Ngwe Soe 2001: 13).

<Figure 20> Terracotta Spouts Found at Kyaikkatha, (KKT-7) (2000)



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

<Figure 21> Terracotta Lamp Found at Kyaikkatha, (KKT-7) (2000)



Source: Lei Lei Win 2010, Ph. D. Dissertation

By means of these excavations conducted at Kyaikkatha over a decade (from 1987 to 2001), it is known that Kyaikkatha the old city reveals a kind of monumental civilization exposing four religious structure (a stupa and three monasteries).<sup>5)</sup>

### 3.4 Observation and Identification

The archaeology of Lower Myanmar especially in Mon and Kayan State presents a picture of expansion from a core area between the two rivers valleys, Sittaung and Thanlwin, in the Neolithic period with the big or small urbanized settlements spreading around the coastal line in the Gulf of Muttama (Martaban). Kyaikkatha is one of these newly discovered early urban

---

5) Except for K.K.T-4 and 5 which are of testing pits. Another brick structure (K.K.T-6) is not mentioned in the excavation reports.

settlements located on the apex of the Gulf. The available date for sites yielding polished stone artifacts through surface finds shows that "Neolithic" settlements can be found generally across Lower Myanmar.

The walled site of Kyaikkatha was identified in the 1970s from aerial photographs and explored and excavated in the 1980s. It has a considerable size and interesting shape with multiple walls and moats inside while a strong outer wall, double in some places completely encircled the inner town; this may be compared with the close neighbors Zokthoke and Kadaik-gyi in Belin and Thaton townships.

There are laterite stupas, Buddha images, animal figures carved in laterite blocks such as the face of a lion, elephant head, *grudha* (Mythical bird), as well as terracotta plaques with an affinity to the art of Dvaravati in Thailand. Departmental reports identify the city as a brick construction involving a range of finger marked bricks and confirm that it shares cultural elements with Pyu (Before Bagan) period or early urban period settlements of Upper Myanmar. Coins with auspicious symbols and carnelian, agate and chalcedony beads are still regularly discovered by villages that dug trenches in producing laterite bricks. Some also found fragments of stone carving, terracotta objects and pottery vessels from there.

From the excavated mounds, rectangular brick structures presumed as religious buildings as well as stupas with chambers were unearthed. Votive tablets of Buddha-gaya type and statues were discovered from the chamber. Their relative dating suggests that the religious buildings might have lasted 1200 years BP during the late Pyu period or early Bagan period while the glazed shreds (Caledon), stone rollers and grinding platform in black-slate indicate the later of Hanthawaddy and Muttama periods (15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries).

The architectural landscape suggests that the site forms quite a different system to the walled centers of Upper Myanmar. While there are shared elements such as finger-marked bricks, coins with auspicious symbols and stone beads, there is a key

difference in the way the landscape is modified. The presence of "Pyu Period" materials suggests that these materials are not specific to the Pyu sites, but characteristic of the broader region in which Indian cultural influence dominated the whole area of South-east Asia.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Though the ancient Myanmar was well connected with northern India through land routes, Mon legends tell of Indian influence coming to Lower Myanmar by sea because of the perood's seafaring. It is believed that this sea route was regularly followed by sailors of both Kalinga and Andras, the maritime traders of South India. Ptolemy has referred to a direct route from Paloura (Pular) to Sada, frequently used by the Kalingans in the course of their journey to Myanmar. Sada was the first port touched at in Ptolemy's time by ships proceeding form Indian to the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal. It is most plausible that the people of Kalinga used the south-west monsoon to course their journey to Myanmar, and took advantage of the north-east monsoon when coming home (Benudhar Patra 2005: 29). To conclude, we can say that Kyaikkatha in ancient time had close commercial and cultural contact with India. Different aspects of India cultural influences such as town planning, monumental civilization and Hindu and Buddhist religious practices show this. Thus, it can be inferred that Kyaikkatha, an early settlement in Lower Myanmar, might have been a sea port town along the maritime trade route between India and Southeast Asia.

To know more about Kyaikkatha we may need other archaeological investigation. A Preliminary Excavation Report on the defense system (city walls, moats and gates), burial practice, the art of writing, administrative system, social status, water managements, and ancient belief are essential historical facts. Later systematic excavations on Kyaikkatha must reveal these.

## References

- Aung Myint, U. 1985. A Study on Some of the Hanthawaddy 32 Myos found in Aerial photographs. *History Journal*, 3(1). Yangon University. (in Myanmar)
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998. *Myanmar Ancient Cities from Aerial Photos*. Yangon: Ministry of Culture. (in Myanmar)
- Aung Myint and E. H. Moore. 1991. Finger-marked designs an ancient bricks in Myanmar. *JSS*, 79, Part 2. Bangkok.
- Aung Thaw. 1978. *Historical Sites in Burma*. Yangon: Sarpaybeikman Press.
- Benudhar Patra. 2005. Kalinga and Burma - A Study in Ancient Relations. *Orissa Review*, November.
- Coe, Michael D. 2004. *Angkor and the Khmer Civilization*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Harvey, G. E. 1967. *History of Burma*. London: FRANK, ASS & Co. Ltd.
- Ko Ko. 1987. *A Report on the First Season Excavation of Kyaikkatha*. Yangon: Archaeology Department. (in Myanmar)
- Lei Lei Win. 2010. *A Study on Old Thaton City*. Ph.D. Thesis, History Department, University of Yangon.
- Luce, Gordon H. 1970. *Old Burma-Early Pagan*. New York: J.J. Augustin Publisher.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1985. *Phases of Pre-Pagan Burma*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mahlo, Dietrich. 2012. *The Early Coins of Myanmar (Burma) Messengers From The Past, First Millennium AD*. Bangkok: White Lotus Press.
- Maung Maung Thike. 1970. *Field Report to Kunzeik-Thaye-Thamein in Waw Township, Bago*. Historical Commission. (in Myanmar)
- Moore, Elizabeth H. 2007. *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*. Bangkok: River Books Co. Ltd.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. Interpreting Pyu Material Culture: Royal Chronologies and Finger-marked brick. *MHRJ*, 13.
- Myint Aung. 1977. The Capital of Suvannabhumi Unearthed?

- SHIROKU, 10. Kyoto, Kagoshima University, November.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1978. Neolithic Implements from Suvannabhumi of Tanintharyi Division. *Mon States Journal*, March. (in Myanmar)
- Ngwe Ngwe Soe. 2001. A Preliminary Excavation Report for the 4<sup>th</sup> season (continuation at Kyaikkatha). Prepared by Ngwe Ngwe Soe in July.
- Page, A. J. 1917. *Burma Gazetteer, Pegu District*, Vol. A, Rangoon: Superintendent, Government Printing.
- Phasook Indrawooth. 2011. Dvāravati and Sriksetra: A Cultural Relation, *The Mon Over Two Millennia Monuments, Manuscripts, Movements, Institute of Asian Studies*. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University.
- Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bah. 2004. *Archaeology, Theories, Methods and Practice*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- San Win. 1986. *Field Survey and Study of Ancient Sites in the region of the Sittaung and Thanlwin Rivers*. Master of Research, History Department, University of Yangon, Yangon. (in Myanmar)
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. A Report on a Visit to Si Mahosot, Prachinburi, in Thailand. Unpublished field report.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. A Report on Visit to U Thong Suphanburi Province, Thailand. Unpublished field report.
- Than Tun. 2001. Ancient Myanmar Cities VII, Kyaikkatha. *Computer Journal*, 1(19), October.
- Tin Gyi. 1931. *Burma Gazetteer, Thaton District*, Vol. A, Rangoon: Superintendent Government Printing and Stationery.

Received: Mar. 30, 2015; Reviewed: June. 23 2015; Accepted: June 25, 2015

# ***SUVANNABHUMI***

Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

## **Text and Manuscript Guideline**

### **I. TEXT STYLE**

#### **1. Spelling**

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

#### **2. 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.

#### **3. Sections, Tables and Figures**

Sections and sub-sections should be divided by "I, 1.1., 1.1.1.; II, 2.1, 2.1.1.; III, 3.1., 3.1.1...." And tables and figures should be numbered by <Table 1>, <Figure 1>.

### **II. FOOTNOTES AND CITATIONS**

#### **1. Footnotes**

Notes should be kept to a minimum and numbered consecutively throughout the article. Notes should be included as footnotes, and not as endnotes. Footnotes with more than 5 lines shall be input to 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:

- 1) If author's name is in the text, follow it with year in parentheses, e.g., Wong (1986).
- 2) Pagination follows year of publication after a colon, e.g., James (1979: 56).
- 3) If author's name is not in the text, insert, in parentheses, the last name and year, e.g., (Duncan 1986: 76).
- 4) 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, e.g., (Cribb and Brown 1995: 95), (JS Park and JH Park 2011: 23).
- 5) Separate series of references with semi-colons and enclose them within a single pair of parentheses, e.g., (Edwards 1981: 43; Lee et al. 1983: 112).
- 6) In case of daily, weekly, monthly publications and similar references, pagination follows dd/mm/yyyy after a comma, e.g. (Korea Times 01/04/2014, 3).
- 7) For 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. e.g. Taylor (n.d.)
- 8) In case of organization author, information that can be identified shall be provided. e.g. (Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security 1992)

### III. REFERENCES

Detailed information of all literature that was 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.

e.g., 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 book cover from the first, it shall be as it is.

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

- In case of compilation, it shall be written in ed.

e.g., 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 order of original author, year of publication of translated books, name of translated book, author and publisher.

e.g., Coed S. G. 1928. *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 related page shall be definitely indicated.

e.g., 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 compilation, it shall be in order of author, year of publication, compilation name, compiler, related page and publisher. If there is no compiler, then it can be omitted.

e.g., 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 thesis and dissertation, the following form shall be followed  
e.g., Parker, John. 1988. The Representation of Southeast Asian Art. PhD Dissertation. Harvard University.

## **5. Newspaper Articles**

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

e.g., 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).

e.g., 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

## **Guidelines for Contributors**

*SUVANNABHUMI is an international refereed journal specializing in Southeast Asian Studies. It is published biannually, in June and December. It aims to unearth various and distinguished aspects of Southeast Asia, and improve the field of Southeast Asian studies by circulating knowledge among scholars and the general public who are interested in Southeast Asia. It publishes original papers dealing with critical topics, demonstrating a high standard of excellence in theory and practice. SUVANNABHUMI invites contributors from a broad range of academic disciplines—social sciences, humanities, arts and culture, and the natural sciences.*

### **REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE**

The acceptance criteria for all papers are the following: (1) quality and originality of the research, and (2) its scholarly significance to our readership. Except otherwise stated, manuscripts are peer reviewed by the Editors and three anonymous reviewers. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editorial Board, who reserves the right to refuse any material for publication.

Submitted manuscripts should be original pieces of work that have not been published in other places or are not being offered to another publisher. Manuscripts should be written in a clear, concise, and direct style, intelligible to readers who may not be specialists in the field. When contributions are judged as acceptable for publication on the basis of content, the Editor and the Publisher reserve the right to modify typescripts to eliminate ambiguity and repetition and improve readability. If extensive alterations are required, the manuscript will be returned to the author for revision.

### **SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS**

Submissions should be written in English, 5,000 to 10,000 words in length, including references, appendices, tables and figures. Review articles should be between 2,000 to 5,000 words. All pieces must be encoded in a Microsoft Word file, 1.5-spaced, in Times New Roman, font size 12. References should be placed at the end of the manuscript. The style of the text and footnotes must conform to the style of the Journal specified in <suvannabhumi.iseas.kr>. In order to ensure a double-blind peer review, authors are advised to remove any information that can point to their identity in any way from the manuscript.

Manuscripts should be submitted with author's curriculum vitae (less than 100 words), an abstract (150-200 words), five key words, and contact information in a separate file. They should be emailed as attachments addressed to the Journal editor, <editor@iseas.kr>, with a clear note that the manuscript is intended for submission for publication.

### **COPYRIGHT**

Authors publishing in the Journal will be asked to sign a Copyright Assignment Form. In signing the form, it is assumed that authors have obtained permission to use any copyrighted or previously published material. All authors must read and agree to the conditions outlined in the form, and must sign the form or agree that the corresponding author can sign on their behalf. Articles cannot be published until a signed form has been received.



---

# ARTICLES

---

Vol 7, No 1 June 2015

---

## **Special Review**

*on Southeast Asian Studies*

Southeast Asian Studies : Area, Method and Comparison

by Victor T. King

### **Introduction**

Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies : Issues in Multidisciplinary Studies and Methodology

**Victor T. King**

Approaches in Southeast Asian Studies : Developing Post-colonial Theories in Area Studies

**Cahyo Pamungkas**

A Historical Review of Japanese Area Studies and the Emergence of Global Studies

**Shintaro Fukutake**

Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies : Beyond the "Comfort Zone"

**Mala Rajo Sathian**

## **Articles**

The Mother Goddess of Champa : Po Inâ Nâgar

**William B Noseworthy**

The Pluralism of Ethnic Cultures and Inclusive Development in the Philippines

**BAO Maohong**

A Study on Kyaikkatha : An Early Urban Settlement in Lower Myanmar

**Lei Lei Win**