

CSEAS



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# Editorial

This summer has been a busy one for the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS). Over half our faculty attended the International Convention of Asian Scholars (ICAS) which was held in Macau, China between 24-27 June 2013. CSEAS sponsored a number of panels and roundtables, one of which stimulated strong attention and has been turned into a special feature for this newsletter: a current overview of Southeast Asian studies.

It goes without saying that in recent years, the economic crisis caused by the Lehman shock in 2008 resulted in funding cuts to area studies in various countries, and institutions, most notably in the U.S. and to a lesser degree Europe. The uncertainty created by these cuts led to a certain amount of nervousness and anxiety over the future of area studies for our colleagues who are engaged in Southeast Asia in both Europe and the U.S. However, the situation in these regions stands in stark contrast to that in East Asia, which has seen governmental investment and promotion of the institutionalization of Southeast Asian area studies from within the region. With ever increasing recognition of the role the region will play in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, recent academic expansion has led to the founding of centers specializing in Southeast Asia in Thailand, Mainland China and South Korea, in addition to those already established centers in Singapore and Japan. This is in line with deepening East Asian regional integration. In itself, this is indicative that the study of Southeast Asia is being undertaken in multiple sites outside of the traditional American and European centers. And interestingly, it also points to a gradual shift towards the expansion of networks and deepening of institutional ties within, across and beyond the region.

CSEAS sponsored a roundtable with a number of leading intellectuals who have their fingers on the pulse to discuss the changing context within which the study of Southeast Asia takes place. The growing economic power of the region (represented in part by the putative establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015), and subsequent investment by surrounding East Asian and Pacific Asian nations, have led academics to question how we can tap into the opportunities represented by the rapid social change now taking place in the region. Southeast Asia is home to over 650 million people, and will soon form a new economic community in 2015. It is more important than ever, not only as a sub-region of East Asia, but also as the hub of East Asia and Asia-Pacific region-making. In this special newsletter we offer a platform

to reflect on how area studies from within and outside the region can come to terms with the new arrangements and realities which are redefining its geopolitical and global presence. It is both a time of crisis and opportunity where academics, scholars and intellectuals alike can continue to define the terms of academic engagement and create new agendas for study. This newsletter brings together an overview of the field to stimulate discussion on how the region will take shape over the coming years.

## News Update

While this issue was going to press, Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) struck the Philippines on the 7 November 2013. This was one of the largest and deadliest typhoons on record and has devastated the central Philippines, particularly, Samar Island and parts of Leyte, affecting millions. CSEAS offer its condolences to the victims of this disaster and offers its support to survivors and our colleagues and friends in the region.

## The Editors

## SPECIAL FEATURE



## SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES: CRISIS OR OPPORTUNITY?

In recent years, the economic crisis caused by the Lehman shock resulted in funding cuts to area studies in various countries, notably America. This has led to a certain amount of nervousness and anxiety over the future of area studies. However, the situation in America stands in stark contrast to that in East Asia, which has seen governmental investment in promoting the institutionalization of Southeast Asian area studies from within the region. With ever increasing recognition of the role the region will play in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, recent academic expansion in the founding of centers specializing in Southeast Asia has grown apace in Singapore, Thailand, Japan, mainland China, and South Korea, in line with the deepening East Asian regional integration. This in itself is indicative that the study of Southeast Asia is being undertaken in multiple sites outside of the traditional American and European centers. It also points to a gradual shift towards the expansion of networks and deepening of institutional ties within, across and beyond the region. At the International Convention of Asian Scholars (ICAS) held in Macau, China between 24–27 June 2013, CSEAS sponsored a roundtable to discuss the future of Southeast Asian Studies and brought together leading Southeast Asianists based in Thailand, Singapore, Japan, South Korea and Europe in the interest of promoting multilateral dialogue about the direction, challenges and future of Southeast Asian area studies. This feature issue pools together the discussions which were shared between concerned scholars engaged in Southeast Asian Studies.

Special Feature: Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?

## Southeast Asian Studies: Toward an Open Regional Networking

Caroline Sy Hau  
Professor CSEAS



More than fifteen years ago, the distinguished scholar Ruth McVey, in her Frank Golay Memorial Lecture at Cornell University, noted that Southeast Asian studies in the United States of America were being marginalized at precisely the time when Southeast Asia was becoming increasingly globalized, and increasingly “real,” important, and relevant to Americans (McVey and Reynolds 1998, 37-38). In a time of budget cuts and pressure to demonstrate area studies’ relevance to other academic fields and to the state and the general public, McVey called for rethinking Southeast Asian studies. To quote McVey, “It is not that Southeast Asia is the object of our study, but that Southeast Asians are its subject” (ibid., 53). McVey was critical of the setup of Southeast Asian studies programs in America, in which programs competed for funds and prestige, and advocated greater cooperation instead, calling on Southeast Asianists to think “in terms of networks rather than of institutions, and these networks should in principle be global and not just regional or national” (ibid., 54).

Nowadays, McVey’s vision of networking among Southeast Asian studies institutions has been borne out, and, in fact, no longer limited to developed countries. Indeed, an important development of the past decades, particularly from the 1990s onwards, has been what some area studies scholars have called the “decentering” of Southeast Asian studies from their established bases in a few preeminent institutions in Western Europe and, in particular, the USA, Australia, and Japan toward multiple hubs spread out, and connected network-style, both globally and regionally. New centers—with Southeast Asian studies often included under Asia-Pacific or Asian studies—have been set up not only in Mainland China, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, but in Southeast Asia itself, starting in the 1970s and increasing in the 1990s in countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines. We are now seeing the fruits of this multi-sited growth, which has not only produced high-quality scholarship undertaken by Southeast Asian scholars based in the region, but also Southeast Asian scholars who are specializing on other Southeast Asian countries beyond their own home countries or diasporic communities.

Although Southeast Asian specialists have long been aware of the constructedness of “Southeast Asia” as a geopolitical, economic and multicultural system, as field of study and unit of analysis for asking questions and proposing methodologies, and as an institutional space, there is no doubt that the reality

of economic integration and increasing densities of flows and movements, exchanges and interactions of people, goods, ideas, and institutions within this so-called region have done much to strengthen regional awareness and identification, if not necessarily consciousness nor identity, among its people. Geographical proximity, however, is no guarantee that people of Southeast Asia know more, let alone ought to learn more, about each other than about, say, Britain or the US or Australia. And yet, Southeast Asian studies are becoming more globalized in the sense that there are greater possibilities not just for people but for knowledge itself to “travel” (as Carlo Bonura and Laurie Sears have pointed out [2007]). Moreover, historical and contemporary international migration has created substantial communities in America and Europe with biographical, symbolic, cultural, and material ties to Asia and Southeast Asia, resulting for example in a close but also fraught relationship between area studies and Asian-American studies in individual, institutional and conceptual terms. The recent book edited by Goh Beng-Lan, *Decentering and Diversifying Southeast Asian Studies: Perspectives from the Region*, called for nurturing forms of “thinking from and about Southeast Asia” (2011, 13) that can develop “theoretical perspectives which can consider the simultaneity and interaction of the global and local, the inside and outside, the old and new, the centre and the periphery, the stable and the unstable, and so on” (ibid., 9).

This idea of Southeast Asian studies that can be undertaken by both Southeast Asians themselves as well as committed scholars from other regions in expanding and deepening networks of peoples and institutions that link up and undertake activities at the local, national, regional and global levels has become a reality. With the establishment of an ASEAN community in 2015, and the critical role of ASEAN as hub of region-making in East Asia and Asia-Pacific, such institutional and individual networking initiatives and efforts are likely to increase rather than decrease. There is a need for us to consider more closely the region-based impetus for promoting studies of Southeast Asia and the perspectives arising from the region itself.

As we get better connected with each other, we find ourselves learning from each other, and confronting similar challenges under different circumstances. Funding is always a problem. Strengthening collaboration and exchange is another. Identifying local, national, regional and global agenda for Southeast Asian scholarship, located as it is now in multiple sites across a far wider geographical swath, is still another.

From the start, we accept the fact that although we may speak of common challenges and problems, we also speak from multiple locations, from specific histories, from heterogeneous cultures and societies, from different languages, and not always convergent priorities and agenda. For some scholars, particularly in America, the marginalization of Southeast Asian studies is a reality, while for others working, for example, in Japan and Korea and Southeast Asia itself, new opportunities for obtaining funding and institution-building—including funding directly connected to region-building—have arisen in connection with state priorities and private-sector investment in the region. While some scholars worry about Southeast Asian studies' contribution to universal knowledge, others seek better ways of engaging nationalist or what some call "nativist" scholarship. For some institutions, Asia-Pacific or Asian studies appears more institutionally viable as a geographical framework than Southeast Asian studies, while many Southeast Asian scholars are rooted in national or sub-regional studies and some lament the fact that they know more about the debates and concerns of "Western" scholarship than about the debates and concerns of their own neighbors. While some of us call for multidisciplinary and comparative approaches to the study of Southeast Asia, others strive to cross not only the disciplinary boundaries that separate the social sciences from the humanities, but also the disciplinary boundaries that separate the natural sciences from the human sciences. While some of us think of Southeast Asian studies in terms of its potential for promoting oppositional thinking and practice, others see the necessity of working with the state, for all its constraints and limitations.

How do we step-up our institutional and personal networking efforts to make Southeast Asian studies viable? How do we nurture cross-disciplinary and comparative perspectives in our respective "areas" of study in the process of learning from each other and learning from the rest of the world? How do we rethink national studies to make the nation more open and inclusive? What kind of cooperative, collaborative activities can we undertake at both individual and institutional levels? This special newsletter feature issue brings together a group of scholars who are representatives of their respective institutions to share their experiences and ideas about the state of Southeast Asian studies in their countries, the problems and challenges that area studies scholars as well as programs or institutions are confronting either by themselves or in common with other institutions, and the initiatives and prospects for further collaboration and cooperation among area studies specialists and institutions at the local, national, regional and global levels.

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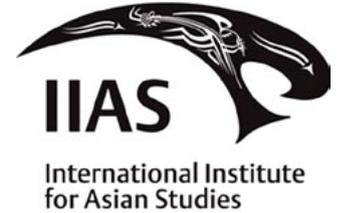
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Special Feature: Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?

## Southeast Asian Studies from the Perspective of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden

Philippe Peycam

Director, International Institute of Asian Studies



I am an historian by training working on Southeast Asia, especially Vietnam, and later on Cambodia. In this latter country I was involved in developing a capacity building institution, the Center for Khmer Studies, both an international and a Cambodian organization. Today, I am working as director of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), an institute with a global reach but rooted in the Dutch/European academic context. In addition, I retained a position as a Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore. There are therefore many dimensions and angles through which I should discuss the issue of Southeast Asian studies.



Philippe Peycam, Director of IIAS

Concerning the challenges and opportunities for Southeast Asian Studies (SEAS), I feel that we are currently at a major crossroads with major transformations taking place in the knowledge production process, both in terms of what we mean by Southeast Asian studies, and how we actually do it institutionally. These changes are affecting the way SEAS has been previously conceived. I see these changes both in terms of a process of decentering and re-centering of the field which becomes more “global,” with a multiplicity of actors both within and outside Southeast Asia, and simultaneously, the possibility of opening new intellectual and methodological boundaries beyond the traditional “area studies” model with its old reference to nation-states as we have been used to. As we know, the field has been dominated by a Western academic model through Cold War “area studies,” and before it, the colonial “orientalist” tradition. The institutional model of production and transmission of knowledge has also been characterized by the dominance of the West. If we take in the bigger picture today, we see that we are living in a time where there are new spaces and flows to approach human reality, that of the societies which constitute “Southeast Asia.”

Of course, we could discuss the validity of “Southeast Asia” as a term and concept, as it is still very problematic. As I work at IIAS, when I attempt to look at the region in the larger, global / “Asian” - perspective, I see that a great deal of attention in the West is oriented primarily towards China and India. When people often think about Asian studies, they mean China and Chinese studies. That trend in itself reveals a current Western agenda and anxiety with regard to the rise of China. This has led to an increased marginalization of Southeast Asia as a subject of study and a source of meaning. As Mario Lopez and Shimizu Hiromu have pointed out, as managers of academic institutions, we see SEAS in Western and Japanese institutions suffering because of funding cuts and a depletion of language training resources. This process is only partially compensated by the development of SEAS Centers in newly “rich” North-East Asian countries like China and Korea, and in the “rich countries” of Southeast Asia such as Singapore, which are building their own capacities, usually following the same institutional “Western” model.

The fact that Southeast Asia, as a field of study, has been fragmented in national and linguistic subtopics, at university and national levels, has led to more financial cuts. In the neo-

liberal age of commercialization of higher education, cuts are bound to occur with small subjects because they are unlikely to attract a large demand from students. Of course, SEA languages such as Khmer or Burmese are exposed to these influences. In overall terms, this trend may not be deemed to be too serious at an institutional level, yet it contributes to killing the diversity of knowledge production of a large and diverse area such as Asia (another complex notion in itself). These are sometimes huge cuts, as the one experienced recently in the US with the depletion of Title six funding. These are very sad situations in the sense that they not only kill communities of students and teachers, but they impoverish the overall knowledge foundation of any given institution.

Yet, these trends may be mitigated by increased inter-institutional collaboration, the definition of new thematic research and teaching subjects, and an increased connectivity with other centers of knowledge: beyond the West and Japan, outside and within Southeast Asia. This new situation may help us to not only decenter, but actually re-center the process of knowledge production of Southeast Asia. Such trends, I believe are not bad for students and new scholars on the region. I see an opportunity to frame new topics of study that can better interlace local and global experiences while offering scholars and students a chance to go beyond their traditional "national" academic system/approach, encouraging them to travel and work in Southeast Asia with people of the region, as well as elsewhere in the world – not necessarily in Western institutions.

For one thing, I believe that we – Western and Japanese institutions – need to learn to work more in partnership with Southeast Asian and Asian institutions. To me, the epitome of traditional areas studies is the fact that, not only an American or European, but also an Indonesian or a Korean would need, if they want to learn about Indonesia, to travel to Cornell University –and it is not my intention to offend anyone when I make these comments — in the middle of a mountainous region of the New York State, where, until now you had one the best center of Southeast Asian studies. This is likewise with Burmese studies at Northern Illinois University, the School of African and Asian Studies (SOAS) in London, or for Cambodian studies, in Paris. We have to ask ourselves why don't we have centers closer to Indonesia, Burma or Cambodia with more interactions with local individuals and institutions, or else, why these centers of excellence are always in the West but not in Africa, Latin America, China or even Korea. This situation is of course a result of history, but it must change.

I therefore see a chance for the field to grow, though a process of knowledge production reclaimed by the people and institutions in the region – especially if they succeed in moving beyond narrow national foci. This knowledge of Southeast Asia can also be developed in other parts of Asia, and well beyond, in an increasing multipolar world. Present at this panel is Professor Webby Kalikiti, Secretary of the African Association for Asian Studies (A-ASIA) and himself a "Southeast asianist." Southeast Asia is no longer just the domain of Western and Japanese scholars or even that of rich North-East Asian countries. It can now become the focus of academic enquiry from scholars and students from hitherto unconnected regions of

the world like Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and so forth. This new range of international academic "actors" has not been traditionally involved in the intellectual dialogues that pertain to the region. The same can be said about the multitude of new Southeast Asian institutes, local institutions, and younger scholars, often from unprivileged countries in the region, or countries where the higher education system is weak, who, thanks to the new fluidity of education and scholarship ongoing within the region, are now more likely to participate in the knowledge production process.

Drawing from my own experiences in Cambodia where I was involved in the training and promotion of young local scholars following the tragic recent history there, I saw many of these individuals who, despite the bad shape of the Cambodian university system, managed to find their way, in the country and abroad, and acquire a very high level of competency and a capacity to reach high levels of international scholarship. Their numbers are fast increasing. This same process is true for Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia and so forth.

While working in Cambodia, I often witnessed how these up and coming young Southeast Asian scholars encountered multiple difficulties when they tried to access some established institutions overseas. Within the region, some mental barriers are perpetuating: they are usually not interested in studying in the Philippines, despite the high level of some of this country's institutions or; when they wanted to study in Thailand or Singapore where they were restricted by high costs (Thailand); or the almost unattainable requirements put in front of them (Singapore). NUS, for instance, is a very good institution in Southeast Asia. If you want a fellowship as a Southeast Asian national, you have to have an almost Shakespearean command of the English language (Michael Fenner from ARI interjects "it's higher than that demanded from most U.S. institutions!"). This is in Southeast Asia. There must be ways to improve the decentering of knowledge production within the region which must start with easier access to institutions, more information, and the stronger will of the region's governments to foster education. In any case, this process of growing interaction between different intellectual traditions in Southeast Asia should be encouraged. This is also true at the global level.

Another point I should like to underline is that to move beyond the old Western dominated knowledge production process, we also need to move beyond old categories inherited from this model, such as the nation-states, or the old colonial / neo-colonial geographic constructions. We also need to think about the institutional configuration of higher education itself and the need to review the kind of over-specialization that today exists in "functionalist" Western academia. Among the subjects that should be enhanced for Southeast Asian studies, I think in particular of questions of trans-national/regional/pre or post-national interests, including the existence of networks. I can also think of subjects like material culture, local indigenous knowledge and so forth. These can contribute to change rigidly framed disciplines that are continuing to fragment SEAS. And as for changing the way we as scholars "specialize" in the university architecture of today, I believe it is not only important to move beyond disciplinary boundaries, but sometimes, to go

beyond professional or specialization “sectors”: this means that anthropologists should not only learn to work with historians, but also with “practitioners” of the city (urban planners, architects), with artists and members of the craft communities, etc. In other words, go beyond their ethnographic research.

To stress what I see is a need for a more de-centered, interdisciplinary and multi-sector field of Southeast Asian studies, I should end thoughts by briefly describing what we are trying to do at IIAS – even if our range goes beyond Southeast Asia. IIAS is based in Leiden, Holland and we now see ourselves as a global facilitator. We are aware of our Dutch/European background, but we want to incorporate a truly multi-centered and multi-vocal approach to what and whom we study. We run more activities outside Europe, notably in Asia, than we do in Holland or Europe, and we are very active in Southeast Asia. All our activities are collaborative and we work on an equal partnership basis, whether being major universities, small institutes, municipalities, NGOs or other social community groups. Concretely, to only discuss Southeast Asia, we have forged a strong array of connections, in Singapore, Indonesia and in Thailand. We aim to develop links in other countries and with other actors in the region.

We have identified three thematic clusters – the practice and politics of culture and cultural heritage, Asian cities and the “urban factor”; connectivity in Asia and beyond, with what we call “the global projection of Asia.” Under these three cross-disciplinary/sector themes, IIAS engages with global/Southeast Asian scholars and partners. These themes enable us to interact with people from different backgrounds, disciplines and even sectors of activity. We have, for instance, organized a number of events involving different strands of activities: a roundtable on Indonesian coastal cities in Palembang (2011), a strategic workshop with Nusa Tenggara weavers, local governments and scholars of Eastern Indonesia (2012), a training program on heritage management for city officials and members of the civil society of Yangon, Myanmar (2013), a planned summer school on craft and power in Chiang Mai (2014). Moreover, we make sure that in many of our activities dealing with anything related to Asia – under the three clusters –, scholars and experts from Southeast Asia are involved. For instance, for our recent roundtable on old Taipei, in November 2012, we invited participants from Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore. They positively interacted with their counterparts from North, East and South Asia.

At ICAS held in Macau 2013, IIAS sponsored ten panels, many of which include participants from Southeast Asia, or covered aspects of Southeast Asia. One engaged city practitioners with scholars on cities. Another one brought together artists and social scientists. One involved textile craftsmen with political scientists and anthropologists. One more involves the development of partnerships between Asian/Southeast Asian institutions and their African counterparts. IIAS works not just with universities, but also civil societies and local government partners. It adapts to the institutional landscape in a pragmatic way to ensure that we reach out to new partners within the region who can contribute to widening the knowledge base on Southeast Asia. We are eager to forge new alliances both within

and outside the region serving an ever multi-centered and inclusive field of exchange of knowledge.

I believe in a process of affirmative action to help shape a critical mass of Southeast Asian scholars, especially from less economically developed countries, capable of interacting with their international counterparts, about Southeast Asia, and also about other subjects (when will we have Vietnamese scholars interacting with colleagues on Thai, Indonesian, French or American studies?).

We have had similar discussions with our colleagues from the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore. This institute, I believe, could play a major role in connecting scholars from the region; likewise with the SEASREP program based in Manila which links up scholars and institutions within the region. To sustain an inclusive Southeast Asian studies momentum in the region, institutions need to go beyond petty national and administrative policies. A more interactive, trans-national model can truly act as catalyst of change, with the active participation of young scholars from countries not always equipped to be part of this process.

We seek to contribute to Southeast Asia and beyond, by encouraging scholars from the different regions of the world to interact with their Southeast Asian colleagues. The January 2015 conference in Accra, Ghana, will see the first pan-African conference on Asian studies. IIAS will hopefully partner with other institutes to encourage more comparisons and exchanges between SEA and Africa and to commit to furthering fruitful and productive collaborations.



International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden, Holland.

Special Feature: Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?

## Southeast Asian Studies in Southeast Asia: A View from Singapore

R. Michael Feener

Associate Professor, Asia Research Institute (ARI),  
National University of Singapore



What I want to do here is to reflect on the state of Southeast Asian Studies, and how it looks from Singapore in the context of the questions asked at the roundtable held in Macau.

Building upon its place as a regional infrastructure and educational hub, for the past 50 years, Singapore has come to play a major role in the development of Southeast Asian Studies in the region both at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS). NUS which was one of the first institutions in Southeast Asian that really began to develop an international research profile in the field by drawing in scholars from all across the region and beyond who came to base their work in Singapore. However, the rapid economic growth of Singapore in recent decades has attracted new waves of migrants in all fields including a lot of migrant academics. They have been drawn there by a range of different factors including relatively good resources and research funding and also, very importantly, close proximity to the field. If you are going to work in Southeast Asia, it is a much shorter commute from Singapore than most other places. But also, importantly, it has become a real pull for the opportunities it gives for interaction with an increasingly vibrant academic community centered there.

I was happy to see some of my colleagues from NUS – in particular from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and from NUS Press, at ICAS in Macau. They are in a position to talk more broadly as to how NUS has staked itself out in the field. So I will try to keep my remarks focused on the Asian Research Institute (ARI) which is the unit within NUS where much of my work has been focused. ARI has been around since 2001 and arose from one of NUS' myriad strategic initiatives the administration throws up from time to time. But, I think that it is one of the few initiatives that has grown its own legs. Over the past 12 years, ARI has developed into a major site of not only regional, but also global scholarly collaborations: we have just over 80 faculty members and researchers from 24 different countries. We also hold a large portfolio on MOUs and collaborative research programs with other institutions across Asia, as well as in North America, Europe, and Australia.

One of the advantages of work at ARI is that it is interdisciplinary and we bring together scholars under clusters from different disciplines to look at different focused areas of research. I am currently in charge of the unit that looks at religion in Asia,

which has been a very active unit within ARI over the past decade. Work at ARI has contributed to some significant studies in Southeast Asia over the past few years. This has been significantly facilitated by both resources and location. Both of these have contributed to new configurations of research personnel that have come together to work on projects that have served to reshape some of the relationships between scholars and the objects of their studies, in some very stimulating and productive ways.

One result of this has been a significant shift in the way in which work being done on Asia at NUS is framed. That is, the work of Southeast Asian Studies in a place like ARI is not primarily conceived so much of studies of Asia as an *object*, rather than of studies of diverse social phenomena in Asia as a *con-*



R. Michael Feener. Source: Author



*text.* This shift makes a huge difference in our approach to the field and toward others in the environment. This shift is not just semantic: it reflects a whole new kind of position for area studies scholars in relation to their field. In addition to this general reconfiguration of the field, there is also some innovative conceptual work taking place locally that aims to try to develop new models for understanding connections linking diverse communities both within Asia and to the broader world beyond. With Prasenjit Duara as head of ARI, the current focus on interactions within and across Asia has been very productive to bring scholars from around the region and beyond to enter into new kinds of conversations.

Another exciting new line of development that we have seen at NUS over the recent years involves the way in which we explore new frameworks for constructive interaction between academics and professional practitioners from other fields. This is something that I started engaging with a few years ago with some work on Islamic legal professionals in Asia. We started to organize a series of workshops with participants that included professionals from fields beyond academics - bringing in judges and lawyers from Islamic jurisdictions from around the region to come to work together. I am sure that you are all familiar with the saying that working with academics is like herding a group of cats; now think about throwing a bunch of lawyers and judges into the mix. In terms of administrative issues it takes things to a whole new level. But it has been possible to do at NUS in a way that it would not be in many other places due to its location. To get a dozen Shari'a court judges to a conference in the United States is in itself a major challenge, starting with immigration issues. But, we can still manage to do that in Singapore. So to be able to bring in these regional participants who aren't academics by training, but are doing very thoughtful work in the areas that we are interested in has created a whole new set of conversations: something that is very exciting. We are now doing this more systematically at ARI as part of our project on "Religion and Development."

It is, of course, also very challenging particularly in ways that we can produce publications that can capture some of the dynamics of the conversations we have there, and also how we can also communicate these to broader professional audiences. This is the thing NUS has been trying to do and it is building on these experiences. Some of the current work that we are doing at ARI has moved to build these new frameworks and conversations in new directions. For example our project on "religion and development" and that has brought in practitioners from a number of international relief and development agencies that have either regional offices in Singapore or that have operations based in Southeast Asia. This is with the aim to try to come up with a new series of conversations that look at major social phenomena within the social context of Asia: but all the time focusing much more on Asia as a context rather than as an object of study.

These developments are all very promising. There are more people coming and new lines of research being developed. But we still face challenges. Firstly, places like ARI are embedded in institutional contexts in Asia that have relatively underdeveloped traditions in the humanities and the social sciences, in

which usually more resources are dedicated to areas such as the natural sciences and engineering. Some have attempted to establish work in the humanities and social sciences as having some kind of direct policy relevance. Many academic institutions in Singapore and across the region are directly involved in the work of consulting government on various matters. ARI is unique in NUS in that it works without any such expectations. Yet, this space for academic work does require constant justification to the higher administration of the university as to why our work could be worth the time, energy, and resources that goes into it. So this might also be a problem that other institutions in the region face which on the institutional context where work from the social sciences and the humanities doesn't have the same kind of social prestige or historical track record that we'd find in European or North American Universities.

Another final significant challenge that we've seen at NUS is that ARI is a completely post PhD institution. The university is still not producing many leading doctorates in the field of Asian studies. We have made some remarkable progress toward this in recent years, but we still are seeing relatively few Singaporean students coming through NUS who are really attaining global visibility in the field. Many of our students do their studies there and then go off to one of these legacy centers of Asian Studies in Europe, North America, and Australia to get their PhD. So, we are faced with significant challenges in trying to make NUS a place where not just well established scholars will come to work late in their careers, but as a place where you can foster an upcoming intellectual community. There are some real institutional problems with this. For example the short limits of having five years to complete a PhD; the relative lack of language training; and a relatively small window to do fieldwork. In some of the more established programs abroad, you can get good PhDs because you can teach them languages, give them the years they need to do this, and to carry out extensive fieldwork. These are simply not options in a place like Singapore, unfortunately.

So there are some real institutional constraints to producing the kinds of scholars that you are getting in other places. How can NUS be a place that attracts people coming in, and how can it really work to more vigorously develop them and scholarship? These are the constant issues we face in what is a constantly evolving field and region. For the future development of Asian Studies in Asia, however, it is imperative that we work more on producing, and not just absorbing, the most productive and prominent scholars in the field.

Special Feature: Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?

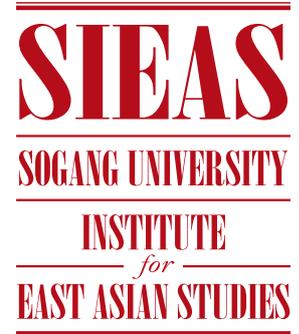
## The Development of Southeast Asian Studies in Korea

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In Korea, academic interest in Southeast Asia first arose in the early 1960s, when some language programs were offered in college education. It is also around this time that Korea entered into diplomatic relations with major nations in Southeast Asia. However, very little research was done during the '60s and '70s.

What can be regarded as the first Southeast Asia area specialists only appeared in the '80s. Their emergence was related to the government's policies for liberalization and opening up the economy. It was around this time that many Koreans began to show an interest in other foreign countries, particularly in less well-known countries, including those in Southeast Asia. Thus, by the early '90s South Korea had opened up to a much wider and strong currents of "globalization" and "regionalization."

In this context, the majority of the first generation Southeast Asianists who started their academic careers during the late '80s and early '90s majored in political science and in particular, in comparative politics and international relations. It was around this time that an important institutional development in Southeast Asian Studies took place. In June 1991, the Korean Association of Southeast Asian Studies (KASEAS), was established and started to publish its own official journal, the *Southeast Asian Review*, in 1992.

A Study Group on Southeast Asian Politics, the predecessor of the Korean Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (KISEAS), was formed in December 1990 with eight political scientists. Later on it began to recruit more scholars from other disciplines such as anthropology, economics, and sociology. In 1992, this was expanded into a Study Group on Southeast Asian Studies. Finally, it was in 2003, that it was further expanded and reorganized into the present day form of KISEAS.

From around the mid- '90s a new generation of Southeast Asia area specialists began to join this academic field and Southeast Asian Studies in Korea began to develop and mature. Second generation researchers had a keen interest in the area of Southeast Asia from the early stage of their academic careers and received more systematic training both in undergraduate and graduate schools. They were also stimulated by the enthusiastic academic atmosphere created by the proliferation of academic societies such as KASEAS and KISEAS. One of the

significant features of the second generation is that conducting long periods of fieldwork became de rigueur for them.

At the beginning of the 2000s, more and more young scholars with Ph.Ds in various disciplines were entering the field of Southeast Asian Studies. They were more diverse in terms of their academic backgrounds and the universities from which they graduated. Above all, the number of anthropologists substantially increased compared to the past and other disciplines during this period.

It may be premature to judge the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to be the most fertile period in the history of Southeast Asian Studies in Korea. But, it is nonetheless fair to say that it was an era of very productive, progressive, and promising, academic work both in quantity and in quality.

One of the noteworthy characteristics of the last decade is that many new research issues and themes have been developed and pursued. Firstly, there have been a series of studies on regionalism in Southeast Asia and East Asia including such themes as regional cooperation, economic integration, and the East Asian community. Secondly, more recently, many Korean researchers have become more interested in trans-border human exchange issues such as transnational migration, international marriage, migrant laborers, and resultant social problems that arise through human movement. Thirdly, "Hallyu," or the "Korean Wave," in Southeast Asia has also become an issue that has recently been studied and debated. Fourthly, the study of connections and networks between Southeast Asia and other countries or regions have become another issue of research interest that has been frequently pursued by researchers interested in the formation of the region. Another outstanding feature of Korean Southeast Asian Studies in the last decade is that collaborative research projects have proliferated. Many researchers have formed their own research teams and conducted research on common agendas and issues over a number of years.

The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has also witnessed notable progress in terms of institutional developments. The KISEAS has now become more formalized academically and continues to play a role by providing an academic arena where

scholars and researchers can regularly meet, discuss and exchange ideas.

At this point, we should mention the role the KASEAS has played over the last 10 years. It has long held regular academic conferences bi-annually since its inception. Since the early 2000s, it has also held regular academic conferences every two years in cooperation with the ASEAN University network. It has also organized joint conferences with Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) Kyoto University every two years since 2009.

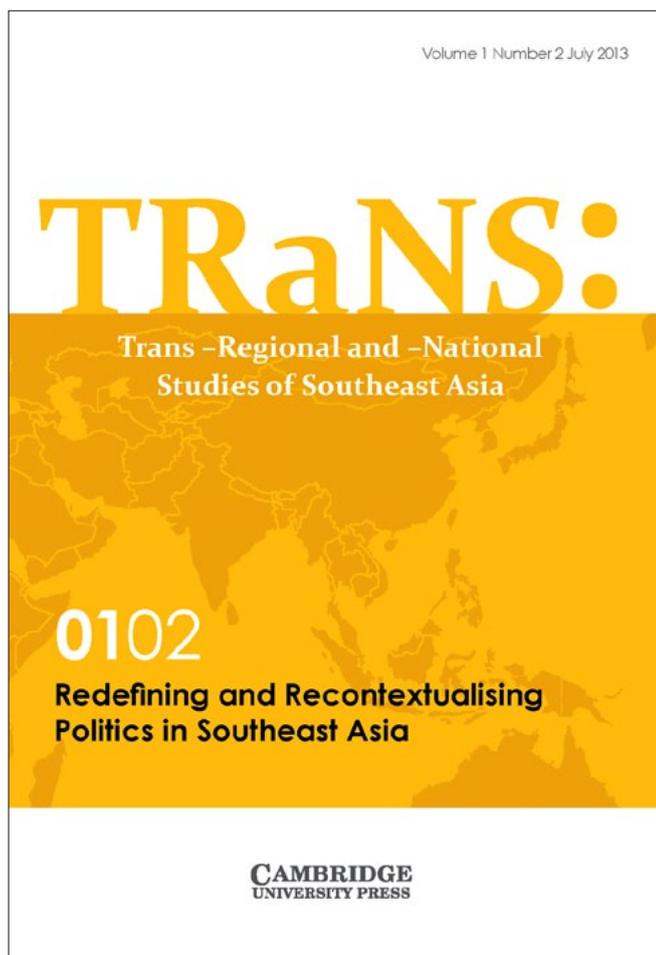
Above all, the role of Institute for East Asian Studies, Sogang University at Seoul merits attention as since 2008, it has been conducting a grand-scale research project sponsored by the National Research Foundation of Korea. It has become a central institute for Southeast Asian studies in Korea and has attempted to globalize its research activities. This effort culminated in the launch of a new English journal named *TRANS: Trans-Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia* in early 2013, published by Cambridge University Press.

However, there are a number of problems and limitations that Korean scholars need to tackle. Firstly, although we should not underestimate what has been accomplished by Korean academics, we need to develop more analytical and theoretical approaches to Southeast Asia.

Secondly, we need to make a more serious effort to transcend disciplinary boundaries and to ultimately integrate them into a unique and independent discipline of "Southeast Asian Studies" or "Southeast Asiology," something that is still conspicuously lacking. What is needed is not just an inter- or multi-disciplinary approach to the region but a trans-disciplinary and integrative approach to the study of Southeast Asia, although that might not be an easy task to accomplish in the near future.

Lastly, although more and more research results are being published in English and other languages, most publications on the region have been in the Korean language. This language barrier has prevented them from being widely known, and as a result of this they remain unknown to foreign audiences. So that more research conducted by Korean Southeast Asianists can reach academics in other countries, we need to increase academic exchanges and collaborative research through a common language to encourage communication.

Despite these limitations, arguably Korea has been emerging as one of the leading countries in this particular moment when Southeast Asian studies has been downsizing in the early runners such as the US and Europe. We hope that in the near future, when Korea demonstrates quality research outcomes and its own approach to Southeast Asian studies, then our contribution to the scholarship will more deeply appreciated.



TRANS: Trans – Regional and – National Studies of Southeast Asia



The Southeast Asian Review (published by the Korean Association of Southeast Asian Studies)

Special Feature: Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?

## Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand

Charnvit Kasetsiri

Emeritus Professor, Thammasat University



I would like to talk about the state of Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand, but before I do so, I would like to just bring to your attention something that some academics have said about Southeast Asian Studies. First let's hear from Oliver William Wolters (1915-2000). In 1993, at a workshop in Jakarta, he said that "the major contribution of Southeast Asian studies within the region itself could be the enhancement of one's self-awareness in order to assist one in reaching a better understanding of the present. Perhaps, in an age of great change, there is more than ever a need for self-awareness" (Wolters 1993). To contextualize these comments, let us go back further to 1977. Two years after the Communist's victory in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos, Thak Chaloemtiarana and Sombat Chantornvong, two leading academics from Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand, made the interesting observation at a colloquium on Southeast Asian Studies at Kota Kinabalu,

Sabah, Malaysia that Southeast Asian studies in Thailand was parochial, meager, and "at square one." Hence, the implication here was that Southeast Asian Studies in Thailand was non-existent.

By the end of the '80s with the collapse of the Communist regimes in the West and tremendous changes in the East, Thailand was making record economic growth and was part of the so-called 'Asian Miracles.' In 1991, on behalf of my university, I attended a Kyoto-Thammasat Core University conference: "In Search of a Collaborative Framework for Southeast Asian Studies." There, I proposed that there was an urgent need and that the time was ripe to take action on Southeast Asian studies for Thailand.

Let me jump to the '90s again. In 1995, a group of some 50 academics and students from Thammasat, Chulalongkorn, and Sinlapakorn Universities, with support from the newly established Thailand Research Fund (TRF) held a discussion and their conclusion was the following:

"Now that Southeast Asia has become more and more of a regional entity, and now that it has received full recognition by universities in Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, and elsewhere, is it too late for us to reconsider Southeast Asian studies as an inter-discipline that deserves full academic attention...? Are we too late to act?"

So, is it really too late for us Southeast Asianists to reconsider Southeast Asian studies as an interdisciplinary field that deserves our full attention? Are we too late to act? Let us fast forward to the year 2000 for we can find one answer in the sudden proliferation of studies on Southeast Asia at various Thai Universities.

Chulalongkorn started with an M.A. program on Asian Studies, an 'international program.' But let us clarify that when we say international what we really mean is that English is the medium of instruction, it admits 10-20 students per year mostly from foreign countries, and tuition fees are very expensive. Thammasat also came up with a B.A. program; one that is 'special' with direct admission tuitions and high fees admitting 100 students per year. Thammasat also received support from outside donors, especially from Japanese government (via the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT)); Core University Program (Kyoto-Thammasat); Toyota Foundation, Japan; and Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program (SEASREP) which was established in 1994.

What the above proliferation suggests is that at present, there seems to be a shift in Thailand from "Southeast Asian



Emeritus Professor Charnvit Kasetsiri. Source: Author

Table 1. Expansion of Student Population and Universities

Population of Thailand	
1990	54 million
2000	61 million (up 1.10%)
2010	65 million (up 1.07%)
Students: High Schools Graduates	
1990	271,096
2000	292,244 (up 1.07 %)
2010	629,768 (up 2.15 %)
Universities	
1990	16 (state universities)
2000	24 (state universities)
2010	164 all universities (including private ones)

Source: Author

Studies” to what we can call a ‘trendy’ “ASEAN studies”: a kind of brand change. There are at least five B.A. programs in Southeast Asian or ASEAN Studies and these are not just limited to Bangkok, but also found in Chiang Mai, Phitsanulok, Nakhon Sithammarat, and so forth. Interestingly, in some universities the name of studies has been changed to ‘ASEAN’ Studies. This is meant to attract students and to also gear up toward the birth of the ASEAN Community in 2015.

We also have a number of acronyms which have become familiar all over Thailand. We have the Bangkok Declarations (5+5+1). If you are in Thailand now, you will find people discussing ASEAN’s ‘three legs’. These are APSC (ASEAN Political Security Community), AEC (ASEAN Economic Community), ASCC (ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community) with flags appearing all over Thailand, in particular in Universities. It is jokingly said that one can now make money from selling these flags... In addition to the above B.A. programs, there are five more M.A. plus one new Ph.D. program at Naresuan University in Phitsanulok. This type of academic proliferation can also be seen at Thammasat. The university now has one B.A program in “Southeast Asian Studies” (2000); one new ‘international’ M.A. for ASEAN Studies (2013); one research program called ASEAN Studies Center (2011); plus one research program in Southeast Asian Studies (2013). So the question that arises here is why has there been such an academic proliferation of these courses?

Firstly, there has been a big push from ASEAN with active campaigning by the Secretary General Dr. Surin Pitsuwan (2008-2012). Secondly, there was a positive response from Thai Government administrations. Initiated by the Abhisit’s (2010–11) and continued with Yingluck’s administration since 2011. This was not the case with Thaksin’s administration (2001–2006). Thus, we can see that ASEAN has become a trendy new brand in Thai primary and secondary education and there is

top down funding from the Ministries of Education and Culture. Thirdly, this proliferation becomes a lot clearer if we look at the following statistics (see Table 1.). The population has continued to increase and what is interesting here is that from 2000 to 2010, the student population has also shown an increase. Yet, what is most notable is also the increase in universities. Between 2000 and 2010 there has been an incredible proliferation of them in Thailand. This represents a change not just in Thailand, but also in Cambodia and Myanmar where you can see an increase in private universities, something that suggests a regional phenomenon.

If we look at Thammasat University, the Faculty of Liberal Arts has set up a Southeast Asian Studies program in 2000 (not funded by national/university budget). This program has direct admission (i.e. not through a national entrance exam), with 100 students registered per year. It focuses on an interdisciplinary approach, and the study of one Southeast Asian language (besides Thai) is compulsory. Tuition and fees are 35,000 baht (\$1120) per semester. Therefore the cost for a four year course amounts to 280,000 (\$8,950) for 4 years.

The program has been rather successful with a good number of applicants. It has also made a good profit as well. Unfortunately, it is less successful in creating an efficient administration and foster sufficient teaching staff and academics, not to mention research work or publications. It depends primarily on invited part-time or retired lecturers (like myself) including ‘borrowing’ regular Thammasat University teaching staff. The program has only four junior lecturers per 400 students. This is the kind of situation that most universities are facing at the moment.

The faculty of Social Sciences at Kasetsart University, also has a Southeast Asian Studies program which it established in 2007. As with Thammasat, it offers direct admission and has 100 students per year. The program focuses on an interdisciplinary

approach but at its inception, it did not require another Southeast Asian language (besides Thai). Tuition fees are the same as above. It does not have teaching staff of its own and therefore relies on regular faculty lecturers.

Walailak University, Nakhon Sithammarat offers a B.A. in ASEAN Studies, Liberal Arts. The program was established in 2002, two years after Thammasat, and what is of interest here is that at first it was offering area studies and due to its location in the south placing a strong focus on Malaysia and Indonesia with compulsory Bahasa language training. However, in 2011, its degree name was changed ASEAN Studies. The reason for this is that under the area studies guise, student registration dropped to 10 per year. However under the new guise it went up to 80 with the new ASEAN label. Students are admitted directly or through national entrance exams. Tuition fees are much less than in Bangkok, at 10,000 (\$31,400) per semester, and the program seems to work, but as with Thammasat there are issues with teaching staff.

To catch up with this trend, in Bangkok, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Rajabhat Ban Somdet Chaophraya (teacher training college) started offering a Southeast Asian Studies program. This started in 2012, with seven students, and 10 the following year. Like most other teacher training colleges it fails to attract students. So it has started to offer 'free' admission and maintain low tuition fees. It employs three junior lecturers.

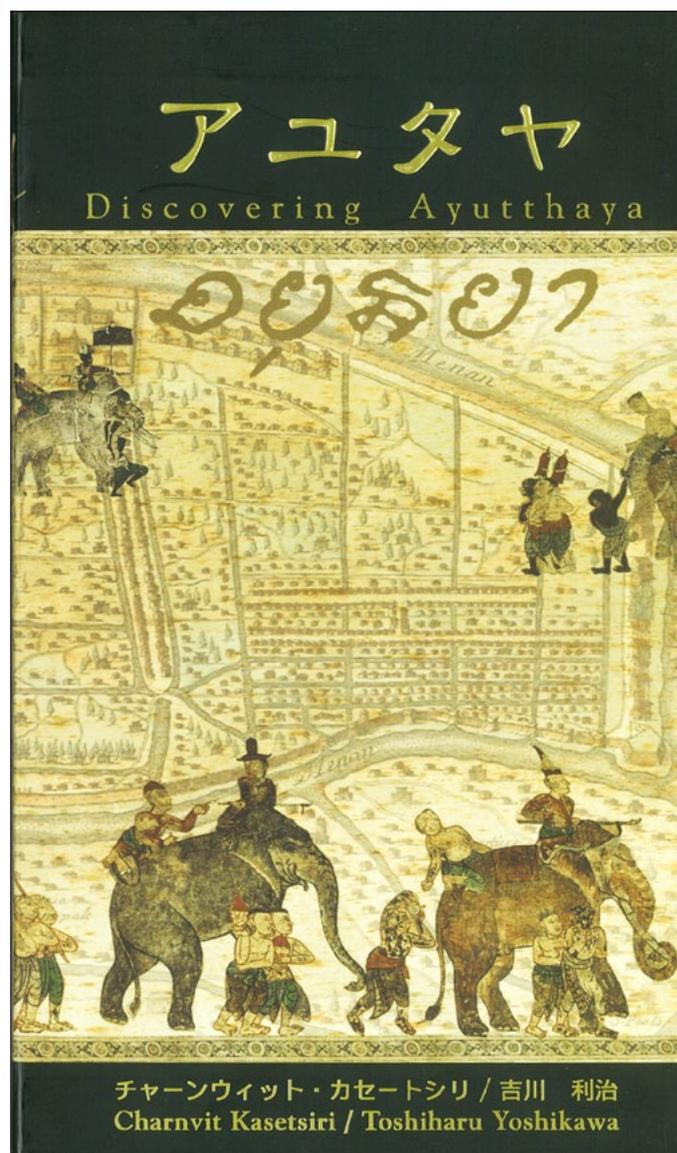
Mahidol University has an international program that was established in 2000. English is the medium of instruction and it is oriented to foreign students for those who take their semesters overseas. It offers Southeast Asian Studies and modern World History. At Chulalongkorn, we find that there is a Southeast Asian Studies 'international' program aimed for foreign students, with the highest fees: 450,000 (\$14,390) just for tuition fees. Thammasat's ASEAN Studies, 'international' program is 280,000 (\$8,950) for tuitions and fees. At Chiang Mai there is also a Southeast Asian Studies at 100,000 (\$3,200) (for weekday classes) and 160,000 (\$5,120) (for weekend) for tuition fees; Walailak offers a Southeast Asian Studies, regular program; and Sinlapakorn, Nakhon Pathom offers a Southeast Asian History (mainly Thai oriented) regular program.

In terms of Ph.D and M.A. studies, the Faculty of Social Sciences, Naresuan University, Phitsanulok was newly established in 2013 and it presently has 10 M.A. and 6 Ph.D. students. Tuition and fees for M.A. is 30,000 baht (\$960) annually, while a Ph.D. is 60,000 (\$1,920). We should note that these are rather inexpensive when compared to the B.A. programs that are now offered elsewhere. Interestingly, the program has five lecturers all with Ph.D. degrees who are conducting ten research projects funded by TRF.

So having looked at the increase of Southeast Asian Studies across the country, in conclusion, why do we see this proliferation? Are many of the programs that are classified as 'special' or 'international,' profit oriented and leading to the commercialization of education? It remains to be seen if "academic knowledge" of Southeast Asian studies, now somewhat termed as ASEAN studies, in Thailand, will take off or be, as we say in Thai, "*Fai Mai Fang*" (fire burning straw, i.e. it comes and goes quickly).

I am certain that from the above discussion we can hardly say that Southeast Asian studies does not exist in Thailand. It has been around despite being "parochial," a by-product of world politics, and being pushed from the outside (by USA and Japan). I myself am a byproduct of American education. Nonetheless, as has been discussed above, whatever its origin was in the '60s and '70s, Southeast Asian Studies by '90s has come to be a localized Thai response, as can also be seen in other parts of the region. By 2000, we came to witness the phenomenon of a 'proliferation' of Southeast Asian or ASEAN studies in Thailand.

So we have come full circle to what Wolters raised. If the time is ripe for self-awareness, as proposed by him, a genuine Southeast Asian studies in Thailand, or to a large extent Southeast Asian studies in Southeast Asia, has to be collaboratively worked out. There has never been a time where we have seen shared common, cross-cultured boundary problems as we do today. Thus, we in Southeast Asia hold the potential to become mirrors of one another. We can see problems but at the same time we hold the key to finding solutions together.



Discovering Ayutthaya (Japanese version) written by Charnvit Kasetsiri and Yoshikawa Toshiharu

Special Feature: Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?

# Southeast Asian Studies in Japan

Hayami Yoko  
Professor CSEAS



For scholars situated in Japan, the immediate conditions surrounding Southeast Asian Studies today are perceived not so much as a crisis, since interest and relevance is pretty much sustained. If there is a crisis, I think it will derive from our becoming smug and inwardly self-satisfied within our country.

Ben Anderson used the term “ecology of scholarship” to refer to the total effect of the language of scholarship, epistemological tendencies in the scholarly practices, as well as the institutional set-up of academia. To these, we can add the geopolitical mapping of powers and the economics supporting the academic institutions. Social science disciplines are coming to a turning point as geopolitical delineations as well as intellectual challenges have been redrawn in the age of globalization, bringing to question area studies and its perspectives on regions and states. Having seen the end of the Cold War, on the one hand, scholars from the west are de-constructing and questioning the idea of “Southeast Asia” itself. Yet paradoxically, there is rising interest from within the region itself. What we see today is not a convergence towards global standardization of Southeast Asian studies, but towards exchange of ideas in a consortium of different traditions and perspectives.

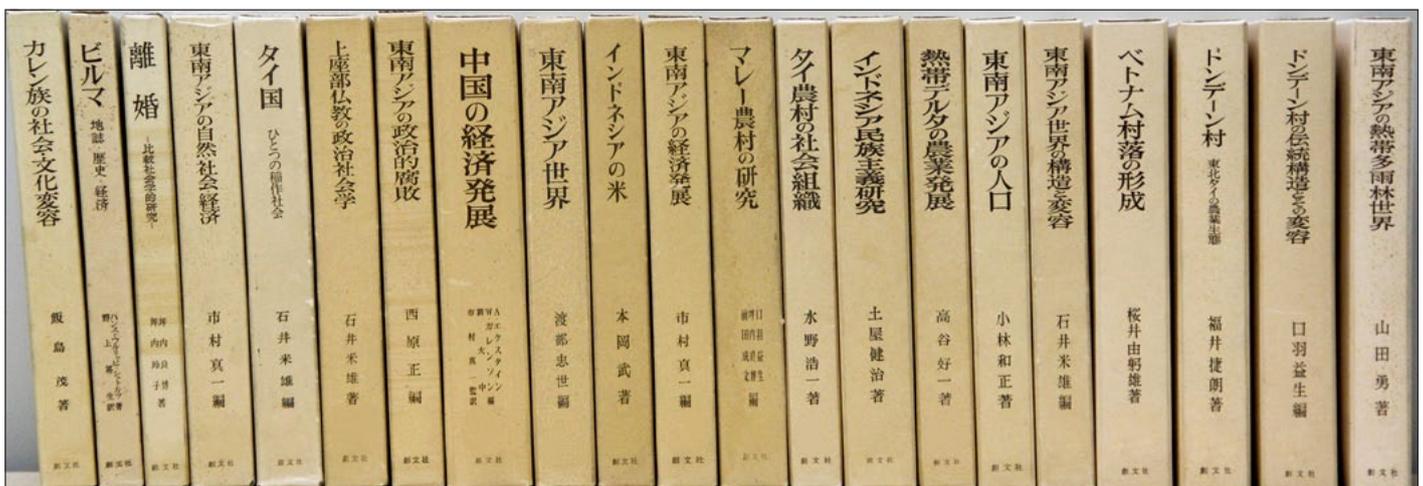
In Japan, “Southeast Asia” (*Tonan Ajia*) had already been in use in the context of imperialist expansion. Studies on the region began under systematic state interest under the propaganda of “The Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” in the internecine decades. Many state agencies for research and training were founded for the study of the colonies, such as the research division of the Manchurian Railway Company among

others. After defeat and occupation, Japan re-imported “Southeast Asia” as a regional concept from the US. Since then, government as well as private agencies have funded and supported studies on various aspects of Southeast Asia, and with all this, interest in the region has been sustained.

The Japan Society for Southeast Asian History was founded in 1966 and renamed in 2006 as Japan Society for Southeast Asian Studies, and now has a membership of over 700. This does not include a further large number of scholars in various disciplines who work in the region. For the general public, there are innumerable publications and information sources on Southeast Asia, its culture, language, literature, economy, politics, travel, cuisine, arts and crafts, etc. There is substantial Japanese-language market for all kinds of information on the region i.e. plenty of incentives from within the country to write and publish in Japanese on various topics related to Southeast Asia.

Institutional foundations for research developed since the mid- '60s. The Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University was founded in 1963, recognized by the government with funding from the Ford Foundation in 1965. The founding was itself instigated internally, by participants in informal seminars held by scholars of varied disciplines. Its distinctive feature was the inclusion of natural scientists: agronomists, foresters and biomedical specialists. The Institute for Asian and African Language and Culture at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies was founded in 1964.

Field-based research began to take off in the late- '50s.



CSEAS Monographs (in Japanese). Published between 1966 and 1991

Systematic funding for overseas research by the ministry of education began in 1963, and scholarships for sending graduate students for long-term research in 1968. Long-term fieldwork by individual scholars, and multi-disciplinary projects took place on varying scales. While most scholars were trained in particular disciplines, they gained cross-disciplinary mutual stimulus in field trips, research and discussion there and back home. Our center is an example of how area studies in Japan was institutionalized without being based in any discipline or department. It was from the start, a multi-disciplinary institution.

Characteristic in Japanese scholarship is the emphasis on the researcher's groundedness in the local context based on language skills and long-term fieldwork, enabling sound empirical research. The flip side of this has been the tendency for weaker theoretical contributions. Japanese scholarship pursues research with conceptual frameworks closer to observations from the field. Perhaps this epistemological habitus, in addition to the language barrier, partially explains the low acceptance and low profile of Japanese scholarship in the English language academia. The kinds of data and arguments presented by Japanese scholarship do not necessarily answer the theory-driven interests of the English language audience. Moreover, while information in English and vernaculars of the region are consumed in Japan, there is much less effort to produce output available to non-Japanese audiences. With abundant opportunities in publishing within the country, there is less incentive to overcome the language hurdle and venture beyond.

If these are the weaknesses in our scholarship, by contrast, Ben Anderson criticized the discipline-based area studies in the US, where Southeast Asian studies was designed as programs across, but based on, disciplines and departments. The disciplines were always prioritized, both institutionally and in research, which he argues is "the institutional and intellectual weakness of area studies in the post-war US." Post-war area studies in the U.S. was carried out against the background of discipline-based academic professionalization and the habitus/practice of modern academics.

Since the foundation of ASEAN in 1967, area studies from within the region itself began to gradually develop. By the '80s, the region was undergoing rapid economic growth and political changes. By the '90s, the up-and coming actors on the stage of Southeast Asian studies were scholars from the region itself. Just as western scholarship began to deconstruct and dissolve "Southeast Asian studies" and "Southeast Asia" as a regional concept in Southeast Asia itself, the region was becoming more "real," and its study becoming institutionalized. Scholars in the region began to reconsider some of the hitherto unchallenged official national and regional histories, concerns of the periphery such as minorities, as well as topics across national boundaries into other locales within the region. Another big rise, especially in the past two decades, is scholarship on Southeast Asia from Taiwan, China and Korea.

There has been discussion on the insider and outsider position in research. Scholars from the region are involved as primary actors, they have close vantage points, and have the advantage in gathering information, yet are at times constrained from expressing their ideas. Euro-American scholars

as outsiders define academic practice, set up the issues and concepts, conduct objective analysis, yet are disadvantaged in data collection. Euro-American strength in discipline-based theorization may have been related to physical, cultural and social distance and outsider position. Because they are distant from the immediate realities and issues brewing in the region, there is space to theorize, based on intellectual drives. Contrarily, as my colleague Caroline Hau pointed out, "for those in Southeast Asia, Southeast Asian studies is what people in the region are already doing: thinking about themselves." Japan stays "outside" this insider/outsider dichotomy. We find ourselves in something like a "neither here nor there" space. We neither constitute a visible part of the western scholarship, nor are we within Southeast Asia.

However, I think what is actually taking place now is far more complex and multifarious than an "insider-outsider" dichotomy. There is global re-mapping of multilateral research directions, where western theorizing is no longer the only significant voice in Southeast Asian area studies, and scholars from the region as well as in other mostly Asian countries participate. Scholars from different backgrounds cross the boundaries of these academic traditions with ease. In this multilateral intersection of perspectives, Southeast Asia is not the "other," the object of the hegemonic gaze, or of unidirectional theorizing. These perspectives cross each other where research, education and mutual discussion is all going in many directions.

For those of us in Asia, while it is true that academic tradition in each country has its own historical relationship with the region, different socio-economic basis, institutionalizing process, and different ecology of scholarship, still, the immediacy of issues, such as (for example) coping with disasters, sustainable development, energy-sources, demographic changes, etc. are shared, and we are together involved in the real issues of the region. Multilateral discussions in Asia will allow us to set the agenda from region-based perspectives. Our discussion and debates derive from questions and concerns that are important in the region. While we continue to learn from debates in the Euro-American Southeast Asian studies, we should develop ways of agenda-setting from within the region that can engage in fruitful dialogue with the former.

Today, Japan's relationships with ASEAN is becoming even more crucial. In 1990, ASEAN-7 was about 10% of Japan's economy. In 2012, it was 38% and according to IMF estimates, it will be 67% by 2018. The ASEAN community 2015 promises a more institutionally integrated and harmonized regional economy, with rising middle classes and expanding markets. In the past several years, Japanese businesses learned the political risks of investing in China, and now find in ASEAN expanding consumer markets with far less political risk. The Japanese government, in a tense relationship with China over territorial issues, is pursuing partnerships with ASEAN not only in trade, investment and finance, but also in security and foreign policy towards building the regional architecture. We, as academics, cannot but be affected by such political and socioeconomic trends. Southeast Asian studies in Japan becomes as important as ever. There is the strong possibility, in view of Japanese government policy for university reform and internationalization, that South-



east Asian studies, (rather than area studies in general), will emerge as one of the “focus fields” for government funding.

This trend constitutes an opportunity not only for us in Japan. There is a sizable foundation or a potential network between Southeast Asia and Japan, in varied disciplines and fields, from the hard sciences to the humanities. Southeast Asian scholars trained in Japan, as well as Japanese researchers, business people, journalists, etc. who work on/in Southeast Asia with scholars in the region (without necessarily being Southeast Asianists). This creates a broad base or constituency for Southeast Asian specialists to coordinate and for bringing disparate fields and people together. This could become the basis for multilateral exchange through international networking and collaboration, including Northeast Asia, America and Europe.

I mentioned that in the founding days of our Center, disciplinary boundaries were overcome through joint research involving field trips and observations, discussion there and back in the seminar rooms among scholars from different disciplines with widely-defined interests, towards new framework of understanding. Such academically fertile settings for dialogues have become more difficult to stage today due to diversification of interests and deeper specialization. Yet our predecessors have demonstrated that the effort is worthwhile, and we might emulate the spirit of it towards dialogue not only across disciplines, but across different academic traditions, in a global multilateral network especially among scholars of the upcoming generation.

Recognizing that each stands in a different position within a different ecology of scholarship, dialogue or “multi-logue” in the multilateral network among these different traditions promises to be productive. This should be facilitated by the following activities:

- 1) Flow and exchange of researchers and scholars, and beyond academia.
  - a) Focus on education no longer limited to undergraduate and graduate education. Postdoctoral training and networking among upcoming generation of scholars.
  - b) Creating interfaces between Southeast Asian scholars on the one hand and governments, businesses, NGOs etc on the other.
- 2) Joint projects and programs among scholars from different academic traditions and disciplines. The challenge is how to go beyond Japan and beyond academia, and create platforms for conversations and collaboration with ASEAN counterparts as well as East Asian and global partners.
- 3) Improving ways of sharing information, data and material.
  - a) Catching up with varied forms of material that are becoming available.
  - b) Not only in the central archives of each country, but from multiple local vernacular perspectives.
  - c) Alter the hitherto one-way flow of local language information, stalling resources in local libraries
  - d) Digitizing information to make available varied forms of information to scholars from both within and outside the region.

- 4) Joint effort to strengthen the impact of our outputs/publications. There is nothing we can do about the dominance of English language in the global academe but we need to make available more of the works and materials from the region towards a fair exchange of ideas and information.

In conclusion, it has come to a point where, Southeast Asianist scholars, whether in Southeast Asia, or in other parts of Asia, Europe, Australia, or the US, must re-position ourselves to changing academic maps: to reflect on our respective positions in the evolving “ecology” of the global academic endeavor.

# Exploring the East-West Cultural Corridor: Historic and Modern Archaeology of Bago and Dawei, Myanmar

Elizabeth Howard Moore

Former Visiting Researcher CSEAS

## The East-West Cultural Corridor and the Southern Coastal Zone

The East-West Corridor is a conceptual tool for identifying common cultural processes across mainland Southeast (Ishii 2009). Our research group has drawn upon this model to study the past histories of sites and their continuities with present traditions. My role in our group has been adding Myanmar to our database of Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos and widening our discussion of the East-West Cultural Corridor concept. Our 'sites' vary in size, at times end-points, and at others, connectors along routes that over many centuries have connected Myanmar to capitals such as Sukhothai (13<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup>), Ayutthaya (14<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>) and Angkor (9<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup>) (Shibayama 2013).<sup>1</sup> The 'routes' include walls, moats, streams, paths and special purpose roads used by man, ox-carts and elephants to move within, between, and beyond sites (Im Sokrithy 1998, 101; Surat Lertlum and Im Sokrithy 2013).

We follow Ishii's example in using ecological zones rather than dynastic lines to divide Myanmar into three regions as our primary framework:

1. Upper Myanmar: the broad Ayeyarwaddy (Irrawaddy) basin (c. 650–1250 mm rainfall per annum)
2. Lower Myanmar: the plains bordering the Gulf of Muttama (Martaban) (c. 5000 mm)
3. The Southern Coastal Zone: the 600 km long peninsula (c. 5000 mm) with river valleys sandwiched between the Andaman Sea and the 700 m high Tanintharyi (Tennasserim) Range

While we have identified links between sites in Upper Myanmar, Yunnan and south to Thailand, our focus is Lower Myanmar and the Southern Coastal Zone, two regions of vital significance whose early and later archaeology has been little studied. Two sites are compared here, Bago (Pegu)<sup>2</sup> in Lower Myanmar and Dawei (Tavoy)<sup>3</sup> in the Southern Coastal Zone. Each is the western terminus of routes east: Bago leads to Haripunchai, Sukhothai and Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand and Dawei via multiple passes over the mountains to Kanchanaburi and Ayutthaya.<sup>4</sup>

In the historical sketches below, a 9<sup>th</sup> century traditional founding is followed by a millennium of conquest by greater powers: at Bago to establish a new capital and at Dawei to lay

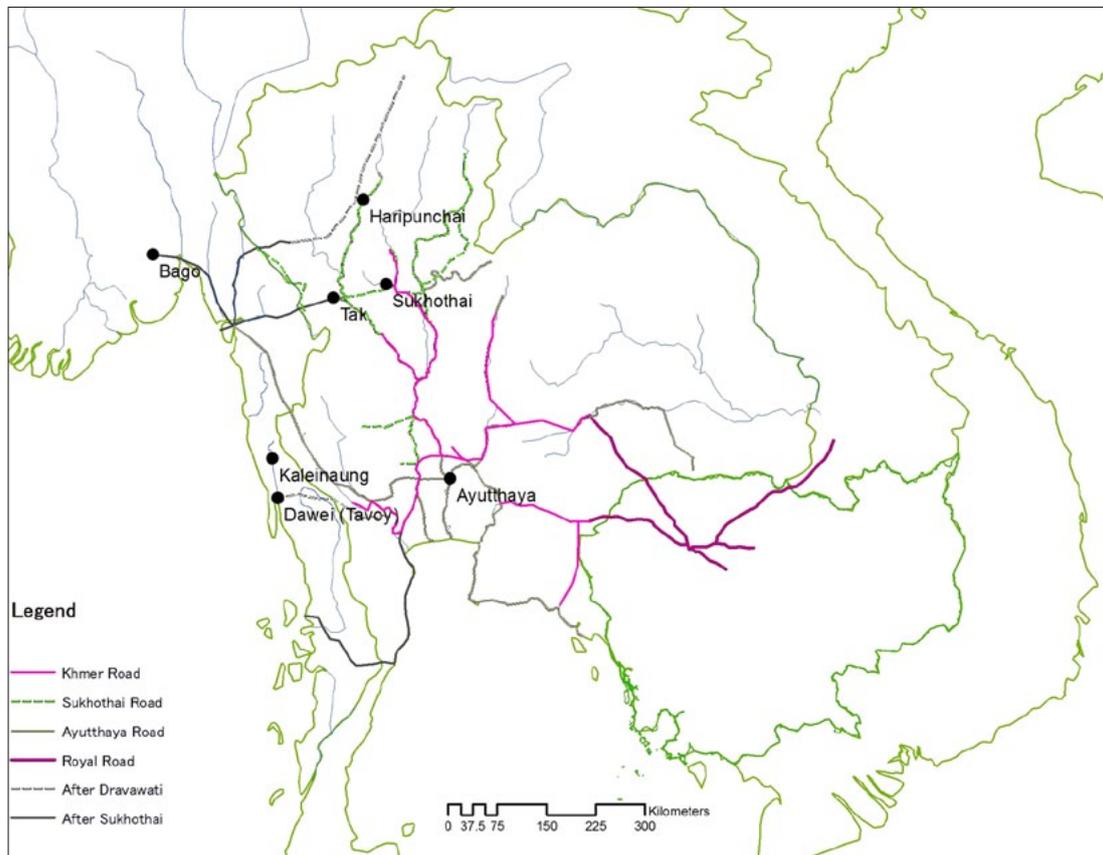


Fig. 1: Map showing Bago, Dawei and sites in Thailand. Courtesy of Mamoru Shibayama



Fig. 2: Bago in 1942, Williams-Hunt Collection, Geo-referenced courtesy Surat Lertlum, CRMA



Fig. 3: Bago in 2002, IKONOS, Geo-referenced courtesy Surat Lertlum, CRMA

claim to the seaward side of the Tanintharyi peninsula. The process internationalized Bago but in Dawei, apart from a few stupas said to be 'Thai-style,' the isolation and conquest as a region rather than a center, encouraged an insular pride with a strengthening of local modes and styles. The historical sketches end with World War II images from the Williams-Hunt Collection as comparison of these with present day images can help us contrast the rapid expansion of Bago and the relatively stable Dawei landscape.<sup>5</sup>

### Bago: 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Century Capital

The chronicle history of Bago (Ussā-Hanthawaddy) dates the original rectangular walled site (120 ha) to 825 (Moore and San Win 2014). In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Bago was dominated by the Upper Myanmar capital at Bagan<sup>6</sup> but in the 14<sup>th</sup> century it ended up being ruled by a succession of eleven Mon kings from nearby Martaban (Muttama) (Tun Aung Chain 1999: 38). Among these was Dhammaceti (1470–1492), whose reign, free from invasion from the Upper Myanmar capital at Ava (Inwa)<sup>7</sup> brought expanded trade. Gifts sent by on a religious mission to Sri Lanka in 1476 included cloth from China, betel boxes from Haripunchai and carpets from Inwa – all indicative of a trade network stretching from the Gulf of Martaban (Muttama) to Yunnan. Bago reached its peak in the 16<sup>th</sup> century under a line of rulers from the Upper Myanmar capital of Toungoo<sup>8</sup> with its geographical position giving it maritime access to goods from South Asia and the river valleys on its landward side that linked it to inland trade (Tun Aung Chain 1999, 42, 37). It was at this time that a vast new moat and wall (571 ha) were built by King Bayinnaung (1552–1581) lying just southeast of the original site. As noted by Ralph Fitch in 1586;

'It is a Citie very great and populous, and is made square with very Faire walls and a Ditch round it full of water with many Crocodiles in it... there are also Turrets for Centinels to watch, made of wood, and gilded with Gold very faire' (Fitch 2004, 170).

The 16<sup>th</sup> century rulers brought artisans from Ayutthaya, conquered in 1548, including goldsmiths, painters, cooks and cloth dyers. Trade from the interior to the port was encouraged, so that Bago was active in 16<sup>th</sup> century European and Japanese markets (Tun Aung Chain 1999: 43). In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, however, the ruling dynasty moved the capital back to Upper Myanmar and the land base of Bago dwindled while deposits of alluvium narrowed the Bago River and destroyed its access to the sea.

In 1757, much of Lower Myanmar was devastated by Upper Myanmar rule, Alaungpaya and in 1852, the British took control of Lower Myanmar. With World War II, British troops took extensive cover of Bago including a mosaic of the ancient city on 20 March, 1942, two months after the Japanese took Dawei. The outline of the 16<sup>th</sup> century wall and moat is strikingly clear, as is the absence of a dense population apart from the northwest corner of the site adjacent to the Bago River. Lines of rectangular vegetation are the only remnants of the once-renowned palace and the lively 16<sup>th</sup> century capital described above.

### Dawei and the Southern Coastal Zone

Dawei's chronicle history begins in 707 at Kaleinaung, 60 km north, and its royal lineage in 754 with the walled site of Thagara (176 ha).<sup>9</sup> As with Bago, Dawei's location attracted conquest by a succession of more dominant powers: not only Upper Myanmar, but Lower Myanmar and Thailand. The latter included a 10<sup>th</sup> century line of Thai princes from Tak and Ayutthaya rule from 1350. Thai links are seen also at Mokti (c. 150 ha), a walled site 9.6 km south of Dawei dated to 1417. A bronze bell was donated to Mokti in 1432 by Wikara Orada, a Thai person of high status.<sup>10</sup>

During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Dawei rule moved between Upper Myanmar and Ayutthaya including a successful attack in 1593 by King Nareusuan. The 1757 present walled city was soon seized by Upper Myanmar with Tanintharyi (Tennaserim) ranked as a second level city within four levels by the Ayutthaya monarch in the 1805 edited 'Law of the Three



Fig. 4: Lead coin (10 cm), Collection Than Swe (Dawei)

Seals' (*Kotmai Tra Sam Duang*) (Ishii 1998). In 1826, Lower Myanmar and Tanintharyi Division were ceded to the British who were quick to document routes to Thailand and demarcate the border. An 1826 map of Dawei, for example, includes Kaleinaung of the Dawei chronicle, the starting point from which the Dawei River is navigable, and a route to Thailand. Kaleinaung is also marked on a 19<sup>th</sup> century Siamese royal military map and a 1917 geological survey (Hearn 1917, Pasuk Santanee 2004). By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the British administrative documents focused on the isolation of the region, documenting routes east to the disputed border and Siamese elephant stealing (NAD 1919).

Dawei was invaded on 18 January, 1942, with the battle being the first clash between British and Japanese troops inside Myanmar. The Williams-Hunt Collection photographs of Dawei include the elaborate Japanese expansion of airport runways taken in December 1944 during the British campaign to re-take the country (Defence Surveyors Association: 216, 237).

## Conclusion

This article has shown how, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Bago was internationally renowned as a port linking South Asia to the interior of the mainland overland. Its power waned after the silting up of the Bago River and Upper Myanmar rulers returned the capital to the north. The Department of Archaeology excavated Kambawzathadi Palace in the 1990s, included it in the 1996 UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List<sup>11</sup> and in 1999 inscribed it on the Ministry of Culture's Notified Zones of Cultural Heritage Regions and Buildings. Today, however, the moats are thick with vegetation and refuse on the eastern side at the Shwe-yaung-ye pagoda where the massive 16<sup>th</sup> century wall curves around this stupa, a clear note of the ancient respect for its earlier construction (Pyiet Phyo Kyaw 2013).

The famed beauty of its wide streets and gilded turrets

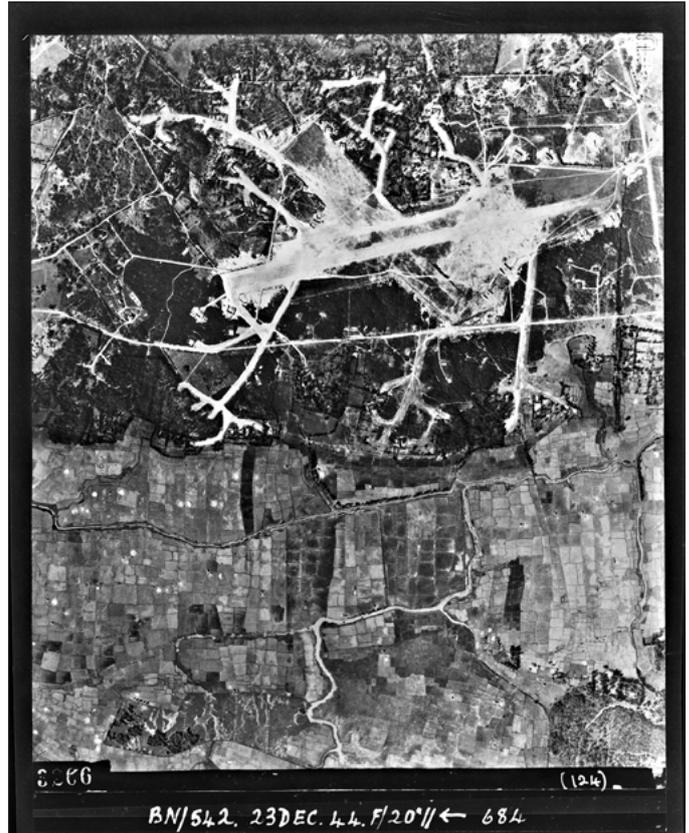


Fig. 5: Dawei airport in 1944, Williams-Hunt Collection

can be glimpsed in the reconstructed palace buildings, still-venerated pagodas, and the vibrancy of its ceramic artefacts. However, the population of over 300,000 in the immediate metropolitan zone has obscured the ancient cultural landscape, a process that will accelerate with the completion of the Hanthawaddy International Airport in 2017.<sup>12</sup> This comparison is particularly vivid in a geo-referenced comparison of a 1942 aerial photograph of Bago from the Williams-Hunt Collection and an IKONOS satellite image of the site (Lertlum and Shibayama 2009, 549).

In contrast to the fame of Bago, Dawei was a medium-size port and territorial prize traded between kings of Upper Myanmar, Thailand and from 1824, under British rule. Local styles can be seen in 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> century images of the Buddha to 15<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century brown and green glazed wares and large (10 cm diameter) lead and tin coins. The Dawei dialect, a variant of the Myanmar language, has survived in orally transmitted folk songs (Winn Myintzu 2011). The ecology, again in contrast to Bago, has remained constant, with major change only with the expansion of tin and lead mining in the colonial era. In addition, rather than being a single massive walled site as seen at Bago, Dawei was a series of smaller fluctuating sites north and south of the 1754 town of present Dawei.

Unfortunately, the area has not been without cultural destruction, as in the long period of insurgent activity following 1948 independence, the walled site of Weidi (114 ha) became an insurgent camp and its rich supply of large lead coins dating to the 15–17<sup>th</sup> century were melted down for bullets. For the most part, however, the ancient sites of Dawei are intact. The

region is in the process of change, and has come to international attention with the development of a large deep-sea port project, but this has catalyzed local attention, with the 2012 inscription of Thagara (Thargaya) on the Ministry of Culture's list of Notified Cultural Zones, the first site from the entire Tanintharyi Division.

At Bago and Dawei, the archaeological remains of the first millennium data provide the foundation from which to compare later cities. Conversely, the networks identified in the historical period provide a template through which to explore the earlier communication systems. There has been little attempt to weave synchronic site studies such as these into a wider frame that gives credibility to both continuities into the past and into the present (Aung-Thwin 2013, 97). It is hoped that this study may contribute to our appreciation of this duality.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Mamoru Shibayama (Kyoto), Surat Lertlum (Chulachomkiao Royal Military Academy), Pongdhan Sampaongern (Fine Arts Department, Thailand), Surapol Natapintu (Thailand Research Fund), Im Sokrithy (APSARA, Cambodia), Tran Ky Phuong (Danang, Vietnam)
- <sup>2</sup> Bago 17°17'58.38 "N, 96°28'59.81"E; Sukhothai 16.951169°N, 99.855425°E; Ayutthaya 14°21'11.65"N, 100°34'8.28"E; Angkor 13°25'55.42"N, 103°52'18.72"E
- <sup>3</sup> Dawei 14°10'23.99"N, 98°10'0.58"E
- <sup>4</sup> Haripunchai 18.577107°N, 99.006826°E; Kanchanabui (13.996865°N, 99.555616°E) via Pilok (14.681037°N, 98.362935°N), Sangklaburi (15°16'25.74"N, 98°17'52.30"E), and the Amya Pass (13.888381°N, 99.075318°)
- <sup>5</sup> The Williams-Hunt Collection is an archive of 5000+ 1942-1955 aerial photographs of Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Singapore and Vietnam. The online site is a collaboration between Mamoru Shibayama and Yasuyuki Kono (Kyoto), Surat Lertlum (CRMA) and Elizabeth Howard Moore (SOAS). See <http://gdap.crma.ac.th>
- <sup>6</sup> Bagan 21.124613°N, 94.922275°E
- <sup>7</sup> Inwa 21.856932°N, 95.981813°E
- <sup>8</sup> Toungoo 18.933333°N, 96.433333°E
- <sup>9</sup> Kaleinaung 14°37'28.95"N, 98°08'13.79"E; Thagara 14°10'22.91"N, 98° 9'57.85"E
- <sup>10</sup> The bell inscription includes the words kara (king) and orada (a royal rank) (Surapol Natapintu, pers.comm. 22.12.12)
- <sup>11</sup> 1996 UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/> (accessed 13 Aug, 2013)
- <sup>12</sup> In 2012, 284,179 with 5,739,344 in the metropolitan area; See Myanmar to Build largest airport. <http://www.mizzima.com/business/investment/9843-myanmar-to-build-largest-international-airport> (accessed 14 Aug, 2013)

# Ethnoastronomy: The Sundanese of West Java and their Relation to Ethnoastronomy

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## Introduction

Nothing in nature has intrigued humans more than gazing at a spectacularly star-lit sky. While all people on Earth have observed the same primitive objects in the sky, i.e. the sun, moon, and stars, all cultures have developed their own interpretations of these heavenly bodies within different cultural contexts. There are many different ways in which people have woven concepts and knowledge of sky phenomena and objects they watched into the fabric of their lives. But it is important to realize that in most cultures there was nothing that was thought of as “astronomy.” The phenomena and objects in the sky were merely part of the whole complex of the surrounding world. I use the word astronomy for anything related to what we think of as astronomy in our present context. This article is a preliminary exploration of the Sundanese, an ethnic group in West Java and how they express their perceptions of the universe through ethno-astronomy, the study of knowledge, interpretation, and practices regarding celestial objects or phenomena of specific cultures.

Knowledge of the starry sky and its constellation was indeed common in many ethnic groups inhabiting the Indonesian archipelago. Many studies have already been conducted especially in Central Java and Bali. But to date, only a few have been done in West Java – sometimes known as *Tatar Pasundan* (the land of *Sunda*) by local people. Some of them were written by Sastramidjaja (1991) from Bandung and Igarashi Tadataka (1980, 1987, and 2008).<sup>1</sup> Much more material exists which has yet to be clearly researched and documented. Yet recently, there have been moves to better document Asia’s relationship to ethno-astronomy.<sup>2</sup>

## Sundanese and their Relationship to Time

In the past the Sundanese used natural indicators in understanding traditional time to determine or to name the times of the day. This was based on natural phenomena through what they felt, saw or heard, and in tandem with the effect of the sun’s positions. They used terms which corresponded to specific times of the day, for example, such as *Wanci Tumorek* (*wanci* = period of time, *tumorek* = deaf) for around 00:30 a.m., *Wanci janari leutik* (literally the time after midnight) for 1:30 a.m. and so on. Other terms indicating time were used based on what they felt: *Wanci haneut moyan* (*haneut* = warm, *moyan* = sunbathing) meant the time of day where it begins to warm or good for sunbathing at around 08:00 a.m. These indicators are a few of many which were applicable throughout the year. The Sundanese live near the equator and the time of sunset

and length of twilight are approximately the same all year round.<sup>3</sup> These indicators (more than 20 in number) in effect, represent smaller parts of time segments of a 24 hour day segmented into the morning, noon, afternoon, and evening respectively.

For example, in Salamungkal, a small village in a hilly area about 50 kilometers to the south of Bandung city, people still use these time indicators in their daily social life. In conversations among locals in expressing something related to times, instead of saying “I return home at 6pm,” they will say “I return



Menhir (*lingga*, in Sundanese) found in the former Sunda Kingdom in *Kawali* which might function as a gnomon (like a triangular part of a sundial).

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One of the artifacts in *Kawali* (dating back to 1045 AD), where the former *Sunda* Kingdom is located showed a calendar (*kolenjer* in local language) in the form of matrix.



At one of the annual meetings for the forum of former Kingdoms and Sultanates in Indonesia held in Bandung in November 2012. On this occasion I promoted the importance of conducting research in ethnoastronomy in their former Kingdoms and Sultanates regions.

home on the period when I can hardly see someone's face" or "I return home when the Sun goes down behind the mountain" instead of saying "I return home at 16" to name but a few.<sup>4</sup>

### Pranatomangsa: the Agricultural Cycle

Agricultural people like *Sundanese* were deeply concerned with calendrical observations. These were crucial in gauging the time of planting and harvesting to insure successful crops. The appearance and disappearance of certain stars correlated with the seasons of the year, and reminded observers when to plough, sow, hunt, fish, and celebrate other annual events. The *Sundanese* agricultural cycle is known as *Pranatomangsa* (time/season-keeping system)

The most important seasonal markers for *Sundanese* were the Orion Belt (*Bentang Wuluku*) and Pleiades (*Bentang Kerti* or *Bentang Ranggeuy*). The dawn rising of the Orion Belt and the Pleiades in mid-May marked the coming of the dry season. For about forty nights before sunrise the Pleiades was said to disappear from view. This event, usually noted in an almanac, was called *ngerem* in the local language which means to hide itself. The heliacal rising of the Pleiades and the Orion Belt in the evening sky was also important to farmers as a sign of the wet season and the beginning of rice-planting.

Another constellation which is familiar to *Sundanese* is the Southern Cross (Crux), whose *Sundanese* name is *Bentang Langlayangan* (the Kite). These stars are also very important for local fishermen since they indicate a Southern direction and for farmers because the appearance of the Southern Cross in the East at sunrise was a sign of the beginning of the dry season. Another local name for the Southern Cross is *Bentang Saung Genjot* (leaning Hut).

Van den Bosch (1980) in his study on the Javanese calendar found that *Pranatomangsa/Pranotomongso* was recognized by Javanese farmers, and although this agricultural tradition was practiced for almost two thousand years, *Pranatomangsa* was officially declared by Sri Susuhunan Paku Buwana VII in

Surakarta (Central Java) on 22 June, 1856. In *Pranatomangsa*, the days in a month (more exactly *mangsa*) varied from 23 days to 43 days, depending on specific observable environmental elements. Ammarel (1996) and Salmun (1956) confirmed that every *mangsa* have their own characteristics. Names of the month (*mangsa*) in *Pranatomangsa* and the length of the periods have now been standardized in agreement with the Gregorian Calendar.

With *Pranatomangsa*, all farmers conducted all phases of cultivating rice exactly at the same period of time otherwise rice would be exposed to crop pests. When rice was flowering, insects were eating in other areas. However, if farmers were too early or too late at any phase of cultivation, pests would afflict the crops due to a lack of other food sources. Though recently the climate does not exhibit the same patterns as before, to some extent *Pranatomangsa* is still in use in some remote places in West Java, e.g. Cisolok-Sukabumi, Kampung Naga-Tasikmalaya, and Baduy area (Adimihardja, 1990). This suggests that historically *Pranatomangsa* was used by all agricultural people on Java island.

### Folklore

Human understandings of the sky were expressed in many forms, and celestial lore and storytelling formed a core component of this. I found some examples of the diverse and wonderful ways in which *Sundanese* people described specific objects or phenomena in the sky in lore. Most older *Sundanese* were familiar with tale of *Nini Anteh*. There are variants, but the most well-known one relates how *Nini Anteh* (grandmother *Anteh*) lived in the Moon with her spinning wheels accompanied by her cat. When she was a little girl she lived with her step mother who mistreated her. She then subsequently escaped and flew to the Moon, helped by a ray of light coming out of it. To this day, when the Moon is full, people say that one can see *Nini Anteh*, sitting beside a spinning wheel accompanied by her cat. By way of comparison, we have celestial lore of the ancient

people from both North America and the Far East, including Japan, where the rabbit appears in the moon: the lunar disk presents the same shape and is identified as a rabbit.

For all ancient peoples, the Sun and the Moon are probably the best documented sky objects amongst other celestial bodies, in particular the eclipses of both have always been impressive to all people. The Sundanese also possessed their own celestial lore about these spectacular events. There is an oral story in some parts of West Java which explains the lunar eclipse.

"In heaven *Batara Guru* (the god of gods), shot a fake god with a bow and arrow, separating his body from his head. The body fell down to the Earth and changed into a rice mortar but the head was still alive in the sky. The head ate everything in the sky including the Moon. Yet when he ate the Moon, an eclipse occurred. Since he had no body, the Moon went out from the bottom of the head and the eclipse ended."

The solar eclipse however, was seen as a couple in love. People on Earth beat rice mortar with pestles and the noisy sound like two annoyed lovers who separated from each other.

Sundanese people did not generally separate phenomena which we currently classify as meteorological from what we now think of as astronomical. The phenomenon of rainbows, which is called *Katumbiri* was regarded as the angels from *kahyangan* (heaven) coming to Earth to take a bath. The rainbow itself symbolized a golden ladder used by angels to descend to earth and to return to heaven.

No feature of the sky was more amazing than the Milky Way: the sky consists of darkness as well as light, a bright splash of light broken by dark separations. This specific object which is observable during the dry season in West Java was known as *catang bobo* or *catang* which means rotten tree trunk full of holes (Igarashi, 2013), while in Javanese in Central and East Java it is described it as *Bima Sakti* (a hero in *wayang* story). To the south-east of Southern Cross stars (*bentang langlayangan* – the Kite) two bright stars  $\alpha$  *Centauri* and  $\beta$  *Centauri* are observable almost at the same period of time during the dry season. The Sundanese story of these constellations relates that a younger brother,  $\beta$  *Centauri* flew a kite in a rice field. Due to strong winds he was drawn up by the kite. The elder brother,  $\alpha$  *Centauri*, helped by holding him from behind. However, the wind was so strong that both of them were drawn up into the sky. It is fortunate that some celestial lore are still remembered and can be recorded, but many may have been lost or not yet revealed and need to be further explored.

### Appraising our Rich Ethno-astronomical Past

I have briefly touched upon the ethno-astronomical historical of the Sundanese and every attempt has been made to include as many relevant materials as possible. However, I cannot claim to have given a complete and comprehensive account of their ancient astronomy-related culture. Yet, I hope that my work will stimulate research interest into exploring ethno-astronomy in other regions of Indonesia; not only on the main

islands (Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Papua) but also in many smaller island regions. To do so will allow us to start the construction of an encyclopedia of Indonesian ethno-astronomy which can simultaneously contribute to the ongoing project of documenting the ethno-astronomy of Asia.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Dr. Igarashi Tadataka for sharing much unpublished data and information and for many productive discussions.

<sup>2</sup> Norio Kaifu, the President of the International Astronomical Union, is collecting Asian stories and histories relating to stars and universe in collaboration of fourteen Asian countries into a book called "Stars of Asia."

<sup>3</sup> These times are different in northern and southern latitudes.

<sup>4</sup> Private communication.



## Conference Report: The Future of Southeast Asia Viewed from Historical Area Studies: in Memory of Professor Sakurai Yumio (1945-2012)

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On 19 April 2013, a conference, “The Future of Southeast Asia Viewed from Historical Area Studies: in Memory of Professor Sakurai Yumio” was held in honor of Sakurai Yumio, former visiting professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS). To the sadness of many, Sakurai suddenly passed away on 17 December 2012. He was a leading Japanese expert in historical and area studies, and many scholars both young and old gathered to give presentations in his honor.

Held at Inamori Foundation Memorial Hall, almost 80 participants from all over Japan gathered, among them retired CSEAS faculty members, colleagues from academic societies and research groups who had been associated with the late professor, and current Southeast Asian postgraduate students.

Two sessions were held in his honor, “Historical Studies and the Fieldwork: Viewed from Historical Studies of Vietnam, Southeast Asia and Asian Waters” was hosted by Momoki Shiro (Osaka University) and Okamoto Hiromichi (Prefectural University of Hiroshima). The second, “Area Studies and Historical Area Studies: Viewing Southeast Asia from its Ecological Foundations and Rural Communities” was hosted by Emeritus Professor Takaya Yoshikazu (Kyoto University) and Yanagisawa Masayuki (Center for Integrated Area Studies (CIAS)) all paid tribute to Sakurai’s achievements.

All paid tribute to the trajectory of Sakurai’s research with participants reflecting upon the various perspectives and the wide range of fields that he explored over his productive academic career.

The late Sakurai began his career as an assistant at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the predecessor of CSEAS in 1977, before assuming the position of associate professor at the De-

partment of Oriental History in the Faculty of Literature at Tokyo University in 1990. After retiring in 2007, he rejoined CSEAS as a visiting professor.

Sakurai’s own background was in oriental history and he originally studied the history of villages in Vietnam based on investigations of texts, mostly written in classical Chinese. However on joining CSEAS, he was heavily influenced by the Center’s unique approach to area studies, and came to expand the sphere of his research interests to cover Southeast Asian history. He combined his knowledge attained through fieldwork and historical studies based on the investigation of texts in order to integrate area studies methods learned at CSEAS. Thus, Sakurai played no small role in strengthening both the fields of historical studies and area studies.

In recent years, he started to show an interest in Information Science (IS) and began to participate in the Historical-Geographical Information Analysis Project which utilizes GIS (Geographical Information Systems Science), a joint research project and approach conducted in collaboration between CSEAS and the Center for Integrated Area Studies (CIAS). At the conference, former academic colleagues came together to exchange thoughts on the legacy of his broad research activities and their impact on the current situation of area studies.

Hamajima Atsutoshi (National Taiwan University) reflecting on Sakurai’s impact on historical studies in the early 1980s, explained how, in a “Symposium on Culture of Rice Cultivation in Jiang Nan” Sakurai held in 1984,<sup>1</sup> his influences had a major impact on oriental history studies which had hitherto simply relied on textual analysis and investigation. Sakurai’s research inspired Hamajima to rethink his own research style.

Fukami Sumio (Momoyama Gakuin University) paid tribute to Sakurai and the influence he had on textbooks. He discussed how a Japanese high school text book (published by Tokyo Shoseki and compiled by Sakurai) on world history came to deal with history of Southeast Asia as an independent issue and incorporate it as part of a broader view of history.

Visiting Professor Kato Tsuyoshi (Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, (RIHN)) spoke about Sakurai's recognition of Southeast Asia. Sakurai was inclined to categorize Southeast Asia's history and argued that its development stage theory arose from terms originating from the region, such as "Negara" and "Pura."<sup>2</sup> He had come to argue the differences of cultures and civilizations across certain periods of time and Kato noted how the fundamentals of Sakurai's research might have been greatly influenced by postwar historical studies in Japan. This led him to development stage theory, inflected by historical materialism as well as the history of villages in Vietnam which all influenced his descriptions of the overall history of Southeast Asia as a region.

Takaya Yoshikazu shared a moment by revealing that Sakurai had recently intended to write a novel titled "The Vietnamese" by assuming the persona of one of them, and that he aimed to go as far as anecdotally explore both the method and stance of area studies, as well to test the limits of area studies achieved as a researcher.

When Sakurai was first at CSEAS, there was not yet a momentum toward establishing cross disciplinary exchanges among different areas of interest; however, there were people who were already regarding this as an issue of importance, people such as Tsuchiya Kenji, Yano Toru, and Murai Yoshinori. We will never know if Sakurai had reached a point where he identified himself with the Vietnamese, yet his straightforward attitude in achieving his goals is worthy of praise.

Professor Shibayama Mamoru (CIAS) commented that Sakurai's vast accumulation of data for starting his research on Bach Coc villages in the Red River Delta in 1993 was an indication of his desire to stick to facts so as to understand his subject matter. As such, Sakurai's more recent approaches to Area Informatics (AI) also reflected his ongoing efforts to overcome the difficulties in capturing different realities within a broad field through the application of the latest Information Science (IS) technology.

Toward the end of the conference one poignant question was raised by a younger scholar, a graduate student at the Graduate School of Asian and African Studies (ASAFAS) who did not know Sakurai;

"With research interests, there are two stances. One is to stay close to the area, and the other is to take a step back to secure objectivity. I wonder if area studies today has become too academic."

The Director of CSEAS, Professor Shimizu Hiromu responded, in the light of his own career in anthropology, spurred by his desire to escape from the afterglow of U.S. military occupation and his own postwar experience of growing up in Yokosuka, that "area studies teaches us how to maintain distance as the focus of our interest," finishing with a call to the next generation of area studies students. The conference covered over 50 years

of his research and brought into sharp relief the issues which area studies now faces. It also brought gave us an opportunity to bring together both new and old area studies researchers for furthering the field.

Sakurai Yumio leaves behind his wife Mieko and two children Shizuho and Koshi.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Watabe Tadayo and Sakurai Yumio. 1984. *Chugoku Konano no Inasaku Bunka: Sono Gakusaiteki Kenkyu* [Rice Culture in Jiangnan, China]. Tokyo: Hosho Shuppan.

<sup>2</sup> Ishii Yoneo and Sakurai Yumio. 1985. *Tonan Ajia Sekai no Keisei* (Sekai no Rekishi Bijuaru Ban 12 [The formation of the Southeast Asian World]). Tokyo: Kodansha.

# Visiting Fellows

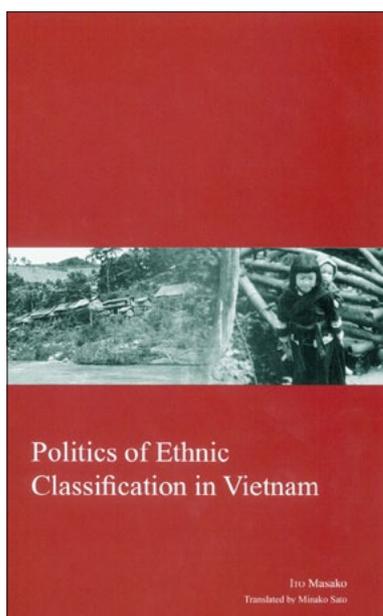
CSEAS is accepting applicants semiannually for about 14 positions for scholars and researchers who work on Southeast Asia, or any one of the countries in that region, to spend 3 to 12 months in Kyoto to conduct research, write, or pursue other scholarly activities in connection with their field of study. Since 1975, more than 300 distinguished scholars have availed themselves of the Center's considerable scholarly resources and enjoyed the invigorating atmosphere of scenic Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan and the main repository of the country's cultural treasures, to pursue their interests in Southeast Asian Area Studies. The Center's multi-disciplinary character and the diverse research interests of its faculty offer visiting scholars an ideal opportunity for the exchange of ideas and the cultivation of comparative perspectives. The highly competitive selection process has brought to the Center in recent years researchers from Southeast Asian countries, Bangladesh, China, Korea, and western countries including the United States and France. The visiting fellows represent various basic disciplines in their study of Southeast Asia, and their official posts

in their home institutions include teacher, researcher, librarian, journalist, and NGO worker. Information and Technology (IT) experts who conduct research on Southeast Asia are also joining the Center, not only to manage various database systems but also to construct academic networks for area study throughout the world. Successful applicants receive an appropriate stipend to cover international travel, housing, and living expenses in Kyoto. Research funds will also be provided to facilitate his/her work. Funds will also be allocated for domestic travel, subject to government regulations, and a number of other facilities are available to visiting scholars. Fellows will be expected to reside in Kyoto for the duration of their fellowship period. Fellows are normally invited to deliver a public lecture during their term at the Center and encouraged to submit an article for possible publication in the Center's journal, *Southeast Asian Studies* and to contribute to the online journal *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*. CSEAS also received researchers, both Japanese and foreign, who visit on their own funds or on external fellowships.

Name	Period	Affiliation/Position	Research Title
Sylavong, Latsamay	1.6.2013~30.11.2013	Country Representative, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	REDD, National Policy and Local Livelihoods in Developing Countries: Development of Institutional Arrangements and Mechanisms to Distribute Benefits
Dasgupta, Swapan Kumar	1.4.2013~30.9.2013	Director, Project Division, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD)	Rural Development in Bangladesh: Experiences of GOs and NGOs
Setiawan, Boni	1.4.2013~29.6.2013	Associate, Institute for Global Justice (IGJ)	Political Economy of the Supply Chain
Widiyoko, Darmaji	10.2.2013~28.6.2013	Student of Development Studies at Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB)	A Study on Eco Airport in Indonesia
Kimura, Ehito	3.1.2013~8.31.2013	Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Hawai'i at Manoa	Justice and Reconciliation in Comparative Perspective
Kong, Jianxun	2013.8.1~2014.1.31	Professor, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences	Outbound Labor Migration and Changing Agricultural Life in the Ethnic Minority Areas of Southern Yunnan Province
Diffloth, Gérard Felix	2013.7.1~2013.12.31	Associate Member, École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Cambodia branch, Siem Reap	Linguistic History of the East-Khmuic (Austroasiatic) Languages
Pokhrel, Chandra Prasad	2013.9.1~2013.12.31	Lecturer, Central Department of Botany, Institute of Science and Technology, Tribhuvan University	Impact of Climate Change on Mountain and Hill Agriculture

List of Visiting Research Fellows, Visiting Researchers, and Visiting Project Researchers at CSEAS

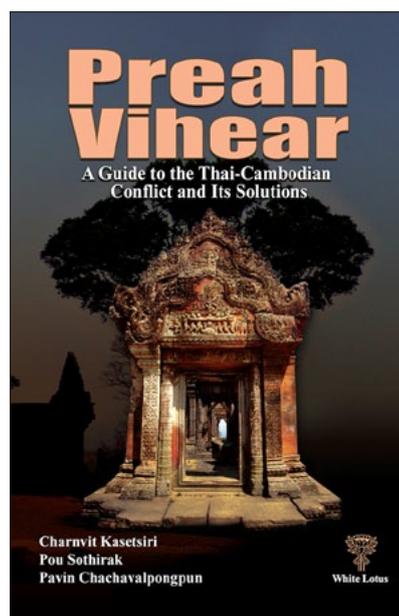
# Publications



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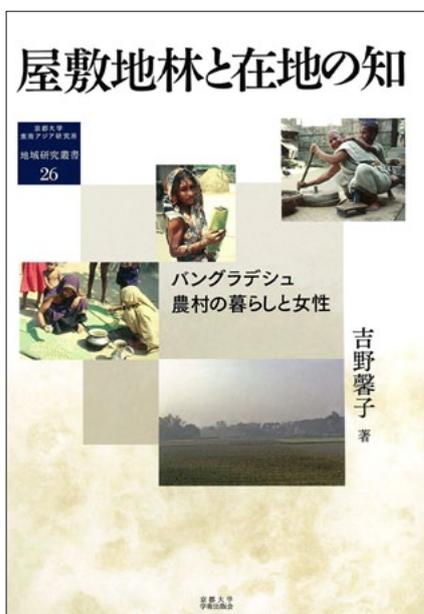
## ***Politics of Ethnic Classification in Vietnam***

Ito, Masako. 2013. Kyoto University Press



## ***Preah Vihear: A Guide to Thai-Cambodian Conflict and Its Solutions***

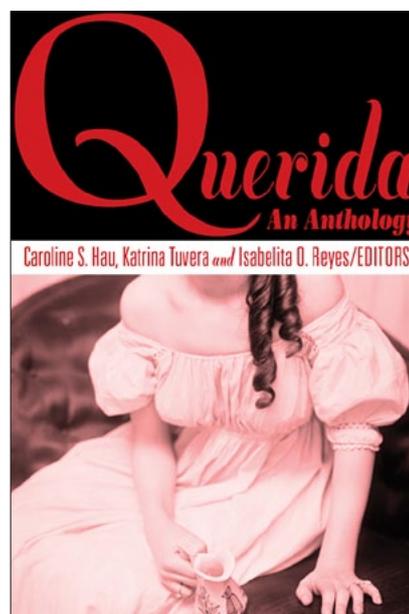
Charnvit Kasetsiri, Pou Sothirak and Pavin Chachavalpongpun. 2013. Bangkok: White Lotus



Kyoto Area Studies on Asia (in Japanese) No. 26

## ***Homesteads and Indigenous Knowledge: Rural Life and Women in Bangladesh (in Japanese)***

Yoshino, Keiko. 2013. Kyoto: Kyoto University Press



## ***Querida: An Anthology***

Caroline Sy Hau, Katrina P. Tavera and Isabelita O. Reyes. 2013. Manila: Anvil



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