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# NSC

# HIGHLIGHTS

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- Zheng He as the Symbol of Chinese Muslims in Indonesia
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- Ancient Money in Southeast Asia - Part 2

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IMAGE:  
ARCA DWARAPALA (GUARDIAN STATUE), EAST  
JAVA, INDONESIA. TAKEN DURING THE NSC FIELD  
SCHOOL. (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)



## NSC Highlights

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## The Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (NSC)

at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore, pursues research on historical interactions among Asian societies and civilisations. It serves as a forum for the comprehensive study of the ways in which Asian polities and societies have interacted over time through religious, cultural, and economic exchanges, and diasporic networks. The Centre also offers innovative strategies for examining the manifestations of hybridity, convergence and mutual learning in a globalising Asia.

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# Editorial



DETAIL OF RELIEF AT CANDI JAGO, TAKEN DURING THE NSC FIELD SCHOOL IN EAST JAVA, INDONESIA. (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)

This is the final issue of NSC Highlights. There are new plans for future publications even as we mark the 10th anniversary of the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (NSC). Set up in 2009, the Centre was the initiative of the Singapore government to enhance India's links to the East Asian Summit (EAS) through research and intellectual exchange. NSC was thus located at ISEAS to complement the re-establishment of the ancient Nalanda University in Bihar, India, and to examine Southeast Asia's historical, cultural and trade links to India in order to explore ancient civilizational networks between them.

Since 2009, NSC has hosted 40 Visiting Fellows of varying ranks and experience who have contributed to capacity and reputation of the Centre. Over the decade, it has published 34 academically well regarded books, organised 164 public seminars, and 80 conferences and workshops. NSC also pioneered the archaeological Field School which hosted students from EAS member countries in Cambodia and most recently, Indonesia, to immerse

them in the civilizational histories of these countries. The aim of the Field School was to nurture an EAS identity and develop a community of young scholars interested in Southeast Asia. There have been six Field Schools since 2012 with over 80 students benefiting from the unique experience. NSC also initiated the NSC-Nalanda University Internship Programme where MA students from Nalanda University would spend a month at ISEAS to use its library and network with experts in the region. This Internship Programme was designed to support the academic development of the university.

NSC has also contributed to Singapore's bicentennial anniversary. Since July 2018, NSC has hosted a series of seminars entitled "1819 and Before: Singapore's Pasts" to introduce the premodern and early history of Singapore, and to locate it in the broader region. Seminar titles include "Why Was There No Singapore Before Raffles?"; "The Orang Laut and the Realm of the Straits"; "Buddhist Accounts of Maritime Crossings in the Southern Seas"; "Portuguese and Dutch Records for Singapore before

1819"; "What More Can Archaeology Tell Us about Singapore's Past?"; "The Mysterious Malay Jong and Other Temasek Shipping", and "The Inception of Lion City". I am grateful to Kwa Chong Guan for helping this special series.

I am in the debt of previous NSC Heads who steadily contributed to NSC in their own ways. Tansen Sen was the inaugural head from 2008 to August 2012, followed by Ooi Kee Beng from August 2012 to January 2014; followed by Derek Heng from January 2014 to July 2015; and finally, Terence Chong from July 2015 to present.

In the meantime, we hope you will enjoy this issue of NSC Highlights and continue to support us in our research endeavours.

## Knowledge Transfers in 14th and 15th Century Java

BY KENNETH R. HALL  
PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY,  
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FIGURE 1: CENTRAL JAVA MOUNTAIN TEMPLE RITUAL. (CREDIT: K. R. HALL)

"The land of Java has become more and more renowned for its purifying power in the World. It is only India and Java that are noted for their excellence as fine places [...] And so constantly all kinds of people come from other countries in countless numbers [...] Namely India, Cambodia, China, Yawana [Vietnam], Champa, the Carnatic [South India] and so on, [...] sailing on ships with merchants in large numbers, Monks and priests in particular -- when they come they are given food and are happy to stay." (*Nagarakertagama*, 83.2-4, in Robson 1995: 85, and Robson 1997: 434).

The passage above comes from a 14th century kakawin (long narrative poem) called *Nagarakertagama* (also known as *Desawarnana*) written by Mpu Prapanca as a eulogy on Hayam Wuruk, a Javanese king of the Majapahit Empire, supposedly during its greatest extent. Mpu Prapanca asserts in the passage that Java's continued patronage of Indic religion was vital to Java's continuity in an increasingly destabilising 'global' world in which only India and Java were stable civilizations as they remained dedicated to Hindu-Buddhist virtues. This passage should be seen in context with the Hindu-Buddhist perspective in mind, as several courts and areas in the Southeast Asian maritime world had begun converting to Islam.



FIGURE 2: TRADITIONAL BALI DANCE/GONG ORCHESTRA. (CREDIT: K. R. HALL)

The passage is significant in that it highlights Java's external 'knowledge networking' contacts over its international marketplace exchanges, including the intellectual dialogue facilitated by 'monks and priests' who travelled on merchant ships and established residency in stable Java (Figures 3 and 4). Of interest is how Java is presented as both India's wealthy as well as contented<sup>1</sup> peer, and there is less focus on Java's material prosperity but more on its 'purifying [spiritual] power' and the consequent superior quality of its culture. It is notable that the citation pairs Java with India as one of the two 'excellent' Asian cultural centres, as China is relegated to the longer list of linked 'material' trading societies that follows.

Revisionist scholarship focal to Southeast Asia has redefined traditional literacy as being more than the transmission of knowledge in print or script, and instead embraces the notion that knowledge of the written word in traditional religious and secular texts did not necessarily translate into readership. However, the alternative knowledge transfers based in traditional textual transmission in oral recitations or in dramatic, musical, and dance rituals allowed illiterate

and semi-literate public to share these written texts in communal reading sessions, religious ceremonies, and dramatic and musical performances (Wappel 2017; Sprey 2017; Hall 2017).

Contemporary scholars study regional written texts, inscriptions, and iconographic portrayals of texts at temples in Java and wider maritime Southeast Asia as these have emerged from rich pre-print literary written and oral traditions. Long-standing oral renditions of texts continued in both formal and informal settings, as the initial texts were widely sung, read, and performed, adding to the text body movements, facial expressions, languages, musical traditions, and contextual practices that connected the pre-printed literary forms -- notably lontar palm leaf texts that remain the source of oral recitations. Unlike the Western notion that literary consumption was done through private reading and study, in Java and elsewhere in contemporary Southeast Asia there is still a range of performing arenas from households to wider public spaces (including television) that connect performance and other representations of textual matter in ways that allow variable consumption of sacred texts

“[In the *Nagarakertagama*] Java is presented as both India’s wealthy as well as contented peer, and there is less focus on Java’s material prosperity but more on its ‘purifying [spiritual] power’ and the consequent superior quality of its culture.”

and historical chronicles (Figure 1). This continuity of the oral drama, dance, and pre-print traditions prevents the written text from being fixed, as multiple reading, recitation, and consumptive practices encouraged personal appropriations that still shape Southeast Asia’s popular literary marketplace (Figure 2).

In sum, these revisionist studies are based in distinctive knowledge transfers characteristic of Java’s evolving literary traditions – from the culminating Hindu-Buddhist era of dynastic sovereignty portrayed in the 14th century *Nagarakertagama* chronicle during the formative years of the Majapahit court to the fifteenth-century *Pararaton*, which characterises the Majapahit court during its decline. From the late 15th century, the transition to Islamic sultanates is recorded in the *Babad* literature initiated by the new downstream Islamic courts. These innovative Islamic texts legitimised the transition of dynastic power from Java’s upstream wet-rice agricultural centres to its subsequent downstream multi-cultural Islamic port-of-trade marketplaces that had regular international engagements. The multiple north coast Islamic port-polity marketplaces superseded the power of the previous upstream courts as portrayed in the 17th century *Babad* chronicle poems composed by Islamic clerics at the original downstream sultanate courts. Eventually, downstream courts were displaced by the new Mataram sultanate court in the productive central Java upstream near modern-day Yogyakarta, which was nearby the earlier foundational centres of Javanese Hindu-Buddhist spiritual and textual tradition at Prambanan and Borobudur.

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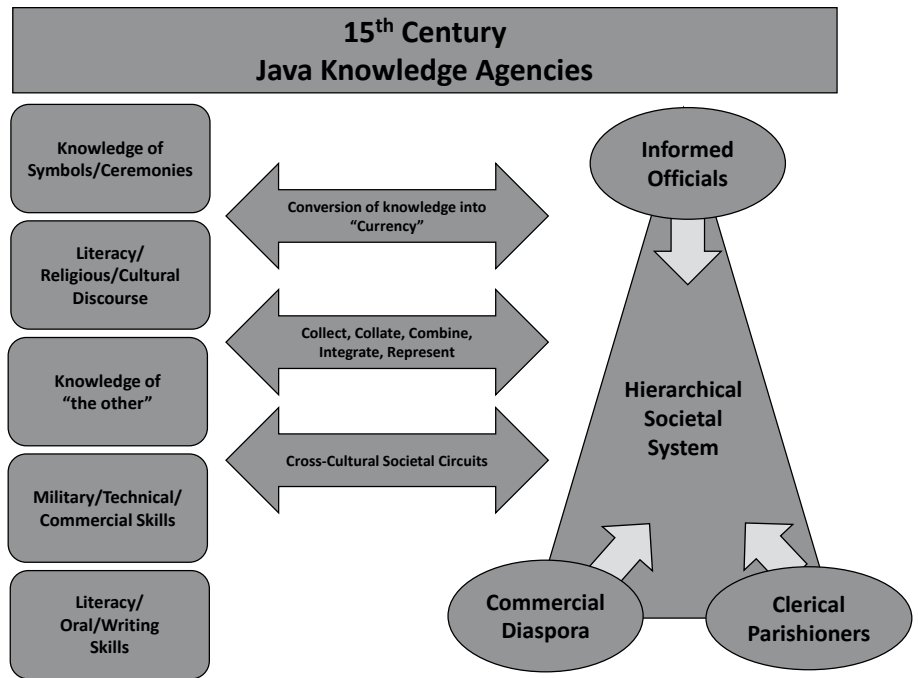


FIGURE 3: 15TH CENTURY JAVA KNOWLEDGE AGENCIES. (CREDIT: K. R. HALL)

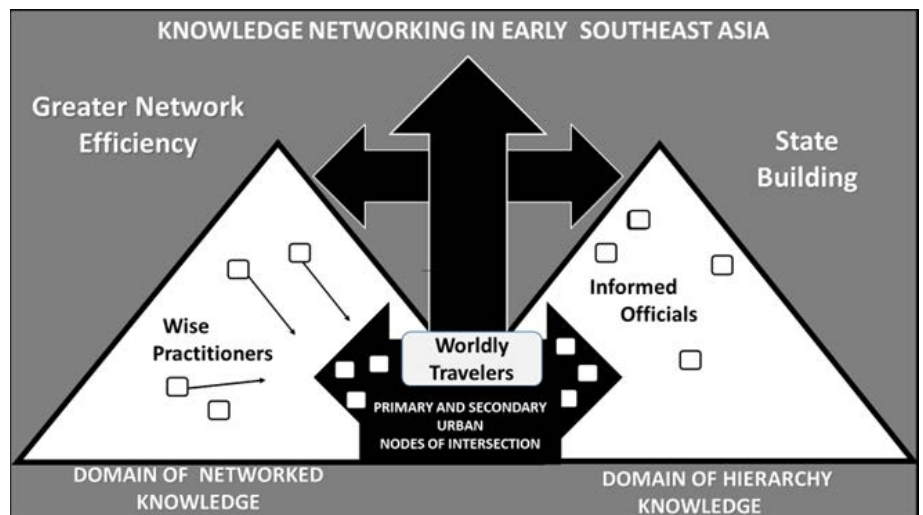


FIGURE 4: 15TH CENTURY JAVA KNOWLEDGE AGENCIES. (CREDIT: K. R. HALL)

THE ADVISORY BOARD OF THE JOURNAL OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE ORIENT, AND WAS A FULBRIGHT SENIOR SCHOLAR/PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION AT GADJAH MADA UNIVERSITY IN INDONESIA (2003-2004) AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES AT THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF PHNOM PENH (2012).

<sup>1</sup>As Java is said to have food to spare.

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# Zheng He as the Symbol of Chinese Muslims in Indonesia

BY LEO SURYADINATA  
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FIGURE 1: CHENG HOO MOSQUE IN SURABAYA, EAST JAVA, INDONESIA. (CREDIT: WILSON TJANDINEGARA, COURTESY OF LEO SURYADINATA)

Admiral Zheng He (郑和<sup>1</sup> 1371-1433/1435) is a well-known historical Chinese Muslim figure among the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, but less so among the non-Chinese, as during the Suharto period (1966-1998), the government policy towards the Chinese was one of total assimilation, and the Chinese, even Muslim Chinese, were expected to become “indigenous” Indonesians by abandoning their “Chinese-ness”. Anything which appeared to be “Chinese” was not acceptable. This policy also applied to the interpretation of Islam, as Professor Slamet Muljana’s (1968) book which mentioned the spread of Islam from China and the role of ethnic Chinese in spreading the religion was immediately banned. The Suharto government took the position of only accepting one official version, where Islam was brought into Indonesia from Saudi Arabia directly or/and through the Gujarat region of India; there was no third route, which was via China.

However, with the fall of Suharto in May 1998 and the era of globalisation, the total assimilation policy was abandoned

and cultural pluralism was accepted. The official interpretation of Islamic history in Indonesia has also been reviewed, with many “indigenous” Indonesian Muslim scholars who began to re-examine the issue. Scholars, led by those such as Sumanto Al Qurtuby of Nahdlatul Ulama (2003), began to accept the third route, which was from China, and they also acknowledged the role of local Chinese Muslims in spreading Islam among the Javanese.

The new era of cultural pluralism also meant that the Indonesian Muslim community had begun to accept the Chinese type of Islam, where mosques had Chinese architectural features and Zheng He was seen as an Islamic leader. Chinese Muslims were also free to keep their ethnic identity. Associations such as the Persatuan Tionghoa Islam Indonesia (PITI) which was changed to Pembina Iman Tauhid Islam during the Suharto era, readopted its pre-Orde Baru name, as a way to show others that it was a Chinese Muslim Association. Together with the local Chinese community in Surabaya, the PITI in 2002 established the Masjid

*“The Suharto government took the position of only accepting one official version, where Islam was brought into Indonesia from Saudi Arabia directly or/and through the Gujarat region of India; there was no third route, which was via China.”*

Cheng Hoo (Zheng He Mosque).

The mosque architecture in Surabaya was based on another mosque located in Beijing’s Niu Jie (Cow Street), which is thought to be the oldest Chinese mosque in Beijing. The walls of the Cheng Hoo Mosque was carved with the reliefs of Zheng He and his voyages. It should be noted that the mosque was not exclusively for Chinese Muslims but also open to all. Indeed, many non-Chinese Indonesian muslims pray in the Cheng Hoo Mosque and participated in mosque’s activities. Within the last 14 years, then, this led to



FIGURE 2: ZHENG HE STATUE IN SAM PO KONG TEMPLE, SEMARANG, INDONESIA. (CREDIT: 22KARTIKA / WIKIMEDIA)

a proliferation of other Chinese mosques; at least 10 Cheng Hoo mosques were established in Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. The latest Cheng Hoo Mosque with a pesantren (boarding school) was built in Banyuwangi (East Java) in 2016. There are also three more mosques which did not bear the name of Cheng Hoo but were built in the Chinese architectural style.

In fact, the influence of Chinese Muslims to Indonesian Islam, especially Islam in Java, was quite well-known among scholars. There was discussion in the past that at least four of the nine Wali Songo (Nine Islamic Saints) in Java were of ethnic Chinese origins. These Nine Islamic Saints are believed to be the notable figures who succeeded in

Islamising Java. Many of their graves were built in accordance with Chinese architectural features. Many ancient mosques in Java also had Chinese characteristics. It can be said that Chinese architecture was not new for the Indonesian Muslim community. However, during the Suharto era when the anti-Chinese sentiments were strong, anything with Chinese characteristics had to be suppressed, if not eliminated.

It is ironic that the Chinese identity was expressed through Islam and was accepted by the “indigenous” community, especially in Java. Nevertheless, Indonesian mainstream Islam wanted to project its liberal aspect and tended to be accommodative; it was prepared to accept Chinese Islam. Ethnicity in

Islam has been allowed; many young Islamic preachers of Chinese descent purposely highlighted their ethnic identity. They even used Chinese names (e.g. Tan Mei Hwa, Koko Lim) and Chinese costumes in order to show that there was no conflict between Islam and Chinese-ness. Nevertheless, the language that they used in preaching is Indonesian as the majority of these preachers are Peranakan Chinese: i.e. local-born Indonesian-speaking Chinese.

**1Zheng He has now become the symbol of Chinese Muslims in Indonesia.**

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# Sang Sapurba/Maulivarmadeva, First of the Last Indo-Malay Kings

BY IAIN SINCLAIR  
NSC VISITING FELLOW



FIGURE 1: BUKIT SIGUNTANG IN PALEMBANG, SUMATRA, INDONESIA, WHERE SANG SAPURBA AND HIS ENTOURAGE FIRST APPEARED, ACCORDING TO THE "SEJARAH MELAYU." 2012. (CREDIT: FOO SHU TIENG)

One of the last precolonial dynasties which ruled parts of present-day Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia from the 13th century onwards traces its origin back to Sang Sapurba. The deeds of Sang Sapurba have so far been known primarily from the *Sejarah Melayu* (SM) literature. This family of texts (formally titled *Sulalat al-Salatin*) has some fanciful elements in its storytelling and has been regarded as doubtful history. Nonetheless, historians have been extracting information from these texts ever since John Leyden's *Malay Annals* translation was published in 1821. We are just starting to learn how, when, and why the various layers and versions of the SM came about (Chambert-Loir 2017A). The possibility that Sang Sapurba is a historical person, the king Maulivarmadeva, has been raised before (Drakoff 1999:242); here I explore this possibility by looking further into the available evidence.

Sang Sapurba was not so much a miraculous figure as a man at the centre of events that are seen as miraculous. In the narratives of the SM, he arrives with two companions at Bukit Siguntang (a hill in present-day Palembang, South Sumatra - Figure 1), meeting girls who

own rice fields there. They see his crown and perceive him as a divine being. The girls call him Sang Sapurba, after Suprabhā, a nymph in Indra's heaven, who features in the *Mahābhārata* and its Malay and Old Javanese retellings (Winstedt 1938:2). Though this name is a respectful acknowledgement of *deva* status, it is clearly a kind of nickname. Likewise, when the noblewomen who sleep with Sang Sapurba break out in spots (*kedal*), this is also taken as a sign of his divinity; however, it may in actuality be an early reference to a certain STD (Boomgaard 2007:25). In any case, Sang Sapurba affirms that he and his entourage are just men (*manusia*). According to the SM, Sang Sapurba is coronated as an Indo-Malay king, one who is both *bangsa hindustan* and *raja malayu*.

## The *ciri* proclamation

In the SM, the formal titles of Sang Sapurba are announced in Sanskrit by the herald, Baṭṭī, in a proclamation called the *ciri*. While the text of the *ciri* has become degraded over the centuries, a recent study has begun to unpack it (Adam 2016:373ff). From this the name elements in the *ciri* would seem to include: *tribhuvana*, "of three-

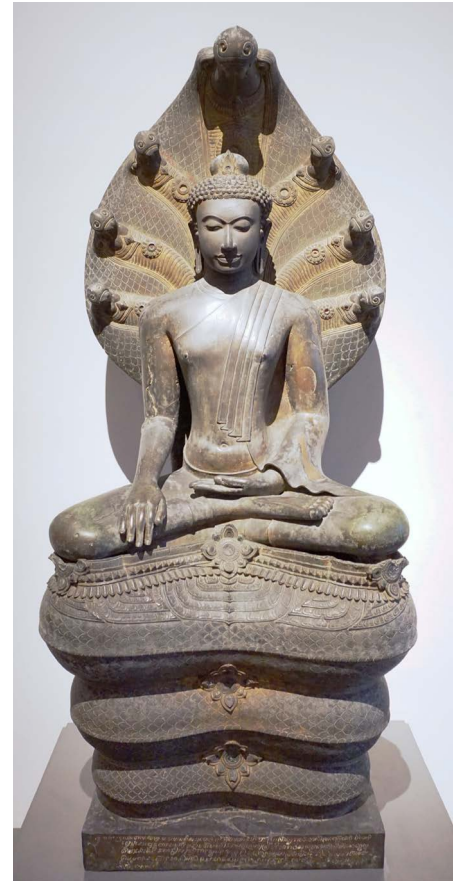


FIGURE 2: THE BUDDHA OF GRAHI, NATIONAL MUSEUM, BANGKOK. (CREDIT: PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANANDAJYOTI BHIKKHU, CC BY-SA 3.0)

worlds", a common title of a universal ruler; *dharmarāja*, "religious/righteous king", as some Buddhist monarchs called themselves; and *adhirāja*, "über-king", an absolute sovereign, subject to nobody. There is also the title *maulin*, "crown-haver." The *Sejarah Melayu* emphasises that Sang Sapurba's right to the throne is essentially due to his owning a crown. Therefore, it is no great leap to suppose that Sang Sapurba, being called a Tribuana king, divine, and a *maulin* within this literature, has a formal name such as Tribhuvana Maulivarmadeva.

## The Amoghapāśa pedestal inscription, 1286

Maulivarmadeva, the historical ruler, is identified in a 1286 inscription on the pedestal of a statue found in Sumatra's Minangkabau highlands. The statue depicts the eight-armed bodhisattva





FIGURE 3: SANG NILA UTAMA, SON OF SANG SAPURBA AND SCION OF THE TRIBUANIC DYNASTY. SCULPTED BY HONG HAI ENVIRONMENTAL ART FOR SINGAPORE'S BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS. KUALA TEMASEK, PRESENT-DAY NORTH BOAT QUAY, SINGAPORE. 2019. (CREDIT: IAIN SINCLAIR)

Amoghapāśa, a form of Avalokiteśvara. It was crafted in Java and installed in Sumatra by officials acting on the orders of Singhasari king Kṛtanagara (r. 1268–1292). The inscription states that the statue is fit to be worshipped by the caste society of Melayu, led by the Tribhuvana king Maulivarmadeva (Ferrand 1922:123–4). There is no mention of the matriarchal society of the Minangkabau.

In this inscription Kṛtanagara calls himself *mahārājādhirāja*, while Maulivarmadeva is called only *mahārāja*. As the latter is subject to the former, the statue no doubt formalises the subordination of Melayu to Java. Javanese sources such as the *Pararaton* would suggest that this situation was the result of the long military campaign launched against the Malays (*pamalayu*) by Kṛtanagara in 1275. Reading the SM in this light, one wonders whether the Javanese campaign was provoked by Sang Sapurba's assertion of *adhirāja* status on their borders – in effect, a declaration of independence – which ended in his fleeing to the remote Minangkabau hills.

It is possible to identify Sang Sapurba with the Maulivarmadeva of the Amoghapāśa inscription in so far as they both appear to be ruling the same region at the same time. The pedestal inscription identifies Maulivarmadeva as the king of “Malay country” (*bhūmi malāyu*). And Sang Sapurba, according to one version of the *Sejarah Melayu*, abandoned Palembang and finally settled down as the king of Malay Minangkabau after moving around the Archipelago

(Leyden 1821:39; cf. Adam 2016:47). He would have to have moved there by the 1280s, judging by the chronology that has Sang Sapurba's son and heir apparent, Tribuana Nila Utama, arriving at Kuala Temasek (Figure 3) and founding Singapura by 1299 (Linehan 1947:120). If

“An ornate, heavy crown (*baibao jinguan zhongshen* 百宝金冠重甚) was already a defining element of Sriwijaya kingship in the early 13th century.”

this identification is accepted, it enhances the credibility of the version of the *Sejarah Melayu* that distinguishes Sang Sapurba from Nila Utama, and diminishes the version that conflates these two Tribuana kings (Chambert-Loir 2017A:169).

### The Buddha of Grahi, c. 1183–1291

A bronze statue of outstanding workmanship, the “Buddha of Grahi” now kept at Bangkok National Museum (Figure 2), may also be tied to Maulivarmadeva. It comes from a monastery in Grahi, now known as Chaiya, in Southern Thailand. In 1225 this region was reported by Zhao Rukuo (赵汝适) to be a dependency of Sriwijaya (Hirth & Rockhill 1911:62). The statue was commissioned by the military governor of Grahi at the

request of *mahārāja* Trailokyarāja-maulibhūṣaṇavarmadeva. This name is practically synonymous with that of the Tribhuvana king Maulivarmadeva (de Casparis 1967:34–35). The presence of this statue at the northern edge of the Malay world might illuminate the claim that Sang Sapurba soon became “well known in all countries” (*masyhurlah segala negeri*). On the other hand, the age of the statue is controversial, and likewise, its association with the Indo-Malay Maulivarmadeva needs to be substantiated.

The base of the Buddha of Grahi is inscribed in the Kawi script – common in Sriwijaya – with a date that appears to have five numerals. There is no firm consensus on how to correct this date. One emendation results in the Śaka year 1105, i.e. 1183 CE; this is well before Maulivarmadeva's time. Another proposal gives a year that resolves as 1291 CE (de Casparis 1961:38 n.25). It can be added here that the day–month–sexagenary year components of the date are also compatible with the current Śaka year 1190, that is, 1267 CE. Whether any of these dates can be confirmed remains to be seen. Art-historical assessments of the statue's age are inconclusive (Woodward 2003:194–195). Without a more solid identification, it would have to be assumed that an earlier, albeit unknown, king of Sriwijaya used the name element *maulin*. An ornate, heavy crown (*baibao jinguan zhongshen* 百宝金冠重甚) was already a defining element of Sriwijaya kingship in the early 13th century, according to Zhao (Hirth & Rockhill 1911:61).

### Ādityavarman's rededication of Amoghapāśa, 1347

Finally, Sang Sapurba may be referred to in the inscriptions of the Sumatran king Ādityavarman (c. 1294–1376). It is generally accepted that Ādityavarman is Maulivarmadeva's grandson (Kulke 2009:232). Ādityavarman's mother has been identified as Dara Jingga, one of two “princess brides” brought from Melayu to the Singhasari court in 1293 at the end of the *pamalayu* campaign. (In one version of the SM, the daughters of the Bukit Siguntang group have the title Dara.) His father, Advayavarman, a Javanese courtier, is probably one of the officials who installed the abovementioned Amoghapāśa statue. By 1347 Ādityavarman had left the court in Java and relocated to Minangkabau. He moved the statue off its pedestal, reconsecrated it, and inscribed a long Sanskrit dedication on its rear face (Figure 4), thereby “appropriating” it (Reichle 2007:127).

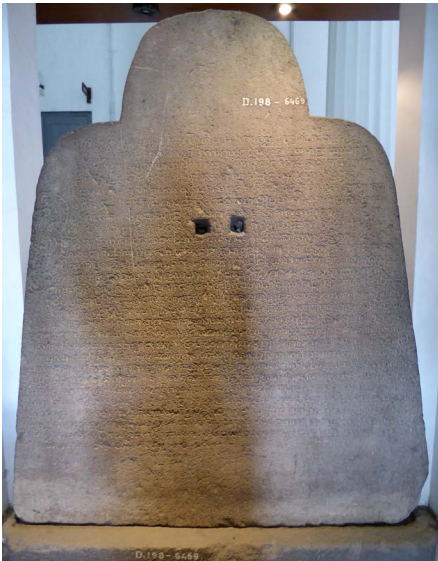


FIGURE 4: ĀDITYAVARMAN'S INSCRIPTION (PRASASTI AMOGHAPASA) IN PRAISE OF THE MĀTĀŅĠŚĀ, 1347 CE, TOGETHER WITH ITS BASE (PRASASTI PADANG ROCO), 1285 CE. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF INDONESIA, JAKARTA. (CREDIT: PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANANDAJYOTI BHIKKHU, CC BY-SA 3.0)

A couple of verses in the new dedication praise the “lord of the low-caste girls” (*mātāṅgīśa*) who sports with heavenly nymphettes (Chatterji 1967:194). These verses have been taken as descriptions of Ādityavarman or, less probably, “the demoniac form of Amoghapāśa.” It would be more fitting if they alluded to the story of the late Sang Sapurba, who was seen by the farmgirls at Bukit Siguntang to have “come down from the heavens” (*turun dari keinderaan*). Illustrious ancestors are, of course, common subjects in royal eulogies. In the same dedication Ādityavarman calls himself Maulimañivarmadeva, the “jewel in the crown” of his grandfather.

From these observations, it can be deduced that Maulivarmadeva took control of the remnants of Sriwijaya, perhaps as early as 1267; was at war with Java in 1275, reduced to a vassal by 1286; had probably ended his reign by 1293, but left at least two lines of succession; and is the same person as Sang Sapurba. Much more could be written about the historicity of Sang Sapurba and the extent of his legacy. Suffice to say that the line represented by Ādityavarman disintegrated in the late 14th century, while the line of Nila Utama established in Singapura was continued in the form of the Malacca Sultanate.

Of course, the high Sanskritic culture and religion of the Indo-Malay kings is long gone. Nonetheless, the SM literature has provided a template for the exercise of Malay power in more recent times. Moreover, Stamford Raffles' decision

to establish modern Singapore was influenced by it, through Leyden and others. As such, our ongoing attention to the precolonial narratives of the Malay world is more than justified.

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'Henri Chambert-Loir (2017B:219) has pointed out that the bard's name is transcribed in Jawi with a *shadda* sign of gemination, i.e. as Baṭṭ. If so, perhaps the word *baṭṭ* is a miscopy of the word *bandi* “bard, herald,” resulting from the ligature *ndi*  $\text{ᮊᮥ}$  being mistaken for *ṭṭa*  $\text{ᮊᮥ}$  in the Kawi script.

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# The Two-World Problem: The Language of Archaeology in the Post-Colonial Landscape

BY NOEL HIDALGO TAN  
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Like many scientific fields in Southeast Asia, archaeological knowledge exists in Two Worlds: the English-speaking world, and the world of archaeology described in local languages (and to a certain extent, the non-English colonial languages). This is a consequence of post-colonial historical trajectories. One of the lasting reactions against European colonialism in Southeast Asia was the development of national languages (e.g. Thai, Filipino, Bahasa, Myanma) and the production of knowledge in these languages. This occurred even as English was used as the common international language of trade and science – this in itself is a post-colonial legacy.

A good starting point to illustrate this two-world problem is from my own experience researching rock art in Southeast Asia. In 2011 the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO SPAFA) conducted a workshop in Thailand on rock art studies. One of the activities in the workshop was to translate rock art terms into native Southeast Asian languages (Figure 1).

The responses of our colleagues from Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Timor-Leste were interesting. The Thai and Malay terms (*sinlapa tham* and *lukisan gua* respectively) literally translated to cave art, which in turn is a translation of a misconception – not all rock art exist in caves. Other translations, such as the Filipino and Khmer are much more faithful translations, but as I recall, for some languages, this was the first time the terms were translated.

English rock art terminology emphasises the method of production as its classification system, e.g.: the distinction between two main classes of rock art being petroglyphs (created by the removal of rock) and pictograms (created by the application of material onto rock). These classes can be further subdivided, e.g.: drawings (dry-medium pictograms) and paintings (wet-medium pictograms). In this case, the lack of equivalent terms in many local languages is part of the Two-World problem.

Country	Writing Language	Karaoke Language
Cambodia	ភ្នំស្រី	Komnou Loeu Thmor
Lao PDR	HOUDTAMYAU PHANANGHINE	
Malaysia	LUKISAN GUA	LU KI SAN GU A
Myanmar	ကျောက်ပုံရိပ် ကျောက်စာ	Kyauk-gu Bagyi Kyaukthwin Bagyi
Philippines	BATONG SINLAG	BATONG SI NIAG
Singapore	ROCK ART	ROK AHRT
Thailand	หินรูป หิน	sil-la-pa- Tham
Timor Leste	PINTURAS IHA FATUR LOLON	
Vietnam	NGHỆ THUẬT ĐÁ	NGHỆ THUẬT ĐÁ

FIGURE 1: UNTANGLING THE TERMINOLOGY OF ROCK ART, AN ACTIVITY FROM THE SEAMEO SPAFA WORKSHOP ON ROCK ART RESEARCH IN 2011. (CREDIT: NOEL HIDALGO TAN)

Besides the problem of equivalent vocabulary, there is also a problem of language equivalency. As English has become the dominant language of academia and science, non-English language sources have become “invisible.” It should be noted that the current renaissance of rock art research in Southeast Asia was not spurred by a sudden change in research direction, but rather, due to an increased awareness

of research written in local languages. In most overviews of rock art research in Southeast Asia written from the 1980s to early 2000s, they give the distinct impression that rock art is rare in Southeast Asia: in Anati’s (1994) map rock art in the world is devoid of sites in SEA, and even up to the early 2000s, the persistent perception was that rock art was rare in Southeast Asia (Glover and Bellwood, although this was compared to the extremely high

bar of northern Australian Art), or that rock art was an unprofitable avenue of research (SPAFA prehistory 1984). Reviews by Anati (1994), Chen (2001), Srisuchat (1996) and Kusch (1986) relied largely on a handful of works in English, amounting to no more than 20 sites. In contrast, my current count of rock art sites in the region sits at 1,200 – a large chunk of this work is found in obscure journals or in foreign language publications. For example, a substantial body of research has been conducted on Thai rock art, consisting of over 200 sites – however, most books about Thai rock art is only published in Thai and are generally out of print.

Scholars and indeed the general public who are unable to traverse this gap between these linguistic differences have profound differences on how archaeology is understood, perceived and experienced. For example, the idea of Suvarnabhumi the so-called 'land of gold' has largely been discussed as a literary device to describe Southeast Asia in ancient times in English literature. However, in Thailand, Myanmar, and Cambodia, the public discourse treats Suvarnabhumi as an actual location, with nationalistic undertones (see Phanomvan 2018).

In Malaysia, archaeological and genetic research have been (mis)used to construct a pseudoscientific narrative of the antiquity of Malay genes, which claims that the Malays are one of the oldest distinct populations after human dispersal Out of Africa and that they were the progenitors of the Greeks and Chinese. The key arguments are laid out in a book that is published by a university press (Zaharah et al. 2016). The proponents of this pseudoscience have presented their ideas in public forums for more than a decade, but in Bahasa Malaysia and it was not until 2018 that members of the Human Genome Project have spoken out publicly against the misinterpretation of their work (Phipps et al. 2018).

This Two-World Problem is exacerbated because scholars proficient in English have a privileged position; they are able to be published in more prestigious journals and reach a larger - but paradoxically not local - audience. At the same time, scholars who do not operate in English may find their local perspectives and understanding of the past devalued or ignored. As a discipline that straddles both the humanities and sciences, archaeologists in Southeast Asia should be

*“This Two-World Problem is exacerbated because scholars proficient in English have a privileged position; they are able to be published in more prestigious journals and reach a larger - but paradoxically not local - audience. At the same time, scholars who do not operate in English may find their local perspectives and understanding of the past devalued or ignored.”*

reflexive of the fact that there may be (and is often the case) an extensive body of research in the local languages. More critically, there is a need to facilitate the sharing of such knowledge across these two worlds. In this regard, I would like to suggest a small but significant change in the way we share our knowledge as a starting effort: by writing titles, abstracts and keywords in both English and the relevant native local language. This would automatically widen a paper's searchability in the World Wide Web and also enhance its accessibility. Several journals in the region, including the SPAFA Journal which I manage, have this policy as a way to make research accessible internationally and locally.

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## Ancient Money in Southeast Asia - Part 2

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*Monetaria moneta*  
French Polynesia, Marquesas Islands  
NMR 49763. Common size 25 mm

FIGURE 1: *MONETARIA MONETA*. (CREDIT: [WORMS](#), IMAGE BY JOOP TRAUSEL AND FRANS SLIEKER, NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM ROTTERDAM, [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#))

This short article on shell money introduces the current understandings, highlights the research gaps, and suggests areas with further research potential. It follows an earlier article which introduced some theories about monetisation and the use of coins (see Foo 2018). The study of shell money as a type of currency is of global importance as it can provide different insights into the role of market forces in global monetisation, rather than one which is primarily predicated on the supply by mints (Yang 2019: 257-259).

Archaeologically, shells may be interpreted as being an exotic good when they are found in contexts beyond the normal food exploitation areas, having been carried inland from coastal areas (measured as an expense in time and labour) and may take on symbolic and ritual value (Trubbit 2003). Shells found in archaeological contexts at coastal sites are usually interpreted as a coastal resource if they are not worked with the evidence of additional processing, and ethnographic and historical information would have to be used if alternative interpretations are suggested. Indeed, to say that an artefact is in fact money usually requires ethnographic or written sources to corroborate that claim.

Given that shell money can be traded in either a modified (pierced or chipped, and then threaded on strings with a standard value) or unmodified manner, however, it is often difficult to evaluate whether they were worn as adornment<sup>1</sup>, part of the gift-giving networks of the elite, an important part of rituals and bridewealth, and/or functioned as money (Heath 2016; O'Connor & Langley 2018; Szabó 2018;



*Monetaria annulus*  
Kenya, Coast, Tiwi Tiwi  
NMR 41854. Common size 30 mm

FIGURE 2: *MONETARIA ANNULUS*, WHICH IS CHARACTERISED BY A YELLOW RING. (CREDIT: [WORMS](#), IMAGE BY JOOP TRAUSEL AND FRANS SLIEKER, NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM ROTTERDAM, [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#))

Gaffney et al. 2018). Analyses of shell money, then, run the danger of conflating aspects of value and wealth with money, and require a certain degree of caution, particularly for those with earlier dates where written sources cannot corroborate their use as money (Yang 2019: 140).

Earlier scholars (Bronson 1976: 11-14) thought of shell money as being used earlier than that of metal currencies, but a recent publication argued that “gold and silver coinages were utilised in India earlier than cowrie money” (Yang 2019: 249). While it is true that some forms of shell money were introduced quite late and are still valued in inland parts of Eastern Indonesia and the Pacific, it may be that the monk Faxian, who is cited as the earliest known source on cowrie money, only had to conduct small transactions and hardly came into contact with rich people (Sircar 2008: 279; Breton 1999; Ploeg 2004; Hylkema 2012).

*Monetaria moneta* (*Cypraea moneta*) and *Monetaria annulus* (from the *Cypraeidae* family) are perhaps the best known historical examples of cowrie shell money, used in parts of Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, forming one of the earliest known globalised currency types, and will thus be the focus of this article (Hogendorn & Johnson 1986; Vogel & Hieronymous 1993; Yang 2019). These cowries' natural habitats can be found from the eastern coast of Africa to the Galapagos and Cocos islands (Hogendorn & Johnson 1986: 8). Although the furthest reaches of the cowrie money trade did extend to parts of the New World (Heath 2016, 2017), Central Asia (Wang 2004: 20), the

“The Sulu archipelago of the Philippines was described as a source of British cowries during the 19th century, and it is likely that Singapore was an important transit port for that period...”

Ryukyus (Kinoshita 2003), and Papua New Guinea (Mahmud 2014; Dubbeldam 1964; Stewart & Strathern 2002), the use of such cowrie shells as money seems to have happened at different times, for different reasons. Cowries were used as small money because it was appealing and easy to handle, its farmed value was cheaper than metal and could thus be used for small market transactions, and could be “accurately traded by weight, volume, or count”; durable; and “almost impossible” to counterfeit (Hogendorn & Johnson 1986: 5-6).

In mainland Southeast Asia (SEA), cowries were an early monetary candidate by the Neolithic, as archaeologically, they were known to have been traded as an exotic item in association with other marine shell ornaments and ceramics (Higham 2017). Cowries have also been reported in mortuary contexts at sites such as the Bronze Age site of Ban Non Wat, and the Iron Age sites of Kok Charoen and Non Pa Wai in Thailand (Higham 2013, 2017; Higham & Rispoli 2014). In insular SEA, there is also evidence that cowries were discovered in mortuary contexts, at Niah Cave (Gan Kira), Manunggul Cave (190 BCE), and at the 14th-15th century sites of San Narciso and Pulong Bakaw of the Philippines, where they were interpreted as ornaments (Arifin 2004: 246; Evangelista 1960: 102-103; Baretto-Tesoro 2003: 308). Other sites in insular SEA where cowries are mentioned also interpret the shells as ornaments, such as at Loyang Mendale in Sumatra (8,430 ± 80 BP), Niah Caves (Lobang Tulang), and in the site of Kimanis in East Kalimantan (12,582-11,116 cal. BP to 4,650±90 BP) (Wiradnyana 2016: 32; Arifin 2017: 109; Arifin 2004: 246).

According to historical evidence, *Monetaria moneta* was farmed in the Maldives, as part of a royal monopoly, since at least 851CE until the collapse

of the money cowrie industry in the 19th century due to hyperinflation (Litster 2016: 4, 6, 9). It should be noted that the Maldivians did not use cowries as currency themselves and the cowries were likely to have been exported in standard units without modifications (Hogendorn & Johnson 1986; Christie & Haour 2018: 17-18; Heath 2017: 58). While the main supply of *Monetaria moneta* to Africa, Bengal, and Pegu was from the Maldives, cowrie shells found in Siam (Thailand) were said to have been exported from both the Maldives and Borneo (Litster 2016: 9; Hogendorn & Johnson 1986). There were also ships from the Moluccas, Pegu, Melaka, and Sumatra which were in contact with the Maldives and likely had cowries as a paying ballast in the 16th century (Vogel 1993: 225). Up until the 17th century, Kedah was still using cowrie money as its main currency (Bowrie 1905). There is historical evidence to believe that at this time, many of the SEA nations which were in contact with the Maldivian royal family were part of a Sufi cosmopolitan network, and these ties may have deeper roots (Peacock 2018; Manguin 2010). While there are still many unknowns about the shell money tradition in SEA, such as the antiquity of the practice outside the Tai world and its development, many researchers are interested in studying cowrie money as a way to study the rise and fall of an ancient global currency type, and the way it may differ from other forms of currency.

Yang (2019: 259-261) has proposed a hypothesis that global cowrie money underwent several phases of development; this needs to be tested archaeologically and through investigations of extant historical sources. He argued that cowries were used first in Bengal or Orissa, sometime before the monk Faxian's visit to Tamralipti at the turn of the 4th to 5th century; by the 10-13th centuries, cowrie use spread to Yunnan, via Lower Burma and the Tai world of Lan Na, Phayao, and Sukhothai, to be used as small money along with gold or silver coinage. Researchers have found links between cowrie shells, horses, and silver in Bengal, Bagan, and Yunnan until the Ming dynasty (see Yang 2004; Mukherjee 2018).

Yang (2019: 261-264) posits that in the 14th to mid-17th centuries, West Africa came to use cowries as small money; the trade in African commodities and slave labour created a shortage of cowries, which led a "retreat" of cowrie money from Yunnan and SEA. In the final phase, from the 16th-19th centuries, *Monetaria annulus* from the east coast

of Africa was introduced as a substitute currency and flooded the market, creating hyperinflation (Hogendorn & Johnson 1986). The Sulu archipelago of the Philippines was described as a source of British cowries during the 19th century, and it is likely that Singapore was an important transit port for that period (Yang 2019: 181). At the end of its use-life as money in its key core areas by the 1880s, cowrie money was no longer accepted as payment for the slave trade, palm oil, and government taxes, signifying how monetary standards of value were indeed political standards of value, expressing the "values of the dominant powers" (Gregory 1996: 210; see Hogendorn & Johnson 1986: 138-157; Sanders 1982).

An interesting point to consider is how to view the link between bronze drums and cowries; Yang (2019) is in agreement with some researchers (Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 1992; Xiao 2006) in considering the cowries found in bronze drums in the Bronze Age Dian culture as "special treasures", only in elite burial contexts, and therefore not money due to their limited supply. This is a departure from earlier scholars (Cribb 1986), who pointed to Shang period inscriptions on bronze objects mentioning cowries as reward payments and used the association of Chinese pictograms with money as a way to express the abstract concept of money. Similar bronze drums are also found in both insular and mainland SEA and are also thought to be prestige objects, but so far, no cowries have been found in connection with them (Calo 2014: 13-15). Although the cowries from Yunnan are thought to have come mainly from the trade with Bengal (Vogel 1993), other scholars have pointed to the mainland silk road as a potential trade route as well (Peng & Zhu 1995). Areas of the South China Sea were likely to have farmed cowries, as according to a Ming dynasty source, the Ryukyu islands also used conch shells and cowries in 1436CE as "wealth enhancers" prior to the introduction of coinage (Wade 2007: 30). However, the Ryukyus' role in the cowrie trade, though suspected to be active, is still unknown.

Another interesting complication about finding cowries in an archaeological context would be their known use in gaming and gambling. Ethnographically, cowries were traditionally used for mancala games throughout the cowrie world (also known as congkak or dakon in Java; and sungka in the Philippines) but the origins and spread of these games are poorly understood, and more research into this field may give further insight into the practice (Voogt 1997,

Voogt 2010). In SEA, the board game (usually carved in wood or stone, or more temporarily, played in sand) usually consists of two neat parallel rows of shallow cupules, terminated at each end by a larger cupule, with cowries, stones, seeds mentioned as pawns (Voogt 2010; Bougas 1998: 95-96). Researchers have recently begun to record how megalithic archaeological sites with these features were considered important for rituals and considered sacred sites, particularly in south Sulawesi and Sumatra (Nayati 2005; Hasanuddin 2011; Setiawan 2012). It is hoped that with further research into shell money, our understanding of the complexities of everyday life can be deepened.

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'Scholars in the Pacific have suggested that *Cypraeidae* with both dorsal and ventral grinding modification marks was more likely to be ornamentation (Clark et al. 2018).

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# Excavating on the Axis of the World: The 2018 NSC Field School at Mount Penanggungan, East Java

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FIGURE 1: THE NSC FIELD SCHOOL GROUP AT THE UBAYA CAMPUS, TRAWAS, EAST JAVA, INDONESIA. (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)



FIGURE 2: THESE REGULAR TERRACES FORMED THE SITE OF INTEREST FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS. (CREDIT: AARON KAO)

## The Field School

The 6th NSC Field School on Archaeology and Art History was held on 22 July to 11 August in Indonesia, at Mount Penanggungan (East Java), Indonesia, and Singapore. The Field School saw the first collaboration between ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute and Indonesia's National Centre for Archaeological Research (Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional), also known as ARKENAS. This new Southeast Asian endeavour, hosted at the University of Surabaya (UBAYA) outbound campus in Trawas, was the first to combine two complementary training components; archaeology and art history. The first 15-day Indonesian leg consisted of a 9-day exploratory excavation, which was carried out at a height of approximately 560 meters in a forested area of Kedungudi village near the south-western foot of Mount Penanggungan. Culminating at 1,653 m above sea level, this mountain was also referred to in old texts as Mount Pawitra (Javanese meaning “the sacred”, “the pure”). The 16 Field School participants were given assignments, including a preliminary research they presented in small groups during the second 3-day leg in Singapore.

Mount Penanggungan contains one of Indonesia's richest mountains in terms of shrines. It was seen as the representation of Mount Mahameru, the world axis from ancient Indian mythology, with its symmetrical eight satellite peaks. It was the site of hundreds of hermitages, sacred bathing places and shrines, some mentioned in ancient texts, peppered on its slopes and base. Generally, the sites are thought to date from the Hindu-Buddhist ‘East Javanese’ period (10th-mid 16th century). Currently, local stakeholders are preparing a World Heritage dossier to enlist Mount Penanggungan as a World Heritage site as showed by Field School participants group 6 during their Singapore presentations (Phuy Meychean, Wang Liwei).



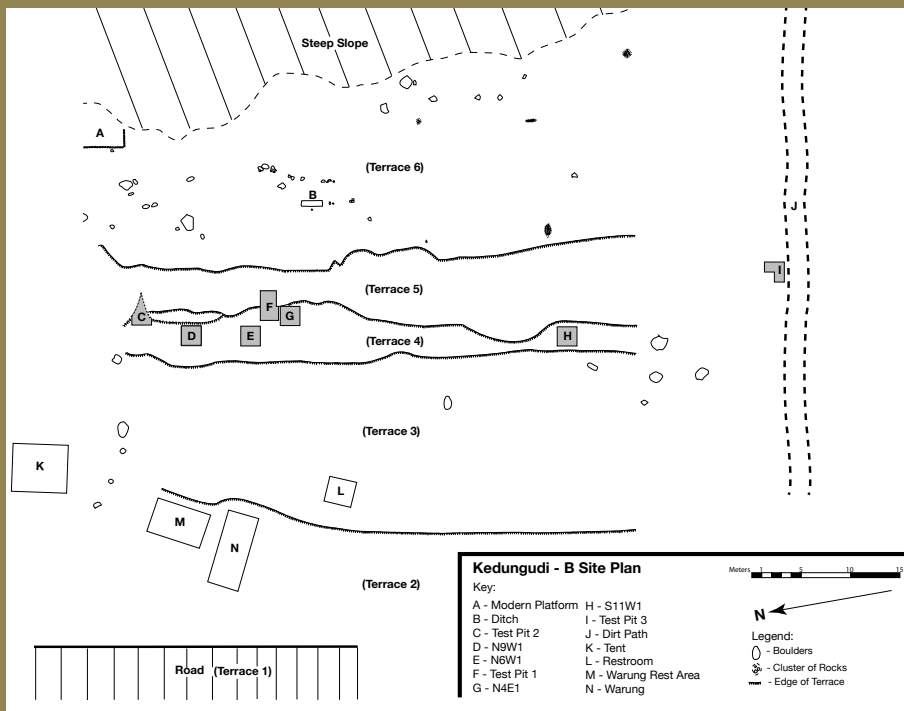


FIGURE 3: KEDUNGUDI SITE PLAN. (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)

The 2018 NSC Field School was the first archaeological research excavation carried out by an Indonesian-Singapore team carried out on Mount Penanggungan's slopes. Situated in the immediate orbit of the kingdom of Majapahit (13th-15th century), the excavation site uncovered man-made topography in the form of terraces and the units had a wide surface scatter of brick fragments and potsherds. The excavation sought to shed light on the presence and nature of this occupation (secular, agricultural, ceremonial, etc.) and its relations to Majapahit's capital of Trowulan.

Field School participants were selected from the East Asian Summit (EAS) countries and came from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Singapore, USA, and Vietnam. The training programme was designed to expose primarily undergraduate students to basic excavation experience and introduce them to the rich and diverse art historical narratives and material culture of East Java during the Late Classical Period (10th to 15th century).

Senior archaeologists Bambang Budi Utomo (ARKENAS), Nurhadi Rangkuti (BALAR Yogyakarta) and art historian H el ene Njoto (NSC) led the Field School, assisted by co-director Aaron Kao (NSC) and field managers Michael Ng (NSC) and Shinatria Adhityatama (ARKENAS). The team benefited from the guidance of senior archaeologist Kyle Latinis in Singapore,

*“Historians have long wondered about the nature of the links between Majapahit and communities living beyond the capital of Trowulan [...] Whether they were considered as part of Majapahit’s central polity or isolated from its influence is a question that future research can help to answer.”*

as well as East Java expert historian Hadi Sidomulyo from the Ubaya Penanggungan Centre (UPC) who provided precious on-site information and logistics support. Sidomulyo's pioneering survey on the mountain paved the way for new endeavours in research and training with local institutions such as the Conservation Department (BPCB) Trowulan, and other international programmes.

#### Human occupation and the nature of the settlement

Among the most obvious traces of human occupation at the excavation site were man-made terraces recessed on an East-West axis, their width stretching along a perfect North-South axis. These features are reminiscent of ancient settlements and ceremonial site type, commonly called



FIGURE 4: PROFILE OF EXCAVATED TERRACE 4 (WITH DR LYDIA KIEVEN VISITING THE SITE). (CREDIT: H EL ENE NJOTO)

Punden Berundak in Indonesian, which is said to have existed since the Megalithic period in Java. The presence of many ancient ceramic and earthenware sherds on the site surface also strongly suggests the presence of human activity at the site.

Remains of brick walls at the bottom of one terrace in particular (see centre-fold, terrace 4) suggest that the terraces were reinforced as a more permanent structure. Most of these bricks remains were buried under more than 1 m of soil. The team decided to excavate along the terrace (4), which was approximately 60 m in length along a North-South axis. Seven units were opened on this terrace, and variation of built structures were discovered. Excavation units closer to the terrace wall revealed that a foundation layer of andesite rocks were laid beneath the brick courses. Uniquely, the characteristics of the rocks varied from unit to unit. One of them featuring mostly large 50-70 cm angular to sub-angular rocks also included an odd specimen, which appeared to have been worked into an almost spherical form. Smaller sub-angular rocks, albeit more numerous and jumbled with brick fragments, were found in another nearby unit (see illustrations in Figures 5 and 6). Elongated rocks with unnaturally flat parallel surfaces appeared in a third unit. Pillar bases or stepping-stones could have been their original function. This could suggest variation in construction methods, function, or a later extension of the terrace by different craftsmen. Ceramic pottery artefacts and brick courses were recovered from all units, while those away from terrace walls did not feature as many brick courses.

The absence of roof tiles suggest that potential structures on the terraces may have been made of timber, with thatched roofs, as could be expected from a mountain site. A few terracotta miniatures kept in the National Museum in Jakarta or at the BPCB in Trowulan as well as private collections, depict such mountain houses or hermitages with thatched roofs and perishable materials. It is also likely that

# The Kedungudi Excavations

Map Credit: Michael Ng

The archaeological training component covered surface surveys, mapping, photographic and illustrative documentation of artefacts, features and pit profiles, as well as soil sample collection and general excavation techniques. Regular tutorials on research design allowed them to be fully involved in the research process underlying the excavation.

The 16 students were divided into teams to dig four units measuring two by two meters each. These units were spaced out in a north south transect to evaluate a 40 m distance along one of the several terraces. Field instructors Aaron Kao, Bambang Budi Utomo, and Shinatria Adhityatama supervised overall team strategies, allowing students to exercise a degree of autonomy within their excavation unit. This teaching method encouraged ownership and responsibility. In addition to systematic excavation by layers, the students learnt to record contextual data, sieve for artefacts, and document the finds.

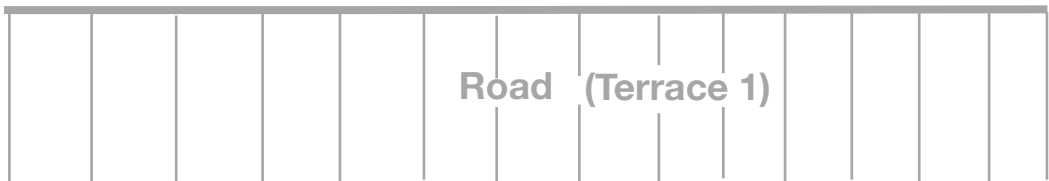
Steep Slope



MICHAEL NG (LEFT) TEACHING PARTICIPANTS TO PRODUCE SCALE MAPS AND PLANS OF THE SITE. (CREDIT: AARON KAO)

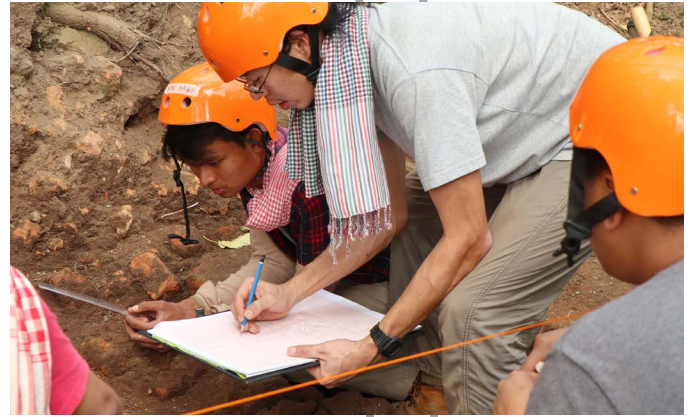


UNIT N9W1, DAY 8, RAISATUL MUFHAMAH, WANG LIWEI, LYDIE LEURQUIN, BAGAS KURNIAWAN AND INSTRUCTOR SHINATRIA ADHITYATAMA. (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)





UNIT N6W1, DAY 8, PHUY MEYCHEAN, NIKITA RAGHUVANSHI, ASRI HAYATI NUFUS, HUNTER WATSON. INSTRUCTOR: AARON KAO AND SHINATRIA ADHITYAMA. (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)



THE SCALE RECORDING OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES IS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF FIELDWORK. HERE MYANMAR PARTICIPANT RAN NAING LIN IS RECEIVING A DEMONSTRATION FROM AARON KAO, WHO ALSO GAVE A WORKSHOP ON ARTEFACT ILLUSTRATIONS. (CREDIT: KWA CHONG GUAN)



UNIT N4E1, DAY 1, NG YUN XUAN, ELYADA WIGATI PRAMARESTI, RAN NAING LIN, SAID EFFENDY. INSTRUCTOR BAMBANG BUDI UTOMO. (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)



UNIT S11W1, DAY 4, JOCYELYN GOH, LÊ HOÀNG QUỐC, JOFEL MALONDA, TYASSANTI KUSUMO DEWANTI. (INSTRUCTOR: AARON KAO) (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)

## Kedungudi - B Site Plan




Key:

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| A - Modern Platform | H - S11W1            |
| B - Ditch           | I - Test Pit 3       |
| C - Test Pit 2      | J - Dirt Path        |
| D - N9W1            | K - Tent             |
| E - N6W1            | L - Restroom         |
| F - Test Pit 1      | M - Warung Rest Area |
| G - N4E1            | N - Warung           |

Meters 1 5 10 15

N

Legend:

-  - Boulders
-  - Cluster of Rocks
-  - Edge of Terrace

*In addition to class-room Art History training, students attended on-site lectures by experts on East Javanese history (Hadi Sidumulyo), art and architecture history (Hélène Njoto, Lydia Kieven, Soedarmadji Damais, Kwa Chong Guan, Eko Bastiawan, Adieyatna Fajri), religion history (Andrea Aciri). On the high-end side of research technology, a two-part night lecture on LIDAR was given by LIDAR expert and archaeologist from Hungary, Károly Belényesy.*



SITE VISIT, SACRED BATHING PLACE, JALATUNDA 10TH CENTURY. (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)



CLASSROOM LECTURE BY HÉLÈNE NJOTO (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)



EKO BASTIAWAN EXPLAINING THE RELIEF FEATURES. (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)



SITE VISIT OF SELOKELIR BY MR PAHADI FROM THE BPCB, TROWULAN. (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)



DESIGNED TO CONVEY A BROAD UNDERSTANDING OF THE MATERIAL CULTURE AND MULTI-DIMENSIONAL BELIEF SYSTEMS, HIKING GROUPS WERE ORGANISED TO CANDI KENDALISODO, AND NEARBY SETTLEMENT SITES SUCH AS BALAI KAMBANG, KUTOGIRANG, AND JEDONG. (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)



ON-SITE PRESENTATION BY ARCHEOLOGISTS BAMBANG BUDI UTOMO AND ART HISTORIAN EKO BASTIAWAN OF AMOGHAPASHA STATUE (13TH CENTURY) AT CANDI JAGO. (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)



PHOTOGRAMMETRY RENDERING OF THE AMOGHAPASHA STATUE. (CREDIT: SHINATRIA ADHITYATAMA)



PARTICIPANTS PRESENTING THEIR FINAL ASSIGNMENTS ON SMALL SCALE RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THE EXCAVATION AT ISEAS ON AUGUST 10TH. TOPICS VARIED FROM CERAMIC ARTEFACTS TO MATERIALITY AND STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF THE TERRACED BRICK FEATURE, THE POSSIBLE SITE FUNCTION, AS WELL AS SUGGESTIONS FOR HERITAGE SITE MANAGEMENT OF MOUNT PENANGGUNGAN. (CREDIT: MICHAEL NG)

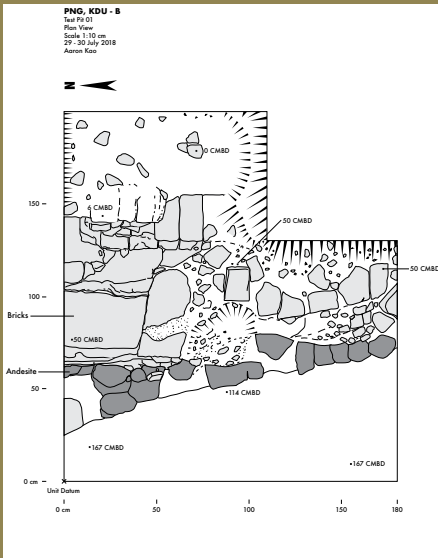


FIGURE 5: PLAN VIEW OF TEST PIT 01 SHOWING BRICK TERRACE IN RELATION TO A NEATLY LAID ROCK FOUNDATION. (CREDIT: AARON KAO)

building materials may have been reused for other sites when the site fell into disuse. The brick terrace wall's foundations, which were made up of a combination of regularly sized rocks and bricks, may be similar to the kind of hermitage architecture depicted on 14th-15th century stone reliefs such as at Candi Panataran complex in East Java.

The living conditions for settlement seem ideal at Kedungudi. There is an ancient water spring located about 1 km from the excavation site, with old brick remains found near an ancient water channel. The presence of rice fields in the immediate area surrounding of the excavation site is another argument that could support the hypothesis of a hermitage settlement,

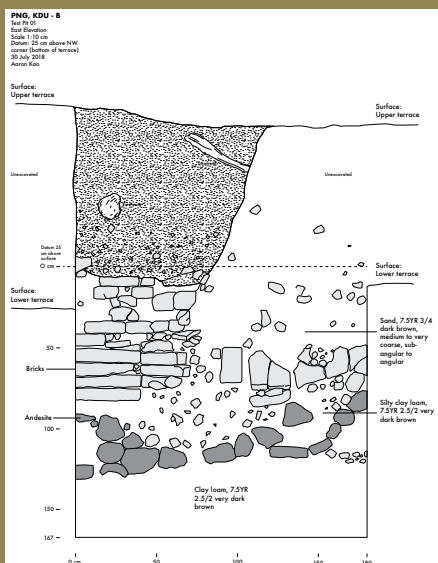


FIGURE 6: BRICK COURSES STILL IN-SITU ARE VISIBLE FROM EAST PROFILE OF TEST PIT 01. ACCUMULATION OF EARTH MATERIAL OVER TIME APPEARED CONSISTANT BETWEEN UPPER AND LOWER PORTION OF TERRACE. (CREDIT: AARON KAO)



FIGURE 7: TEST PIT 02 FEATURING LARGER PIECES OF ROCK CUT FOR FOUNDATION MATERIAL. COULD THESE HAVE SUPPORTED A HEAVIER OR MORE ELABORATE STRUCTURE IN WOOD? (CREDIT: AARON KAO)

as according to Old Javanese texts, hermitages were seen to be self-sufficient and essentially relied on rice cultivation. Furthermore, during a preliminary surface survey in these rice fields, no sherds were found, which may suggest the antiquity of this agricultural activity. Certainly, more research is needed to determine the history of these rice fields, but as pointed out by participants group 5 (Jocyelyn Goh and Jofel Malonda), Kedungudi conveys the image of an ancient site perfectly integrated in the (agricultural) landscape.

There was evidence for human occupation and activities at the Kedungudi site. Earthenware sherds, which were typical indicators comprised majority of the assemblage. The specimens recovered possessed rich stylistic variations. For example, one unit by observation alone featured no less than 11 rim designs. The variety of sherd thickness also suggested different types of usage. And soot covered specimens showed proof of an applied heat source for cooking or rituals. A detailed

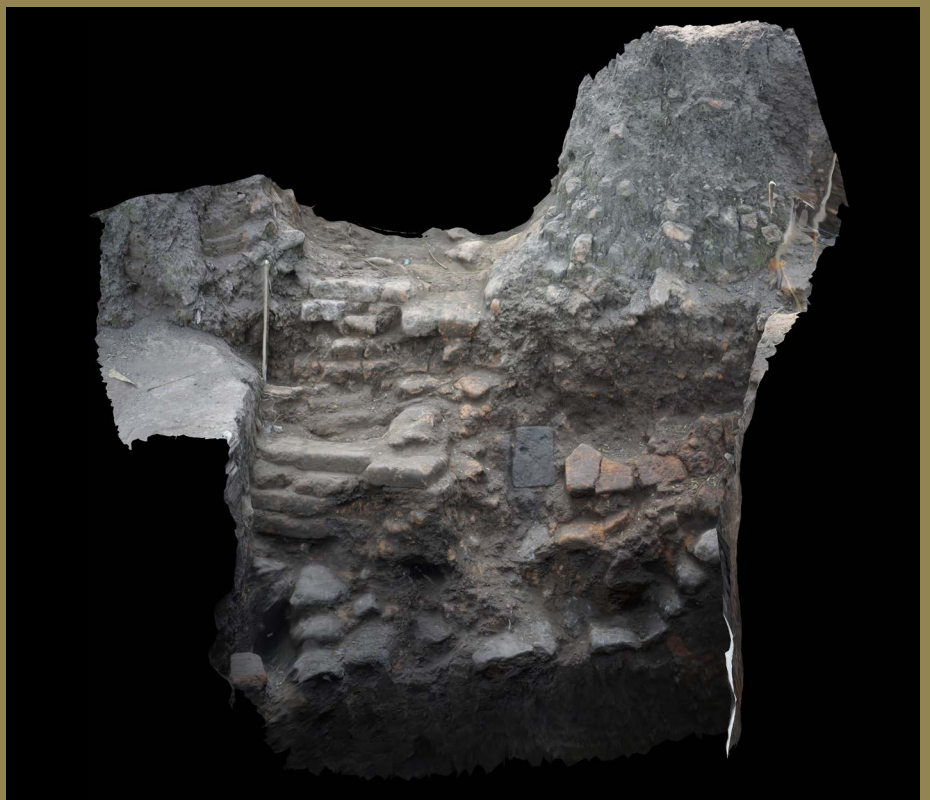


FIGURE 8: PHOTOGRAMMETRY RENDDERING OF TEST PIT 01. (CREDIT: SHINATRIA ADHITYATAMA)



FIGURE 9: TERRACED RICE FIELDS IRRIGATED BY WHAT SEEMS TO BE AN ANCIENT WATER CHANNEL AT THE BOTTOM OF KEDUNGUDI EXCAVATION SITE. (CREDIT: HÉLÈNE NJOTO)



FIGURE 10: CANDI PENATARAN RELIEF DEPICTING WHAT IS THOUGHT TO BE AN ASCETIC ON A STONE AND BRICK PLATFORM AT A HERMITAGE. (CREDIT: SULEIMAN 1980: 14)

study of these materials can give insights into activities, local products, traditions, and the socio-technological aspects behind them. Common kendi spouts, utilitarian stoneware, and green-ware, as well as more exotic white-ware porcelain sherds from the Song and Yuan dynasties were also scattered throughout, albeit less common. The glazed ware showed stylistic similarities with the Trowulan assemblage. But the much smaller proportion suggests that the people of Kedungudi could well have been the end users at the tail of the supply chain network.

A well preserved Chinese copper coin (Cheng Ho Tung Pao) originated from the Northern Song period (906-1127 CE). Although coins provide unreliable dating for Southeast Asian sites, this particular specimen nevertheless paralleled the time period of the Chinese tradewares. Organic materials such as a bovid jaw bone, and charcoal samples were recovered from cultural layers, and will be sent for radiocarbon dating analysis. Unusual stone artefacts that were purposefully shaped remain unidentified. Some of its features suggested a kind of mortar for domestic use; while another with well formed faceted sides indicated a more ornamental function. Rock chips recovered near the site also hinted artisanal activities. For the first time a research team had evidenced a site, which was likely part of the support system of this important sacred site.

### Secular or Ceremonial activities?

The earthenware and kendis found in Kedungudi were of relatively common quality and would support the idea of the site being used as a settlement site

rather than strictly ceremonial. Participants group 2 (Raisatul Mufahamah and Ng Yun Xuan) counted about 6% porcelain sherds against 94% earthenware and stoneware from the site. More interestingly, no trace of Blue and White ware was found, although it was found in good quantity in Trowulan, suggesting the singularity of Kedungudi as a mountain site. Furthermore, group 3 (Hunter Watson, Lydie Leurquin, Bagas Kurniawan) also made the preliminary observation that despite the presence of Chinese stoneware, whiteware, greenware and porcelain, there was little to no evidence of fine or elaborately decorated paste wares. However, we cannot be certain that ceremonial activities were not carried out at Kedungudi. This would be difficult to prove archaeologically without finding definitive religious iconographies and associated paraphernalia in well dated contexts. An interesting find as already mentioned above is the presence of bovid teeth. These finds might indicate the use of these animals to assist with agricultural and farming activities, or perhaps for consumption? This find would make a good sample to refine the settlement dating.

It should be noted, however, that apart from temples, settlements could have both a ritual and secular element, like in today's traditional Javanese and Balinese houses. The hermitages represented on Javanese reliefs of the Hindu-Buddhist period for example do not indicate the use of highly sophisticated architecture, furniture, apart from some specific utensils. Furthermore, the proximity of Kedungudi to another 15th century ceremonial site, Selokelir (dated 1434 and 1442) located further up the hill suggests Kedungudi's close engagement with ceremonial activities. Kedungudi

was in all likelihood related to Selokelir. Potsherds from the Song and Yuan dynasty period were found scattered along a trail linking both sites. Finally, although there is little evidence of specifically religious artefacts found at Kedungudi at this early stage, an altar stone with a mid-14th century date (1343 CE) was found on the Semodo hill, just a short distance away from the excavation site.

### An Earlier Occupation of the Site

A regional peculiarity unique to East Java was that the East Javanese patrons and carvers insisted on dating the shrines and temples (Sidomulyo 2016). The dates for the nearby Semodo hill altar stone, as well as the two dates from Selokelir religious complex, which Kedungudi was in all likelihood related to, could suggest a continuous occupation in the area at least from the mid-14th to the mid-15th centuries. However, the discovery of Yuan and Song dynasty (13th-15th century) porcelain during the Field School surface surveys and excavation at Kedungudi may extend the earliest site occupation date further back to the 13th century while confirming the later period of occupation in the 15th century. However, as porcelain are often heirloom objects, passed from one generation to the next, the 13th century relative dating method would be inconclusive by itself and would require further study and substantiation through other methods, such as radiocarbon dating. More systematic typologies of artefacts and comparison with nearby sites should also be carried out to confirm dating. Field School participants group 1 (Ran Naing Lin, Lê Hoàng Quốc, Tyassanti Kusumo Dewanti) for example was able



FIGURE 11: MONETARY EVIDENCE WAS IN THE FORM OF A NORTHERN SONG COPPER CASH. (CREDIT: AARON KAO)

to establish that one brick type from Kedungudi was common to brick types in two other contemporary neighbouring sites in Belahan temple (10th-14th century) and Jedong temple (10th-15th century).

#### A Settlement site in Majapahit's Orbit

Historians have long wondered about the nature of the links between Majapahit and communities living beyond the capital of Trowulan, particularly the powerful religious communities which were thought to have settled at Penanggungan and other areas of the large mountain range spreading across East Java. Whether they were considered as part of Majapahit's central polity or isolated from its influence is a question that future research can help to answer.

This preliminary research shows that Kedungudi was likely to have been occupied at least from the 13th to the 15th century, as evidenced from the ceramic sherds. The presence and significance of the terraced structures with retaining brick and stone walls in the area may suggest that the slope was altered to house a permanent or semi-permanent settlement area whose activities are likely linked to two nearby ceremonial sites (Selokelir and a close-by shrine on the Semodo hill). However, the nature of activities carried out in Kedungudi might have been different from those in Selokelir as suggested by kendi spouts size discrepancy between both sites. Participants group 4 (Nikita Raghuvanshi, Said Effendy, Asri Hayati Nufus, Elyada Pramaresti) was able to stress that Kedungudi's kendi spouts were larger than Selokelir spouts and also different from Trowulan's, Majapahit's capital city.

The importance of this settlement



FIGURE 12: GREEN-WARE AND WHITE-WARE CERAMIC SHERDS RECOVERED FROM A CULTURAL LAYER. SHOWING PREFERENCE FOR FLUTED DESIGNS. (CREDIT: AARON KAO)

should be further assessed when future studies brings more evidence about the antiquity of adjacent sites, such as on the rice fields and the neighbouring water channels. The imported Chinese ware from the 13th-15th century also suggests that the site was not an isolated area but was embedded in a larger network, with links to a more cosmopolitan urban centre, such as Majapahit's capital in Trowulan, considering the short distances between both sites.

One can imagine that important political/religious leaders, and pilgrims would have visited Kedungudi before climbing the Semodo hill and visiting the Selokelir complex. Equally crucial to future studies would be to understand the supply chain networks, consisting of craftsmen, builders, and service providers.

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BAMBANG BUDI UTOMO HAS BEEN AN ARCHAEOLOGIST AT THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH UNDER THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF INDONESIA SINCE 1982. OVER THE YEARS, HE HAS BEEN TO MANY SITES IN JAVA, SUMATRA, KALIMANTAN, AND LESSER SUNDA. IN ADDITION, HE HAS WRITTEN FOR VARIOUS NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS AND ACTED AS A SOURCE OF REFERENCE FOR SEMIDOCUMENTARY FILMS

PRODUCED BY PRIVATE TELEVISION STATIONS. BAMBANG'S PRIMARY RESEARCH FOCUSES ON REGIONAL STUDIES OF THE SRIWIJAYA AND MALAYU PERIODS. HE HAS BEEN WORKING ON HIS RESEARCH TO IDENTIFY THE INFLUENCES OF SRIWIJAYA IN JAVA, SUMATRA, KALIMANTAN, THE MALAY PENINSULA, AND SOUTHERN THAILAND.

NURHADI RANGKUTI IS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST RESEARCHING THE HINDU-BUDDHIST PERIOD AT THE YOGYAKARTA ARCHAEOLOGY OFFICE SINCE 2016. HE COMPLETED HIS MASTER'S DEGREE IN GEOGRAPHY AT GADJAH MADA UNIVERSITY IN 2000 AND HIS BACHELOR'S IN ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF INDONESIA IN 1984. HIS RESEARCH FOCUSED ON MAJAPAHIT SITES IN EAST JAVA; THE BATUJAYA TEMPLE COMPLEX IN WEST JAVA; HABITATION SITES ON THE NORTH COAST OF JAVA AT REMBANG LASEM, AS WELL AS PRE-SRIWIJAYA-ERA AND SRIWIJAYA-ERA SITES IN SOUTH SUMATRA AND JAMBI. FROM 2006 TO 2015, HE WAS THE HEAD OF THE PALEMBANG ARCHAEOLOGY OFFICE. BETWEEN 1994 AND 2005, HE WORKED AT THE YOGYAKARTA ARCHAEOLOGY OFFICE AS A RESEARCHER. BETWEEN 1986 AND 1994, HE WORKED AS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST AT THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN JAKARTA.

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## Buddhist Accounts of Maritime Crossings in the Southern Seas

SPECIAL NSC LECTURE SERIES: '1819 AND BEFORE: SINGAPORE'S PASTS'

BY MARK HENG  
NSC RESEARCH OFFICER

Tuesday, 14 August 2018 – Dr. Andrea Acri, Associate Fellow at the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (ISEAS) and Assistant Professor in Tantric Studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (PSL University, Paris), delivered his lecture on “Buddhist Accounts of Maritime Crossings in the Southern Seas”. This was the third instalment in the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre’s special series of lectures commemorating Singapore’s bicentennial anniversary, “1819 and Before: Singapore’s Pasts”. Dr. Acri analysed the trope of the miraculous avoidance of shipwreck in Chinese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan narratives of Buddhist monks travelling across Asia by sea and highlighted elements of intertextuality and a similar motif in the *Sejarah Melayu*. More than 50 participants from local and overseas institutes of higher learning and research, non-profit societies, private firms, the government, the media, and the public attended this talk.

Dr. Acri sought to contextualise Singapore as a historical and contemporary strategic node in Maritime Southeast Asia by comparing different texts from different contexts written in different languages. He began with the network of monks adhering to different schools of Buddhism who travelled between South Asia and East Asia. Most preferred the easier, cheaper, and safer maritime routes to the overland routes and stopped in Southeast Asia, where ideas, beliefs, and practices were exchanged and Buddhism flourished. Buddhist texts and monks’ (auto)biographies, such as those of Faxian and Atiśa, presented a mix of literary images and realistic, factual data indicating the perils of oceanic journeys and the setbacks that they encountered at sea, from imaginary, supernatural beings (e.g. marine monsters, nāgas) to mighty storms, unfavourable winds, pirates, and unskilled or unscrupulous crews. Dr. Acri explained how these travelogues feature recurrent, often well-known, literary tropes in Buddhist hagiographical literature: the monks carrying precious cargo (e.g. Sanskrit texts, Buddhist scriptures) on board mercantile ships,



FIGURE 1 (L-R): MR KWA CHONG GUAN AND DR. ANDREA ACRİ (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

which the crews would try to cast overboard in hopes of calming storms to no avail; the monks managing to supernaturally calm the sea and save the ship by meditating and reciting scriptures, sometimes leading to intervention by protective deities. He also showed how these motifs have been found in other materials, including texts that the monks would have read, which serves as evidence of intertextuality and cross-pollination between genres. Furthermore, monks collaborated with one another, and oral transmission may have been at play. These accounts shuttle between imagination and reality, with actual practices in seamanship described alongside supernatural elements.

Dr. Acri shared how these were adapted for regional landscapes and incorporated into local beliefs, reflecting the concerns of traders and seafarers, such as the growth and propagation of “saviour cults” focusing on protective deities in coastal areas across the Buddhist world. He suggested that similar motifs in the Classical Malay chronicle *Sejarah Melayu*’s account of Sang Nila Utama’s sea voyage hints at its pre-Islamic heritage as a composite text drawing from Sanskrit material in a narrative cycle going back to Śrīvijaya. He pointed out that the trope recounting the need to jettison precious cargo (i.e. the protagonist’s supernaturally endowed possession) to calm the storm and avoid being shipwrecked is found in the monk Vajrabuddhi’s travelogue and Sang Nila Utama’s episode in the *Sejarah Melayu*, and that it could reflect a “magico-ritual” and a “royal” motif in the former and latter source, respectively. These authorised both protagonists’ lineages and legitimised their status in foreign lands, one as a tradition’s initiator, the other as a kingdom’s founder.

Dr. Acri posited that the author of the *Sejarah Melayu* was inspired by earlier sources such as textual accounts and oral narratives popular during the Hindu-Buddhist period, reworking them to suit the Islamic fashion of the time. A lively Q&A session followed, where he shared

about how older Malay manuscripts had Indic influences and Sanskritic elements possibly borrowed from late Tantric Buddhist cults, and that Vajrayāna Buddhism was present in the region before Mahāyāna Buddhism pervaded it and Theravāda Buddhism became popular with growing royal patronage. He also elaborated on the audience’s input on the importance of attending to the often neglected Malayo-Polynesian elements and Austronesian influences in Buddhist scriptures and Sanskrit texts, and noted that since the biography genre was well-established earlier in China but not in India, scholars have had to rely on Chinese hagiographies of Indian monks.

The discussion also allowed Dr. Acri to talk about how the presence of other religions might have hindered the spread of Indic religions westwards, while the winds, merchant networks, and cultural commonalities facilitated their spread to Monsoon Asia; how factors besides the rise of Hinduism and Islam led to the decline of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia with monks and artisans leaving monasteries and academies for East Asia; and how the cultural focus on the feminine in Southeast Asian religions led to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara becoming a female goddess there, even though those on board merchant ships tended to be male. Finally, he shared about how famous monks recommended Śrīvijaya as a place of Buddhist learning for Chinese monks travelling to Nalanda to wait for the winds, learn basic Sanskrit, and speak to great masters, where texts were traded, translated, and discussed.

MARK HENG WAS FORMERLY A RESEARCH OFFICER WITH THE NSC, ISEAS, AND ALSO WORKED WITH THE REGIONAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES AND THAILAND STUDIES PROGRAMMES, ISEAS. HE GRADUATED FROM UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON WITH AN MSc IN URBAN STUDIES (2016), WHICH HE PURSUED ON ISEAS’ TUN DATO SIR CHENG-LOCK TAN M.A. SCHOLARSHIP. HE ALSO HOLDS A BSOCSOI (HONS) IN GEOGRAPHY FROM THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE (2015).

## The 21st Congress of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association

BY FOO SHU TIENG  
NSC RESEARCH OFFICER



FIGURE 1: KHAI DINH MAUSOLEUM, WHICH IS PART OF THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE COMPLEX OF HUE MONUMENTS. (CREDIT: S. T. FOO)

*The 21st Congress of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association (IPPA) was held from 23-28 September 2018 in Hue, Vietnam, with over 500 papers delivered, including one by the author on "Risk Sensitive? Coastal-Hinterland Resource Exploitation Patterns during the Late Pleistocene to the Middle Holocene in the Straits of Melaka."*

The IPPA, which holds a congress every four years, has a mandate to promote cooperation in the study of the prehistory of eastern Asia and the Pacific region. Although there is an emphasis on prehistory, the Congress has since expanded the scope of presentations to include other topics from the historic periods. This congress in particular had a heavier emphasis on the archaeological sciences, which uses scientific techniques for the analysis of archaeological materials in order to assist primarily with dating and interpretations of site formation.

In the Congress' opening programme, A/P Dr. Nguyen Giang Hai (Director of the Vietnam Institute of Archaeology)

presented on "Recent Researches on Vietnamese Archaeology" and Dr. Phan Than Hai (Director of the Hue Monuments Conservation Centre) presented on the "Hue Cultural Heritages and the Conservation."

The plenary session then included excellent presentations by Prof. Hirofumi Matsumura (Sapporo Medical University) on the "Dispersal of anatomical modern homo sapiens in East Eurasia and Sahul in the Context of the 'Two Layer' Model", Prof. John N. Miksic (National University of Singapore) on "The Use of Prehistory in the Historical Archaeology of Southeast Asia," and Dr. Rasmi Shoocongdej (Silpakorn University) on "Southeast Asian Archaeology in 21st Century." Each highlighted the current understandings, gaps, and challenges for the field.

There were several NSC-related presentations at the IPPA. The results from the 2015 and 2016 NSC Archaeological Field Schools, which were held in collaboration with APSARA Authority and National Authority for Preah Vihear, were given in a paper

entitled "Faunal and Ceramic Remains from Koh ker Habitation Sites" by Kyle Latinis, Ea Darith, Voeun Vuthy, Károly Belényesy, Foo Shu Tieng, and Huon Yav. The preliminary result from the 2017 NSC Archaeological Field School, which was held in collaboration with APSARA National Authority, was given in a paper entitled "Archaeological Results from the Late Angkorian Tonle Snguot Hospital Site" by Kyle Latinis, Ea Darith, Károly Belényesy, Khieu Chan, Chhay Rachna, and Huon Yav.

The author also joined site visits to the Hue citadel; the Minh Mang, Khai Dinh and Tu Duc mausoleums; and the Chia Tienh Mu (pagoda), which are part of the UNESCO world heritage complex of Hue Monuments. The site visits were invaluable learning experiences. A copy of the trip report along with a copy of the powerpoint presentations were deposited with the ISEAS library.

FOO SHU TIENG IS A RESEARCH OFFICER AT NSC. SHE WOULD LIKE TO THANK NSC AND ISEAS FOR SPONSORING HER TRIP TO THE IPPA.

## Portuguese and Dutch Records for Singapore before 1819

SPECIAL NSC LECTURE SERIES: '1819 AND BEFORE: SINGAPORE'S PASTS'

BY EVELYN TAN  
ISEAS RESEARCH OFFICER

*Tuesday, 9 October 2018* – Peter Borschberg, former Associate Fellow at NSC and Associate Professor at the History department of the National University of Singapore, delivered a seminar titled “Portuguese and Dutch Records for Singapore before 1819”. Prof. Borschberg spoke of the value of Portuguese and Dutch sources to the historiography of pre-1819 Singapore. The seminar was the fourth in the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre's special series of lectures commemorating Singapore's bicentennial anniversary, “1819 and Before: Singapore's Pasts”. It drew more than 70 participants, including diplomatic corps, students and faculty members of tertiary institutions, public servants, museum staff, and members of the public.

Prof. Borschberg outlined some broad issues with textual and cartographic records of pre-1819 Singapore. Of textual records, only a meagre 5% yield in-depth details that contribute to reconstructing pre-1819 Singapore's history. The significance of the information gleaned is often limited by the legibility and coherence of the texts, as well as the authors' intentions. For instance, letters of Portuguese missionary Francis Xavier comprise mostly ecclesiastical details that offer little relevance to Singapore's historiography. Meanwhile, cartographic records display inconsistent placement of a site and many orthographic variants of place names (often mirrored in written records). For example, the exact location of Singapore was at times confused with areas in Johor. In addition, Singapore was known by many references and meanings, such as “Baxingapara” (gateway), “Pulau Panjang”



FIGURE 1: ASSOC. PROFESSOR PETER BORSCHBERG DURING HIS PRESENTATION. (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

(long island), and *falsa demora* (tricky place). While these varied toponyms create uncertainty over how Singapore was perceived then, they ascertain that Singapore was not an unknown place before 1819. Overall, as foggy as these records may be in their details of pre-1819 Singapore, they provided a nuanced representation that is still needed in understanding Singapore's history.

Comparing the magnitude between Portuguese and Dutch records, Prof. Borschberg remarked that the Dutch accounts generally offer more substantial insights for reconstructing the local conditions in Singapore and surroundings. Unlike most of the Portuguese records, Dutch records are more diverse and comprehensive. This is understandable as the Dutch came to the region at a later period as a competing trading company against the Portuguese. Faced with the challenge to be on equal footing with their European competitor, the Dutch had to collect as much information as possible, such as products for trade, market mechanisms, taxes, gifts, royal courts and Portuguese trading activities.

The Q&A segment that followed brought home several important points. Firstly, the highly contested waters of the Singapore Straits were known as a security hazard located south of the navigational landmark now known as Pedra Branca, due to the high risk of sea attacks. Secondly, Singapore imported most of its food products, except for some fruits that the Orang Laut would barter for textiles. Lastly, as the Portuguese and Dutch saw Singapore essentially as a transit point for upstream trade in Johor and Malacca,

they did not settle in Singapore in the 1800s, which explains why majority of Eurasians in Singapore could trace their origins not to Singapore, but other trading ports in the region, such as Malacca.

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## The Localisation of Buddhism in the Wider Landscape of Bagan

BY FOO SHU TIENG  
NSC RESEARCH OFFICER



FIGURE 1 (L-R): DR. TAI YEW SENG AND PROF. ELIZABETH H. MOORE. (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

*Tuesday, 30 October 2018* – Prof. Elizabeth Moore (Associate Fellow, NSC, and In-Region Liaison for the SOAS Southeast Asian Art Academic Program, University of London) gave a talk entitled “The Localisation of Buddhism in the Wider Landscape of Bagan.” She discussed her research to document the spread of art historical, inscriptional, and archaeological data on the heritage of Bagan outside the capital. Prof. Moore has used five criteria – inscriptions, walls, temples, images, and water features – to assemble a region-specific inventory organised by river valleys that forms the core of her in-progress book.

The main concentration of the inventory is in six valleys located in the central part of the country. The most consistent criteria were temples and monasteries, reflecting the centrality of Buddhism in the social life of villages to this day. Inscription stones of the Bagan period, some still in situ, record donation of temple lands, people and goods to these places. Many of these document renovations, repairs, and land donations to an existing place rather than imposition of a new court-led religious structure and supporting lands. Thus while the focus of her study is the 11th to 13th century CE, the pre-Bagan land organization and material culture is relevant for understanding the ongoing processes of integration.

In matching texts to the on-the-ground evidence, ancient walls, generally brick and earthen, were proving to be the most ambiguous. Some can be linked to terms found in inscriptions, others to chronicle accounts, and in some river valleys, to

pre-Bagan systems transmitted by oral tradition (*pasat yazawin*). The most well-known walls are the 11th century ‘forts’ built to purportedly protect the Bagan empire from mixture with various Shan kingdoms to the east. Shan chronicles, however, record several of the sites as occupied by Shan *Sawbwas*. These and other records of the interchange with Shan groups during the Bagan period, profile a far more permeable and negotiated borderland than is suggested by the north-south line of structures along the edge of the Shan Plateau. (See also ‘Buddhism on the Shan Plateau: Bawrithat and Intein’, *NSC Highlights No.9*).

In addition, while the wider landscape of Bagan inventory includes walls linked to the epigraphic and chronicle records, many elements do not fit the texts. The majority of the temples have retained tangible and intangible links to Bagan heritage in connecting their present identity to the monks and kings of Bagan. She concluded by suggesting that while the court may have been the preferred partner for its economic stimulus and religious stature, that the success of the Bagan empire did not lie in its hegemonic rule but in the continual negotiations with a fluctuating series of river valley cultures.

Chaired by Dr. Tai Yew Seng (Visiting Fellow, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute), the 60 min lecture was attended by an audience of 26 people, including scholars, students, and members of the public. The 30 min Q&A session included questions on the antiquity lacquer at Bagan, intra-regional languages and dialects, relationships with the Mongol Yuan

dynasty at the end of the 13th century CE and comparable models of empire. The seminar ended with discussion of the relationship between the wider landscape of Bagan and the nomination dossier for Bagan currently under consideration by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

S. T. FOO IS A RESEARCH OFFICER AT THE ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT, NSC, ISEAS – YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE. SHE RECEIVED HER MA BY RESEARCH IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES FROM THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE (NUS) AND HAS HELPED TO FACILITATE FIELD STUDY PROGRAMMES BOTH AT ISEAS AND NUS IN CAMBODIA, THAILAND, AND INDONESIA.

## Banks, Raffles and the Poison Tree of Java: Botanical Exchange in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries

BY EVELYN TAN  
ISEAS RESEARCH OFFICER

*Tuesday, 11 December 2018* – The latest in the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Lecture Series was Dr. Sarah Tiffin's seminar entitled "Banks, Raffles and the Poison Tree of Java: Botanical Exchange in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries". Dr. Tiffin, an independent Australian-based scholar, spoke of the roles of Sir Joseph Banks and Sir Stamford Raffles in encouraging botanical investigations of the upas (or poison tree) of Java, within the context of the British Empire's global botanical network. These investigations, Dr. Tiffin argued, were a response to the widespread grotesque imaginations of the upas, such as its use as a metaphor for impropriety and immorality in British literature. The seminar drew more than 30 participants, including museum and public service staff, as well as members of think tanks, tertiary institutions, and the public.

Dr. Tiffin attributed the British imaginations of ghastly upas tree to J. N. Forsch's sensational article in the London Magazine in 1783. In it, Forsch claimed to have witnessed firsthand the noxious and lethal nature of the tree. However fabulous his narrative was, his reputation as a surgeon in Java assured that his article was widely seen as the most factual account of the upas at the time. The upas rose to infamy after Forsch's article was reproduced in full as an explanatory note in a popular poem by an eminent physician, Erasmus Darwin. Despite being wholly unconvinced by the narrative, Darwin could not pass on the opportunity to hitch his wagon to the article's fame. However, given Darwin's reputation and serious intent



FIGURE 1 (L-R): DR. IAIN SINCLAIR AND DR. SARAH TIFFIN (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

to educate readers about botany through poems, the inclusion of Forsch's article was heavily criticised for lending credibility to the unscientific narrative.

Dr. Tiffin noted that the notoriety of Forsch's article resulted in efforts by celebrated botanists such as Banks to ascertain the true nature of the upas through scientific investigations. Banks actively encouraged these investigations within the international botanical circle throughout the British empire, over which he had a huge influence, given his reputation in the British botanical network. He deemed these investigations especially necessary so as to restore the integrity of the botanical network, which was briefly threatened when Forsch's fabulous article on the upas was published shortly after Banks admitted Forsch into his botanical circle.

As for Raffles' contribution in the investigations of the upas, Dr. Tiffin remarked that it opened up opportunities for him to establish connection with Banks, which would improve his reputation as both a naturalist and an enlightened administrator. Raffles commissioned Thomas Horsfield, an American scientist based in Java, and instructed him to prioritise the scientific investigations on the upas. The prioritisation was a response to the advice from William Marsden, a Sumatra-based British personnel, who was aware of Britain's growing interest in the recently published French papers that described the upas in scientific terms. Horsfield's papers on the upas and other materials that Raffles sent to Britain

caught Banks' attention, kickstarting Raffles' connection with Banks. With this connection, Raffles' active promotion of the Southeast Asia's economic potential laid the groundwork for the eventual acceptance of a more long-lasting British presence in Singapore.

Dr. Tiffin highlighted some important points in the Q&A session that followed. Firstly, she explained that Raffles intended to further dispel the myths surrounding the tree and Java by mentioning the upas briefly in his book, "History of Java". Secondly, misconception of the upas had persisted since the 14th century among British audiences, as several reports mentioned talltales of incredible ideas about Javanese people and the upas. Lastly, she found that the latest use of the upas as a metaphor was in a document on the city development of Glasgow in the 1980s, where the upas represented the negative qualities surrounding the rich urban development.

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## What More Can Archaeology Tell Us about Singapore's Past?

SPECIAL NSC LECTURE SERIES: '1819 AND BEFORE: SINGAPORE'S PASTS'

BY FOO SHU TIENG  
NSC RESEARCH OFFICER

*Tuesday, 29 January 2019* – Professor John. N. Miksic, Associate Fellow at the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (NSC), ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute (ISEAS) and Professor at the National University of Singapore's Southeast Asian Studies Department, delivered his lecture at ISEAS on "What More Can Archaeology Tell Us about Singapore's Past?" The lecture was the fifth instalment in NSC's special series of lectures commemorating Singapore's bicentennial anniversary, "1819 and Before: Singapore's Pasts."

Although archaeological investigations into Singapore's 14th-15th century Temasek occupation period at various sites in the Civic District since the 1980s have made Singapore one of Southeast Asia's most well-understood port cities of the period, Prof. Miksic argued in his lecture that there was still much more to be done. He outlined the finds from several excavations in the Civic District area, showcasing a rare one-of-a-kind porcelain compass from China, fragments of a porcelain pillow, and Chinese glass beads finds from Fort Canning, and the evidence of metallurgy at the Singapore Cricket Club. In doing so, Prof. Miksic also paid recognition to the many people who had volunteered their time and efforts to the study of archaeology in Singapore, highlighting the organizing and work that was done to spearhead earlier efforts.

Prof. Miksic also contrasted the archaeological finds with extant historical sources that point to a settlement in Singapore from the period, noting that like the Sejarah Melayu had outlined, the Cricket Club excavation and St. Andrews excavations did unveil a white sandy beach; there may have



FIGURE 1: PROFESSOR JOHN. N. MIKSIC DELIVERING HIS LECTURE AT ISEAS. (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

been elements of truth to the texts.

Prof. Miksic argued that while there were still pristine areas in Singapore to be had with archaeological potential, he stated that their current preservation would allow for a better understanding by others in the future as the archaeological process was ultimately an irreversible and destructive one, and as better archaeological theory and methods were being developed.

Prof. Miksic identified a number of specific areas for future study that could be done on currently available data—the ancient ecology of ancient Singapore; comparisons of 14th century Singapore with other sites, whether contemporaneous or from a different period; finding and reading the fragments of the Singapore Stone; a new survey of known prehistoric sites from the colonial period in Singapore; the potential of archaeological science analysis on the source of raw materials for imported objects (such as glass and gold) found in archaeological contexts in Singapore as a way to depict value chains and trade routes; and in the field of maritime archaeology.

Prof. Miksic also outlined the potential of residue analysis studies on certain artefacts which could give better information as to their origin, use, and possible re-use. Prof. Miksic also shared the first results of a database project from the Cricket Club project where raw technical data could be shared and thus compared more easily (<http://epress.nus.edu.sg/sitereports/>), and he invited others not only from Singapore but others from Southeast Asia to do the same.

The lecture was attended by an audience of 63 people, including those from the ministries, the business sector, researchers, students, and members of the public. During the Q&A, audience members asked about the possibility of finding the Singapore stone in Calcutta and whether there were comparable inscriptions from the period. Miksic replied that while there were unsuccessful exploratory forays in the past, there was still a chance. As for comparable inscriptions, Prof. Miksic mentioned that it would be more difficult to ascertain as Malay script kept to the same conventions for much longer, making it harder to date as compared to Javanese scripts. When asked about his current priorities, Prof. Miksic replied that it was storage; analysis; and finally, display and public education. Finally, when asked whether Singapore would allocate more money for heritage and culture, he said that he was hopeful, as the Singapore government now had begun to provide heritage research grants, and that the Prime Minister himself had stated that Singapore's history started in 1299.

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## The Mysterious Malay Jong and Other Temasek Shipping

SPECIAL NSC LECTURE SERIES: '1819 AND BEFORE: SINGAPORE'S PASTS'

BY MICHAEL NG  
NSC RESEARCH OFFICER

*Friday, 15 February 2019* – The lecture on the mysterious Malay Jong and Other Temasek Shipping presented by Dr. Michael Flecker, a maritime archaeologist with 30 years of experience in shipwreck excavations and research in Southeast Asia, was attended by an audience of 60 people from various government, private, and educational institutions, as well as members of the public.

It is a known fact that Singapore has been a major trading centre since the 14th century. However, little is known of how people came to Singapore to trade; what they travelled on; and how these goods arrived in Singapore. According to Dr. Flecker, it is a challenge to identify the types of ships that came to Singapore because there have been no ancient shipwrecks reported within Singapore waters and no shipwreck of the mysterious Malay Jong has been found anywhere. This absence of wrecks means that there is no evidence of the types of ships that travelled to Singapore. However, Dr. Flecker presented information from historical sources and from terrestrial and maritime archaeological sites to illustrate and postulate the possible types of vessels which plied the seas during the Temasek period and beyond.

He started the lecture by introducing Southeast Asian 'lashed-lug' vessels. He explained that such vessels were common from the 3rd to 14th century. Archaeological data from shipwrecks elsewhere such as the Jade Dragon Wreck, Java Sea Wreck, Flying Fish Wreck, Lingga Wreck, Cirebon Wreck and Punjulharjo Wreck have indicated the strong presence of ships of such construction



FIGURE 1: DR. MICHAEL FLECKER SPEAKING AT ISEAS. (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

throughout Southeast Asian waters.

When approaching the topic of the Malay Jong, Dr. Flecker covered some Portuguese sources which described the Jong and how it was constructed. By piecing together information from various historical drawings and records, he was able to provide a good description of the Jong and provided a hypothesis on its shape and size.

Dr. Flecker also spoke of the possible type of ship that may have come from the Indian subcontinent or Arab world. In addition to drawings of Arab ships that he highlighted in the presentation, the 9th century Belitung shipwreck remains one of the best examples of such ships as the design had changed little over the centuries. The archaeological data from this shipwreck provides a lot of information related to the construction of such ships. This data was used to construct a full-sized replica, thus providing a better understanding of how these ancient ships may have appeared and performed.

He also covered the possible Chinese ships which may have plied the route from China down to Southeast Asia and Singapore. Comparing the archaeological remains found on land in Singapore with other shipwreck data, it is plausible that Chinese Junks may have sailed down the South China Sea to trade within Singapore's waters. Shipwrecks found in the Paracel Islands, the Bakau Wreck in Indonesia, and the Binh Thuan Wreck in Vietnam offer strong evidence that Chinese ships which sailed down to this area may have had either a V-shaped or flat-bottomed hull.

Ships from hybrid construction techniques from both Southeast Asian and Chinese traditions may have also plied the sea route around Singapore. The Longquan, Phu Quoc and the Klang Au wreck were examples of ships which manifested a combination of Southeast Asian and Chinese ship construction elements; known as the South China Sea tradition.

The lecture concluded with the possibility of surveying the area around the Raffles Lighthouse. Unlike most parts of Singapore's southern coast which have been reclaimed or subject to heavy shipping traffic, the Raffles Lighthouse area is relatively untouched and may be a site for shipwrecks which may hold information on the vessel types that passed through Singapore over the centuries.

During the Q&A session, Dr. Flecker addressed questions and comments relating to the material, construction and operation of the ships, the cargo and crew implements and the other definitions of the term Jong. Notable questions such as the appearance of the Hybrid Jongs and the iron trade in Southeast Asia highlighted the multitude of research possibilities which can help further the understanding of maritime interactions within Southeast Asia.

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## Workshop on Chinese Ceramics

BY AARON KAO  
NSC RESEARCH OFFICER



FIGURE 1: DR. TAI YEW SENG SPEAKING AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE ONE-DAY WORKSHOP. (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

*Tuesday, 19 February 2019* – Chinese ceramics have long played a central role in our understanding of Southeast Asia's ancient past. For over a thousand years, their high quality and wide-ranging style have made them highly sought after commodities throughout the maritime trade route that spanned the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. An intimate understanding of Chinese ceramics is therefore essential for researchers of Southeast Asian material culture.

It is with this goal that the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (NSC) organised a one-day private workshop on 19 February for 35 participants which included AU's researchers and volunteers, as well as external academics, curators, and conservators from the National Heritage Board, Heritage Conservation Centre, Asian Civilisations Museum, NUS Museum, and the Southeast Asian Ceramics Society.

This workshop was conducted by current NSC Visiting Fellow Dr Tai Yew Seng. Dr. Tai is a ceramic archaeologist specialising in Chinese ceramics and is currently researching Chinese navigational charts and text. Another of his recent projects involved the analysis of ancient ceramics recovered in the Aceh Geohazard Project. He is also the author of several book chapters and research papers.

The workshop was made up of three components. The first component was a lecture that introduced the basic concept of ceramics types, the raw materials used, and the physical characteristics such as decorations, form, and shape. The traditional manufacturing process followed this, in addition to kiln types and firing



ONE OF THE ITEMS ON DISPLAY: FUJIAN CHAYANG GREEN WARE WITH CARVED DECORATION, 11TH CENTURY. (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)



ABOVE: PARTICIPANTS GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH SOME CERAMIC ARTEFACTS AND LITERATURE. (CREDIT: ISEAS - YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE)

techniques. The second component was a hands-on session shortly before lunch allowed participants to get acquainted with a variety of ceramic types. By handling actual artefacts, participants were encouraged to make observations about the differing stylistic traits, fired clay qualities, and the unique workmanship from different kilns in ancient China. The final component of the workshop introduced hallmark pottery from different parts of China and time periods, with an emphasis on specific styles found in pre-modern Singapore. When and how did they come about, their unique qualities, typological evolution, and how information derived from these artefacts can help with the dating of archaeological sites, and vice versa. The Q&A segment raised several important points. One of which was the source for cobalt blue pigment used in the production of the commonly known blue-and-white porcelain wares. Interestingly, the pigment was an imported material before cobalt deposits were discovered in China. Other questions about the temporal lifespan of kilns, suggested the suitability of archaeology as a method to determine their lifespan, and the socio-political factors influencing pottery style evolution. These questions reflected the multi-dimensional nature of ceramic studies.

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## Reflections on an NSC AU Internship

BY FAZLEEN BINTI KARLAN  
FINAL YEAR STUDENT  
LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

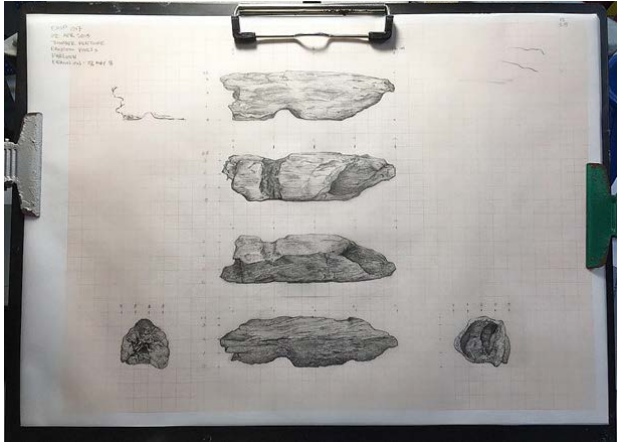


FIGURE 1: ARCHAEOLOGICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF A PIECE FROM THE TIMBER FEATURE EXCAVATED AT EMPRESS PLACE. (CREDIT: FAZLEEN BINTI KARLAN)



FIGURE 2: WRITING ARTEFACTS TAGS FROM EMPRESS PLACE. (CREDIT: FAZLEEN BINTI KARLAN)

Between the months of June to August 2018, I had a wonderful opportunity to intern for the Archaeology Unit at NSC. Even though I was formally trained at Lasalle College of the Arts, this was the first time in my artistic practice that I had to consider historical contexts more extensively. During this internship, I became heavily involved in the archaeological post-excavation process and was able to illustrate timber features from the 14th century Empress Place excavation in Singapore, located in the Civic District. From this internship, I learned much through examining material culture and studying how they might fit into the bigger picture of Singapore's past. I had to quickly learn to adapt to different methods of assimilating information, and I learned that archaeological illustrations are a key element of scientific documentation, particularly as they can bring out the key elements and nuances that photographs may not.

I found that archaeology and the artistic practice had many similarities – they both required a heavy reliance on observation and documentation. During the post-excavation process, which included washing, sorting and packing artefacts, the main objective was to collect data and classify the artefacts according to their classification typologies. At first, it was complicated because there were many steps, but after repeatedly sorting the artefacts, I learned to discern between different vessel parts and it eventually enabled me to draw relationships between the objects. While each

individual piece was a fragment of the whole vessel, the collective assemblage of artefacts showed much more about the local community than one would expect, such as societal preferences for certain sizes, shapes, and designs.

Although the image of Singapore's past is often portrayed as a 'sleepy fishing village', during my internship I was able to view and touch the physical evidence of human activity prior to 1819. Even though many of the artefacts were only broken fragments, many come from faraway lands, and thus showed evidence of trade relations. As many of the survivable artefacts were ceramics, I also came to understand what kind of materials were used in daily environments. Experiencing the post-excavation prompted me to critically think on how even though history is often considered from a specific viewpoint, there are still many other angles to consider. Singapore's past is like a painting with multiple layers, waiting to be peeled. Archaeological work is able to illuminate these layers, and hopes to alter the impression that there was no history before 1819 or that certain texts are too mythical to be worthy of closer examination. The importance of archaeological work cannot be underestimated, and it is timely that we reflect on it as Singapore commemorates its bicentennial.

Being immersed in archaeological work, I learned that it was important to understand the conditions in which an artwork as well as the study of archaeology were produced. Doug Bailey

(2017) argues that like art, the job of the archaeologist was to "open people's minds and disrupt received perceptions of society, politics, places, peoples and material culture" and to acknowledge that the analysis has "political intention and impact." Art and archaeology is also intertwined in many ways. Art is meant to create a visual language based on encounters in which meaning can be shared between individuals and our ancestors. It was artists and craftsmen who created much of the material culture that archaeologists study today, and with material culture, it is thought to be an embodiment of expression, indicative of the world which they were part of. However, artists often search for other ways of using the materials. As such, it was interesting for me to consider whether certain patterns were simply used for individualistic artistic expression or whether it was something else worth noting for archaeological information. This challenge will form the underpinnings of my dissertation for my final year in Lasalle. As an artist, I hope that my involvement with the Archaeology Unit can help place value on their efforts.

FAZLEEN BINTI KARLAN IS A FINAL YEAR STUDENT AT THE LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS. THIS INTERNSHIP WAS PART OF THE INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODULE FOR THE BA (HONS) FINE ARTS PROGRAMME. SHE WOULD LIKE TO THANK MICHAEL NG FOR HIS HELP WITH THIS ARTICLE.

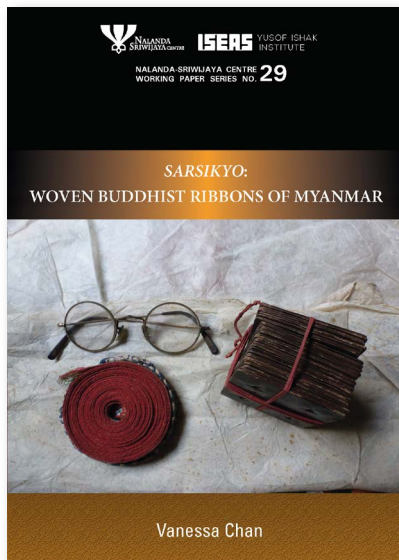
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## NSC Working Paper Series

THE NALANDA-SRIWIJAYA CENTRE WORKING PAPER SERIES WAS ESTABLISHED FOR THE SWIFT PUBLICATION AND WIDE DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH CONDUCTED OR PRESENTED WITHIN THE CENTRE, AND OF STUDIES ENGAGING FIELDS OF ENQUIRY OF RELEVANCE TO THE CENTRE.

### *Sarsikyo*: Woven Buddhist Ribbons of Myanmar

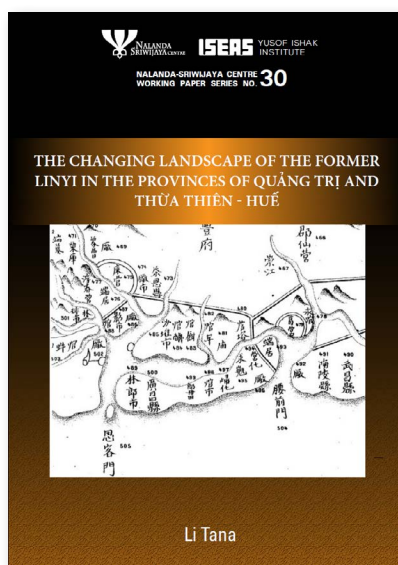


**AUTHOR:** VANESSA CHAN

**Abstract:** *Sarsikyo* are lengthy tablet-woven dedicatory ribbons used originally to secure palm-leaf manuscripts of the Pitakas or sacred Buddhist scriptures when the latter were donated to monasteries as works of merit. Some were woven only with geometric patterns or figural decorations, but the most significant ones bear extensive woven texts, often in poetic form. These ribbons, particularly the ones containing text, appear to be unique artefacts of Myanmar Buddhism.

This article narrates the author's personal interaction with the makers and users of the ribbons.

### The Changing Landscape of the Former Linyi in the Provinces of Quảng Trị and Thừa Thiên-Huế



**AUTHOR:** LI TANA

**Abstract:** This paper seeks to add to the field of Cham studies by exploring Champa's early historical landscape. It focuses on the lesser-known and less understood history of Linyi, a kingdom that was to become part of northern Champa from the seventh century onward. The rationale for this paper is simple: we know something about southern localities such as Trà Kiệu, Mỹ Sơn, Vijaya (Quy Nhơn) and Phan Rang, but less about the northern localities of present-day Quảng Trị and the Thừa Thiên-Huế area. At the same time, while we know something about Cham

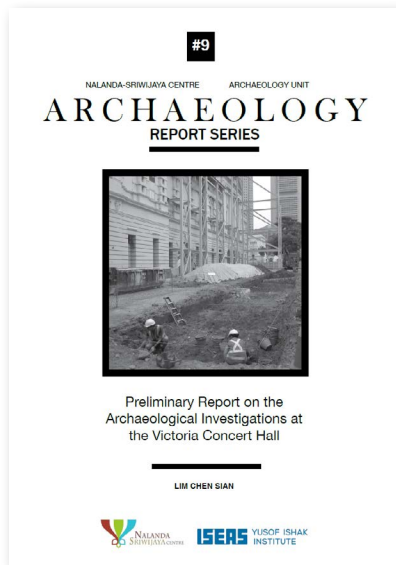
maritime history, we know little about how its coast and rivers were connected and how they changed over time, and whether such changes in landscape impacted on Champa's maritime fortune in any way. This northern region will be the focus of this working paper.

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[HTTPS://WWW.ISEAS.EDU.SG/ARTICLES-COMMENTARIES/NSC-WORKING-PAPERS](https://www.iseas.edu.sg/articles-commentaries/nsc-working-papers)

## NSC AU Archaeology Report Series

THE NALANDA-SRIWIJAYA CENTRE ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT (NSC AU) ARCHAEOLOGY REPORT SERIES WAS ESTABLISHED TO PUBLISH AND DISSEMINATE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND RELATED RESEARCH CONDUCTED OR PRESENTED WITHIN THE CENTRE. THIS ALSO INCLUDES RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CENTRE AS WELL AS OUTSIDE SUBMISSIONS FROM FIELDS OF ENQUIRY RELEVANT TO THE CENTRE'S GOALS.

### Preliminary Report on the Archaeological Investigations at the Victoria Concert Hall



**AUTHOR:** LIM CHEN SIAN

**Abstract:** In September 2010, the Victoria Concert Hall and Victoria Theatre were closed for major redevelopment works amounting to the sum of \$158,000,000. The construction project saw extensive demolition works and the compound within was impacted. An archaeological evaluation conducted in July 2010 revealed pockets of cultural deposits from both the colonial and pre-modern eras. This discovery of an in-situ archaeological reservoir led to a three-week large-scale rescue excavation in September 2011. While

the excavations were restricted to only a small area of the construction impact zone, the archaeology team successfully recovered approximately 654 kg of artifacts and ecofacts. This preliminary site report details the excavation sequences conducted at the site.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### “The Inception of Lion City” by Iain Sinclair

*Part of the “1819 and Before: Singapore’s Pasts” special series of lectures commemorating Singapore’s bicentennial anniversary*

This lecture traces the formation of Temasek, Singapura and Melaka as bases for the Indo-Malay Tribuanic dynasty founded in the thirteenth century. Whereas the name Temasek is found to be associated with trading in tin, the “lion” of Singapura is arguably synonymous with the royal line that eventually became the Melaka Sultanate. The story of the sighting of a lion-like animal at the founding of Singapura draws on the trope of the “superior defender”, which is repeated at the founding of Melaka and gives clues as to the real meaning of the city’s name.

**Date:** 3 April 2019, 10:00-11:30 am

**Venue:** Seminar Room 2, ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute

### A New Dating Method Using Magnetic Declination Extracted from Historical Sources by Tai Yew Seng

The magnetic north pole is a moving point at the Northern Hemisphere and is crucial to maritime navigation. The information on the magnetic north has been found encoded in ancient travel notes, rutters (mariners’ notes), and nautical charts. As the position of magnetic north moves slowly from east to west and vice versa every few hundred years, it has provided scholars with useful data to date materials which contain compass bearings.

In this talk, the dates of the compass bearings which have been recorded in certain rutters and nautical charts are identified. The Southeast Asian location which ancient Chinese navigators visited most often is singled out and used as an example to show how this method works. The historical magnetic north information for this location is first compiled in chronological sequence.

**Date:** 17 April 2019, 10:00-11:30 am

**Venue:** Seminar Room 2, ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute



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