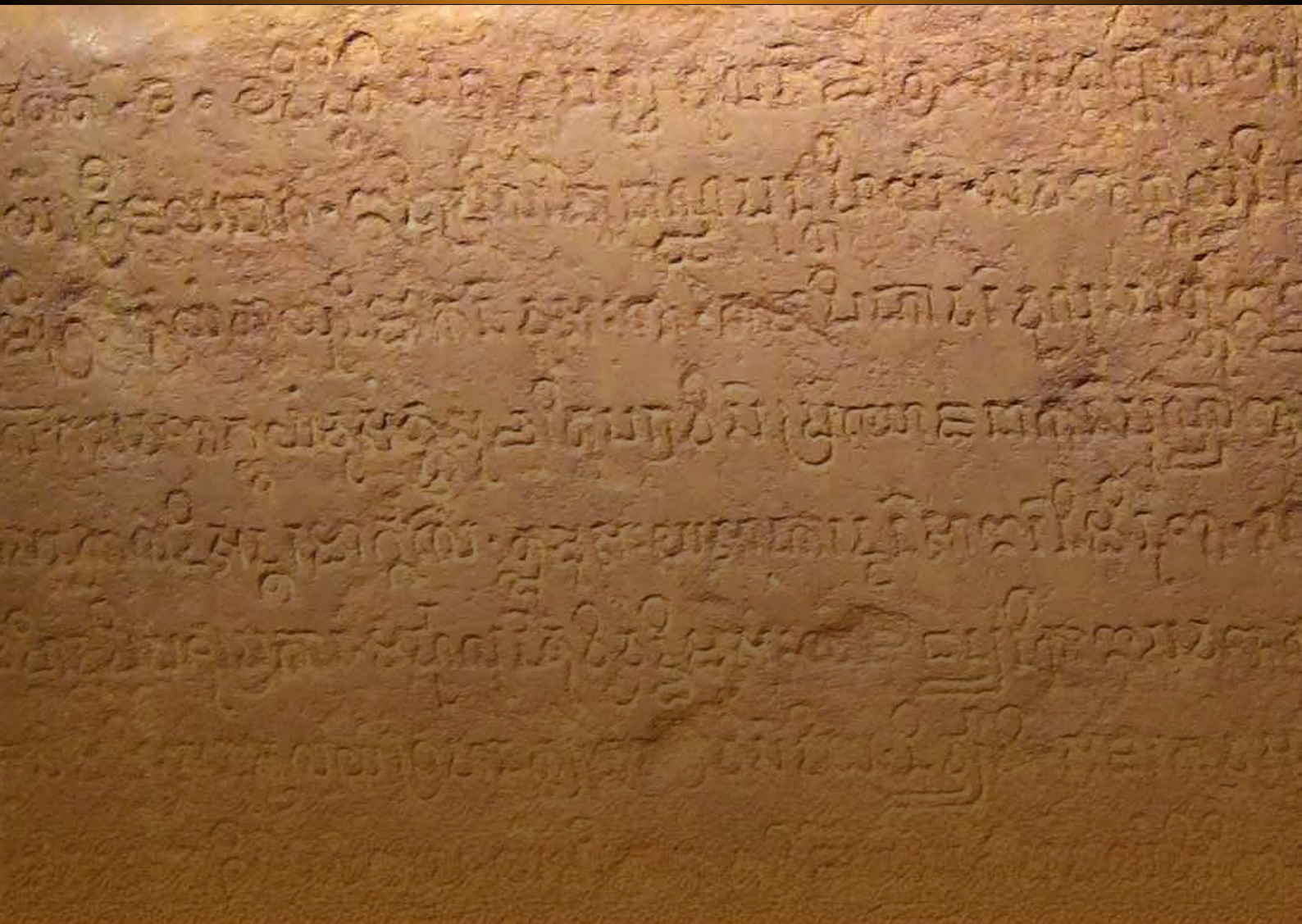




NALANDA-SRIWIJAYA CENTRE
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EXPLORING THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN EARLY STATE FORMATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA



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(Oct 2011)

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Thomas M. Hunter, Jr.

Thomas M. Hunter has been a Fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities (1996), the Institute for Advanced Study at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2003-4) and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (2006-7). He is currently lecturing in Indonesian and Sanskrit languages and Southeast Asian Studies for the Asian Studies Department of the University of British Columbia. Email: thomas.hunter@ubc.ca

The NSC Working Paper Series is published electronically by the **Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre** of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore.

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Citations of this electronic publication should be made in the following manner:

Thomas M. Hunter, Jr., Exploring the Role of Language in Early State Formation of Southeast Asia, **Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre** Working Paper No 7 (Oct 2011), http://nsc.iseas.edu.sg/documents/working_papers/nscwps007.pdf

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The Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre Institute of Southeast Asian Studies

30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Pasir Panjang, Singapore 119614

TELEPHONE : (+65) 6870 4559

FAX : (+65) 6775 6264

WEB : <http://nsc.iseas.edu.sg>

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Exploring the Role of Language in Early State Formation of Southeast Asia¹

Thomas M. Hunter, Jr.

Abstract: In this paper I review a number of approaches to the question of multiple language use in processes of state formation among the early states of South and Southeast Asia. I then develop a set of terms aimed at providing analytical tools for coming to a better understanding of the role of language in the evolution of Southeast Asian polities. Some of these are pre-existing terms drawn from the theoretical perspectives of sociolinguistics or the emerging field of contact linguistics. Others are terms that I have developed for my studies of the complex interaction between Indian and Southeast Asian modes of text-building and the production of high status dialects in processes of state formation. In order to lay the basis for a better understanding of the role of multiple language use in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago I develop in this paper a critique of the terms that can be generally grouped under the rubric “the glossias”. I look first at Henk Maier’s use of the Bakhtinian terms “heteroglossia” and “polyglossia” to describe the hardening of linguistic boundaries during the late colonial era, then at the development of the terms “diglossia” and “hyperglossia” in works like those of Pollock that propose these terms as useful tools in understanding the wider translocal culture of a “Sanskrit cosmopolis” or “Sanskrit ecumene”.

I propose in this paper that the older focus of historical studies of Southeast Asia on “legitimation theory” can be improved upon by looking more closely at the ways that code-switching and communicative accommodation play out over long time periods, and under certain conditions lead to the development of high status dialects that play a large role in the naturalization of status hierarchies in religious and political expressions of sociocultural life. In this paper I also propose that studies of palaeography should be carried out with close attention paid to the shifting needs of “display” and “documentation” and how these themes are reflected in stylistic developments evident from the palaeographic record. I further discuss the use of specialized figures and tropes in the inscriptional record, noting that in cases like the use of “figures of repetition” (*yamaka*) in the Śivagrha inscription of 856 CE it is clear that figural language was employed for purposes of display in ways that parallel stylistic developments in the realm of palaeography.

Keywords: scriptoria, bilingualism, diglossia, heteroglossia, polyglossia, hyperglossia, textuality, contact linguistics, code-switching, communications accommodation theory (CAT), charter states, galactic polities, solar polities, naturalization of hierarchy, em-bhasa-ment (em-bhāṣa-ment), (linguistic) Sanskritization, status dialects, Old Javanese inscriptions, dyadic technique (of translation), *pratika* technique (of translation)

¹ This working paper is the outcome of a conference held at the Conference on “State Formation and the Early State in South and Southeast Asia Reconsidered” convened by Hermann Kulke and John Miksic at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, 21- 23 March 2007. As prepared for that conference this paper was titled “Textuality in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago: Contributions to the Study of State Formation in Early Southeast Asia.”

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to discuss a number of terms, themes and concepts that may be useful in developing a more nuanced picture of the role played by language in early state formation in South and Southeast Asia than has been possible in the past. This means taking advantage of recent advances in our understanding of social, linguistic and economic processes that have gained a great deal on the one hand from the efforts of archaeologists, historians and art historians, and on the other from theorists looking at the role of literary cultures and multiple language use in history. In this paper I take as a starting point the emerging field of “contact linguistics” and attempt to apply some of its lessons in a general way to the period of early state formation in Southeast Asia that has been described by Kulke in terms of “conceptual convergence” and by Pollock under the terms “Sanskrit cosmopolis” and “Sanskrit ecumene.”²

While giving full credit to earlier generations of scholars whose erudition allowed them to concentrate on particular cultural locations while at the same time enriching their discussions with reference to a much broader corpus of materials from the fields of Indology and Orientalism, I would like to propose that our present and future studies will gain much if we move away from the tendency both to segregate studies of the historical record by region and to consider developments on mainland Southeast Asia in isolation from those of the archipelago or the coastal states of South Asia. This is indeed what Kulke’s notion of “conceptual convergence” urges upon us, and is already represented in works like Brown’s study of the “Dvarawati wheels of the law” or Dumarçay’s study of the movement of building techniques between South and

² Hermann Kulke, “Epigraphical References to the ‘City’ and the ‘State’ in Early Indonesia”. *Indonesia* 52 (1991): 3-22; Sheldon Pollock, “The Sanskrit cosmopolis, 300-1300 CE; Transculturation, vernacularization, and the question of ideology,” In *Ideology and status of Sanskrit; Contributions to the history of the Sanskrit language*, edited by Jan E.M. Houben, pp. 197-248 (Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1996).

Southeast Asia.³ In the field of palaeography we have early examples in studies like those of Vogel and Chhabra on the evolution and spread of Pallava script.⁴ However, too few other works on palaeography have been framed in terms of a larger regional configuration, thus limiting the extent to which we might trace broader patterns related not simply to the spread of writing, but to the spread of *writers* and to the *scriptoria* they developed in multiple centers throughout South and Southeast Asia. I thus take it as my task to suggest ways that we can increase our understanding of the role of language in early state formation by developing new approaches and tools for exploring palaeographic and linguistic dimensions of transcultural contacts in the ancient archipelago.

In what follows I will mainly focus on the situation for Southeast Asia and, within that larger area, on insular Southeast Asia. This is simply because of the limitations imposed by my own expertise, which is predominantly focused on the languages of insular Southeast Asia, especially the literized languages that constitute the main part of the inscriptions and literary records.

Bilingualism, diglossia and textuality in the ancient archipelago

As I see it, our understanding of the role of language in early state formation must begin with a clear definition of a number of key terms that have to do with multiple language use and its implications for developments in the political and sociocultural spheres. I begin with the terms *bilingualism*, which refers to the use of multiple languages by individual speakers, and *diglossia*, a term which refers to a more complex and widespread social phenomenon around multiple language use in which at least

³ Robert Brown, *The Dvaravati Wheels of the Law and the Indianization of South East Asia* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1996); Jacques Dumarçay, *Construction Techniques in South and Southeast Asia, a history* [Handbuch der Orientalistik, Section three, South-East Asia, volume 15; translated by Barbara Silverstone and Raphaëlle Dedourge] (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill N.V., 2005).

⁴ J. Vogel. "The Yūpa Inscriptions of King Mūlavarman, from Koetei (East Borneo)," *Bijdragen tot de Koninklijk Instituut*, LXXIV (1918): pp. 167-232; B. Ch. Chhabra, *Expansion of Indo-Aryan Culture during Pallava Rule* (Delhi: Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, 1965).

one form of linguistic usage represents a superposed variety with a restricted and specialized usage.

In commenting on the role of Sanskrit in pre-modern South Asia, Houben (1996) has provided a useful introduction to the major points of concern in discussions of diglossia and its relationship to bilingualism. Houben's working definition for diglossia is drawn from Ferguson:

[Diglossia is] a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the languages... there is a very divergent, highly codified superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature... which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.⁵

Noting that some analysts used the term "bilingualism" where Ferguson would choose "diglossia", Houben goes on to cite the nuanced description of diglossia developed by Fishman:⁶

Fishman requires that the so-called superposed variety in a diglossic society is the variety that is no one's mother tongue, is learned later in socialization under the influence of one or another formal institution outside the home and

⁵ Jan E.M. Houben. "Socio-linguistic attitudes reflected in the work of Bhāṛṭṭhari and later Grammarians," in *Ideology and status of Sanskrit; Contributions to the history of the Sanskrit language.*, edited by Jan E.M. Houben, (Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1996), pp. 157-196, p. 163. Houben cites C.A. Ferguson "Diglossia," *Word*, Vol. 15 (1959): 325-40, p. 336, but rightly notes that Ferguson's definition must be modified for South Asia, since for much of its history, "the highly codified superposed variety" (e.g. Sanskrit) was transmitted orally." The same can certainly be said for the archipelago, although in a somewhat different sense. To follow Sweeney's analysis for Malay, the noetics of many literary cultures of Southeast Asia can be characterized in terms of an "oral tradition with a manuscript component." See Amin Sweeney, *A Full Hearing: Orality and Literacy in the Malay World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

⁶ Joshua A. Fishman, "Bilingualism and Biculturalism as Individual and as Societal Phenomena," in *The Rise and Fall of the Ethnic Revival: Perspectives on Language and Ethnicity* edited by Joshua A. Fishman (Berlin: Mouton, 1985). pp. 9-56.

is not accessible to everyone [and] distinguishes between diglossia which he understands as a characteristic of society, and bilingualism, which refers to an individual who has full command over two languages.⁷

Both terms—bilingualism and diglossia—are crucial for an understanding of the role played by language in early state formation of South and Southeast Asia. For mainland and insular Southeast Asia the term that must receive our attention first is bilingualism—for it is only possible to think the development of the Sanskritized cultures like those of ancient Cambodia, Sumatra or Java if we begin with a consideration of groups of bilingual speakers whose everyday linguistic contacts allowed them in time to play important roles in local economies, religious institutions and processes of state formation.

We can be sure that bilingualism played an important role in the trading networks connecting ancient South Asia, Southeast Asia and China, but it must also have been very important in the spread of technologies like metallurgy that laid the basis for later developments in architecture and the ability to inscribe important charters in stone or copperplate. In order to think through the evidence for cultural convergence we must thus think first in terms of communities of bilingual speakers who were the agents of crucial interchanges in spreading both ideas and the manufacturing techniques that supported the embodiment of those ideas in material culture.

Understanding ancient bilingualism is, of course, a complex matter. First of all it can only be understood through traces to be found in the inscripational and literary records of the past, or in the lexicons of languages like Malay that have long served as a *lingua franca* among the trading communities of Southeast Asia. This means that any consideration of bilingualism during the formative period of the classical states of Southeast Asia will be filtered largely through the lens of diglossia, that is, in terms of

⁷ Houben, "Socio-linguistic attitudes," p. 163.

societies for whom everyday exchanges among bilingual speakers had developed into a more complex situation marked by the development of “sociolinguistic domains.”⁸

To think bilingualism is thus to think of a larger world of exchanges that depended on the ability of bilingual speakers to communicate across linguistic barriers. Thinking in this mode may not lead us to concrete conclusions like those that can be achieved through analysis of the archaeological record, but it can at least provide a firm basis for assessing the more complicated picture that begins to emerge with the appearance of diglossia.

On the “glossias”

Before moving on to a discussion of how multiple language use played out in the archipelago as influential constructions of social and linguistic hierarchy began to flow into Southeast Asia from the Indian subcontinent, we may want to pause to consider two streams of thought around the “glossias” that have the potential to cause confusion if not clearly delimited. Both these streams of thought have their rightful place in critical studies, but their conflation can lead to terminological confusion that may hinder our further understanding of the issues at stake.

The first of the “glossias” that we will examine here is represented in the sophisticated argumentation of Maier’s analysis of the linguistic situation of the Dutch East Indies before and after the promulgation of a standard dialect of Malay by the colonial authorities.⁹ In Maier’s analysis, this act of colonial intervention in the linguistic affairs of the archipelago marks a watershed, a point at which a prior situation that can be described under the term “heteroglossia” was converted into a state of “polyglossia.” The terms here are Bachtinian, and are apt for describing the shift away from a state of

⁸ For the term “linguistic domains” see Joshua A. Fishman, “Language maintenance and language shift as a field of inquiry,” *Linguistics* 9 (1964): pp. 32-70.

⁹ Henk Maier, “From heteroglossia to polyglossia: the creation of Malay and Dutch in the Indies,” *Indonesia* 56 (1993): pp. 38-65.

heteroglossia, where multiple language use did not imply the kinds of separations, demarcations and border-markings that were favored by the colonial authorities. Heteroglossia implies mixture, not separation, and is parallel in sociolinguistic terms to the “mixed-but-separate” clusters of trading and residential enclaves that evolved in the coastal entrepôts of Southeast Asia in a history stretching over a period of several millennia. In this kind of society, traders, financiers, artisans and shopkeepers from a variety of ethno-linguistic groups lived in separate “urban villages” (the *kampung Jawa, Bugis, Pacinan* and *Arab* of the Malay-Indonesian coastline), but came into daily contact in their commercial dealings or as co-religionists sharing a single religious doctrine and practices. Following Bachtin, Maier takes heteroglossia as a positive term and contrasts it with polyglossia, a linguistic situation in which each of several languages that coexist in a roughly coterminous geophysical space is understood as a separate entity. For the colonial authorities, who saw language as bound to particular ‘races’ or ethnic groups, the lines of demarcation separating different dialects or languages were just as important as those that created barriers to interethnic marriage and residence. In the particular dynamics of early-twentieth century colonial rule in the Indies, once the Riau dialect of Malay had been chosen by van Ophuysen as the right and proper dialect to be used in training an indigenous corps of bureaucrats who could take on some of the clerical tasks of the colonial administration, the need quickly arose for a program of educational interventions that would preserve the purity of this form of Malay in the face of threats of subversion from competing languages or dialects, whether conceptualized as super-ordinate (Dutch in the colonial configuration of the Indies), or subordinate (*pasar Melayu* of the same period).¹⁰

Maier’s terms are mainly useful in the study of the changes that took place during the periods of colonialism and nationalism, and are not without relevance for critical study of contemporary debates on the relationship of regional and national languages in

¹⁰ For a recent study that reviews Minangkabau resistance to Dutch colonial language policies promulgated by van Ophuysen (c. 1901) and Emeis (c. 1932-37) see Suryadi, “Vernacular Intelligence: Colonial Pedagogy and the Language Question in Minangkabau,” *Indonesia and the Malay World* Vol. 34, No. 100 (November 2006): pp. 315-344.

states like Malaysia and Indonesia, where national language policy in many ways reproduces the ethno-linguistic separations developed under colonial auspices. At the same time, an understanding of the conditions of heteroglossia is not without its uses for the study of the ancient archipelago: while not all pre-modern states of Southeast Asia had permeable borders the early dissemination of religious, artistic and political ideas, and the technologies that supported an array of related manifestations in material culture could only have developed in the context of trade and social networks that vibrated with the throb and hum of activity and interchange, both in economic and linguistic terms. Maier's heteroglossia is thus a useful term for thinking through the implications of the permeable borders of the linguistic world of ancient South and Southeast Asia.

The second stream of thinking around "the glossias" has a wider provenance in sociolinguistic studies, and has been particularly influential among scholars of South Asia since the nuanced treatment of the subject found in the several works of Sheldon Pollock.¹¹ While most contemporary studies of code-switching, sociolinguistic domains and diglossia have been synchronic in nature, Pollock has applied the lessons of sociolinguistics to a diachronic study that begins with a major shift of language use in the inscriptional record of first millennium South Asia. To briefly summarize, Pollock calls our attention to the fact that during the Maurya and Śatavāhana dynasties (c. 500 BCE - 50 CE) the language of the inscriptions was Prakrit, which in this sense can be understood as a cover term for several literized dialects of the Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA) linguistic subgrouping. He then notes a major shift in the inscriptional record that began to occur with the Indo-Scythian incursions that resulted in the founding of the Śaka dynasty in CE 78.¹² This involved the entry of Sanskrit into the inscriptional record and its eventual predominance in a two-way split between documentary

¹¹ Sheldon Pollock, "The Sanskrit cosmopolis, 300-1300 CE"; Sheldon Pollock, "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57, no. 1 (February 1998): pp. 6-37.

¹² The founding of the Śaka dynasty has considerable importance for the study of the history of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, for this is the era adopted in the archipelago as the sole basis of dating of the inscriptions from as early as the first half of the first millennium CE. It remains in use as the basis of the sacred solar-lunar year in Bali.

functions of the inscriptions (which continued to be served by Prakrit) and the functions served by Sanskrit, which in Pollock's terms gave form to a "poetics of polity" that merged human and mythological actors in a singular expression of state formation:

What is historically important is not so much that newcomers from Iran and central Asia should begin to participate in the prestige economy of Sanskrit [...] but rather that Shakas, Kushanas and the Buddhist poets and intellectuals they patronized begin to turn Sanskrit into an instrument of polity and the mastery of Sanskrit into a source of personal charisma.¹³

This shift was to have profound consequences throughout South and Southeast Asia c. 300-1500 CE: In an earlier study I have begun to apply Pollock's model of diglossia to the study of multiple language use in the archipelago, and in other papers have begun to develop specialized tools of analysis for understanding the pedagogical basis of translation and conscious processes of literization that were originally based on the need to transfer doctrinal materials from South Asian canonical sources into a form that was useful for the development of didactic and literary traditions of the archipelago.¹⁴ I will return to a consideration of these tools for mapping the role of language in early state formation of Southeast Asia after first developing an argument

¹³ Pollock, "The Sanskrit cosmopolis, 300-1300 CE", pp. 205-06. Pollock has brought a further refinement to the study of pre-modern diglossia with his term "hyperglossia", which he introduces to draw attention to the high degree of "compartmentalization" that is observable in the Indian and Southeast Asian case: "This term [diglossia] as well as 'bilingualism' is inadequate for capturing the extreme compartmentalization of usage—and the fact that it is society-wide—let alone differences in cultural opportunity, which are in evidence in the case of Sanskrit and such regional languages as... . Kannada, Khmer, Javanese. This difference lies not merely in internal split (di-) but extreme superposition (hyper-) of different languages. The tension between, say, Sanskrit and Kannada, in the face of this superposition marks the entire history of the latter." p. 208.

¹⁴ Thomas M. Hunter, "Sanskrit in the Archipelago: Translation, Vernacularization and Translocal Identity," a seminar paper for the conference on "Translation in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago" convened in Paris by Henri Chambert-Loir under the auspices of the Association Archipel and the École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris, 2002; Thomas M. Hunter, "The Impact of Indian Forms of the Commentary on Text-Building Strategies in Old Javanese," in *Forms and Uses of the Commentary in the Indian World*, edited by François Grimal, (Pondichery/Paris: Institut Français de Pondichéry/École Française d'Extrême-Orient, forthcoming 2011); Thomas M. Hunter, "Translation in a World of Diglossia," in *Translation in Asia: Theories, Practices, Histories*, edited by Ronit Ricci and Jan van der Putten (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2011).

calling for a further integration of the techniques of sociolinguistics into the study of the consequences of multiple language use in the history of the mainland and insular states of early Southeast Asia.

While acknowledging that the use of terms from among the “glossias” can be a matter of stylistic choice, there are dangers implicit in the contrast of the Bakhtinian terms (heteroglossia, polyglossia and monoglossia) with the sociolinguistic terms developed to deal with the elaboration of specialized linguistic domains, often defined in terms of the contrast of elaborated and restricted codes and implying a hierarchy of language use (diglossia, hyperglossia). A case in point comes out in Keeler’s study of the fate of the traditional theatre genres of Java and Bali in contemporary times, where he notes (and mourns) a movement from an earlier state of “heteroglossa” towards a more mono-glossic state of affairs, which in the Bakhtinian analysis represents a movement away from multi-vocality and towards a new form of hegemony.¹⁵ The general trend noted by Keeler is no doubt noteworthy, as is his conclusion that the movement towards monoglossia may well represent an emerging cultural hegemony that may have powerful effects on how language and society are configured in the future. But the analysis mixes two worlds of discourse: the prior state that Keeler intends to describe is more properly a state of diglossia (Fishman, Ferguson) or hyperglossia (Pollock), that is, one characterized by a hierarchical layering of linguistic domains. Here we are not speaking of the conditions of heteroglossia (Maier, Bakhtin) in which there are no strict demarcations between a number of languages that coexist and come into close contact in a particular geographical area (often defined in terms of trade routes and entrepôts) and code-switching among languages current in this area is not limited by the kinds of demarcations imposed under hegemonic conditions, perhaps especially those of colonialism.

¹⁵ Ward Keeler, “The Pleasures of Polyglossia: translation in Balinese and Javanese performing arts,” in *Between Tongues, Translation And/Of/In Performance in Asia*, edited by Jennifer Lindsay (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006), pp. 228-254.

Reading the indices: contact linguistics and the emergence of the “charter states” of Southeast Asia

One of the major claims of this paper is that the next breakthroughs in our understanding of the historical record of South and Southeast Asia may grow out of a shift of attention from reading strictly for content to reading in terms of the way that textual materials are indexed to social fields, and what this can tell us about the organization of ancient societies. This is not to say that the work of an earlier generation of historians has been insensitive to issues of social organization. Wolter’s work is notable for the close attention he has paid to the ways the historical record can reveal the shape of ancient societies, while works like those of Barrett Jones, Christie and Kulke are among those that have shown us how valuable a careful attention to the terms and terminology of the inscriptional record can be in understanding the form of ancient polities.¹⁶ What I am advocating here is not so much a turn away from the earlier modes of reading for content as an engagement with the work of contemporary sociolinguistics that may help us to better understand linguistic processes that lay behind the development of the historical record in the particular form it took during the era of early state formation.

One term that I have found very useful in beginning to understand the emergence of sociolinguistic domains in ancient Southeast Asia is Lieberman’s “charter state.”¹⁷ Lieberman’s term is provocative in that it suggests the centrality of inscriptions in

¹⁶ O.W. Wolters, *History, Culture and Region in Southeast Asian Perspective* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982); Antoinette M. Barrett Jones, *Early Tenth Century Java from the Inscriptions, a study of economic, social and administrative conditions in the first quarter of the century* [Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 107] (Dordrecht-Holland/Cinnaminson, USA: Foris Publications, 1984); Jan Wisseman Christie, “The <<disintegrating>> village in Early Java?,” in *Texts from the Islands, Oral and Written Traditions of Indonesia and the Malay World*, edited by Wolfgang Marshall, (Berne: The University of Berne, 1989), pp. 27-42 ; Jan Wisseman Christie, “State Formation in Early Maritime Southeast Asia, a Consideration of the Theories and the Data,” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Vol. 151.2 (1995): pp. 235-288; Kulke, “Epigraphical References to the ‘City’ and the ‘State’ in Early Indonesia”.

¹⁷ Victor Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Volume 1, Integration on the Mainland: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830* [Cambridge Studies in Comparative World History] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 33. See pages 31-7 for his discussion of the term “charter states”.

stone or copperplate to the organization of several of the classical states of Southeast Asia. In his analysis these include “Pagan, Angkor, early Ava; in some degree, Champa and early Dai Viet” for the period c. 900-1450 CE.¹⁸ His focus is on the general characteristics of this kind of early state formation, which he contrasts with three later forms of organization: a “decentralized Indic administration” (c. 1450-1840 for much of mainland Southeast Asia and the Malay states of coastal Malaysia and Sumatra), a “centralized Indic administration” (c. 1600-1840 for Siam and Burma) and a “Chinese-style administration (c. 1460-1840, first for Dong Kinh, later for all of Vietnam).”

Lieberman does not delve deeply into the several localized forms of the charter state—nor does he extend his discussion to include Sumatran, Javanese and Balinese states that can clearly be included in a larger grouping of charter states. However, in modifying Tambiah’s term “galactic polities” to characterize what he terms the “solar polities” of the charter states, he gives us a sense of the attenuating political power of the center in more peripheral territories that was characteristic of the charter states:¹⁹

[T]he farthest planets were ruled by hereditary tributaries; less distant realms by powerful local families or relatives of the High King. All such leaders were tied to the overlord by webs of family, marriage and patronage whose instability ensured constant fluctuations in the center’s territorial influence.²⁰

For our purposes what is most important is Lieberman’s description of the role played by religious institutions in the organization of the charter states:

In Pagan, Angkor, and to a lesser extent perhaps early Champa and Dai Viet, temples and monasteries served simultaneously as agencies of agricultural reclamation, ritual validation, and intra-elite alliance. Because these wealthy,

¹⁸ Liebermann, *Strange Parallels*, p. 35.

¹⁹ Stanley J. Tambiah, “The Galactic Polity: The Structure of Traditional Kingdoms in Southeast Asia,” *Annals of the New York Academy Of Sciences*, Vol. 293.1 (1977): pp. 69–97.

self-regulating religious institutions helped to stabilize labor and to concentrate resources, they tended to compress and, in some ways, to obviate royal administration.²¹

In my view the role of inscription in the religious institutions of the charter states is a key feature that needs to be explored for the period of early state formation in Southeast Asia, and very likely for much of South Asia as brahmanical culture began to extend outward from the ancient heartland of the Gangetic plain, known to them as the “central country” (*madhyadeśa*). Lieberman’s focus is on economic cycles from c. 800 to 1830 CE, with an emphasis on developments as the charter states began to disintegrate, so it is natural that he would leave to others the task of charting the underlying similarities and differences among the charter states. Perhaps the most important matter at hand—and the least explored to date—is the development of *scriptoria* associated with Buddhist and Hindu religious institutions. The early spread of these *scriptoria* over a large geographical area must have depended on a high level of motivation to achieve bilingualism on the part of religious actors arriving in Southeast Asia from India, and at the same time receptive communities in Southeast Asia who stood to gain from the development of transcultural modes of belief and practice as founding principles of local political and sociocultural institutions. As Brown’s study has shown us, these developments in the spread of religious and political ideas were in almost every case linked to the spread of artistic and manufacturing techniques crucial to the embodiment of religious ideals in material culture.²²

²⁰ Liebermann, *Strange Parallels*, p. 33.

²¹ Liebermann, *Strange Parallels*, p. 33.

²² Robert Brown, *The Dvaravati Wheels of the Law and the Indianization of South East Asia* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1996). There is a great deal of exciting work being produced as archaeologists expand their explorations in South and Southeast Asia. I will not attempt to review those efforts or publications here. However, I wish to draw particular attention to the recent work of Lustig, Evans and Richards on the analysis of lexical items in Khmer inscriptions. This kind of close, statistical analysis will naturally support the efforts of archaeologists in their studies of material culture, and of historians in their work on reconstructing the development of socioeconomic and sociopolitical forms of organization in early Southeast Asia. This kind of statistical evidence can also be an important ally in the reassessment of the role of philology in our understanding of the past. The frequency of occurrence of particular loanwords, or of particular technical terms from local vernaculars can be combined with a study of the role played by such lexemes in systematic contacts related to economic, state and social

We return now to a discussion of some of the tools of sociolinguistics that I propose may be useful in the study of early state formation in Southeast Asia. If we look to Winford as a good example of a current textbook on contact linguistics we learn that the study of bilingual language mixtures includes attention to the “alternating use of relatively complete utterances from [...] two languages, alternation between sentential and/or clausal structure from [...] two languages, and the insertion of (usually lexical) elements from one language into the other”.²³ We will find that the third form of bilingual mixture is particularly evident in the textual record in the Old Javanese (Old Javanese) language, but further studies may well reveal the presence of the other major forms of bilingual exchange for other languages involved in the translocal culture of early Southeast Asia.

The study of contact linguistics to date has largely focused on contemporary examples of multiple language use. As Winford reminds us this is because these phenomena have “become increasingly common as a result of various socio-historical forces that have led to increasing contact among different language groups within the same national and local communities”. The line of thought I propose to develop here is diachronic, and in this sense related to Pollock’s use of the terminology of diglossia to develop a diachronic study of multiple language recoverable from the historical record for South and Southeast Asia. However, since my focus here is on the earliest phases of state formation I look to two further aspects of sociolinguistic explanation that I believe are particularly germane to the kind of study that seeks to understand the role of language contact in the earliest phases of state formation. First I look at code-switching, a phenomenon that Grosjean early on defined as the alternate use of two or

formation. One of the goals of this paper is to suggest new directions in philology that take advantage both of recent methodological advances in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, and of statistical and topographical (GIS) studies that offer important new sources of data for understanding distributional aspects of the archaeological and historical records. Eileen Lustig, Damian Evans and Ngaire Richards, “Words across Space and Time: an Analysis of Lexical Items in Khmer Inscriptions, Sixth-Fourteenth Centuries CE,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Volume 38, Number 1 (February 2007): pp. 1-26.

more languages in the same utterance or conversation. I then shift attention to the more specialized question of “linguistic domains”, looking at diglossia as a phenomenon that emerged in Southeast Asia from a more general background of code-switching.²⁴ I take it as given here that code-switching had a widespread provenance in Southeast Asia well before the appearance of the historical record, when we can expect that traders, itinerant artisans and religious travelers found bilingual exchanges an important key to achieving their objectives, whether defined in economic terms, or along the less quantifiable axis of religious expansion and development.

Winford’s discussion of the perspectives of several disciplines on the study of code-switching illustrates the broad range of insights that may be possible when we begin to open up a diachronic study of code-switching in the archipelago:

The sociology of language provides insight on how macro-level social institutions and group relationships influence patterns of code switching. Anthropology investigates how micro-level interpersonal relationships, participant goals, and types of interaction affect code-switching behavior in specific encounters. Within social psychology, Communication Accommodation Theory sheds light on how attitudes and group consciousness influence individuals to accommodate to one another through code switching or other linguistic compromises, or to diverge and maintain language boundaries.²⁵

There are many works that should rightly demand our attention in developing a field of historical studies that is informed by the principles of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. However, I will limit myself here to calling particular attention to a

²³ Donald Winford, *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics*, (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2003). The quotations here are from p. 99 of that work.

²⁴ F. Grosjean, *Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982). See especially p. 14 of that work for an early definition of the term “code-switching”. See also Fishman, “Bilingualism and Biculturalism”.

number of conclusions of great relevance that can be drawn from the work of Howard Giles (et al) in the field of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT):

CAT is based on social psychological processes such as similarity attraction, social exchange, causal attribution, and inter-group distinctiveness. Speech convergence is explained primarily in terms of the first three processes, while divergence is explained in relation to inter-group processes. For instance, in convergent accommodation, speakers minimize the linguistic differences between themselves and their interlocutor with a view to increasing social attraction. The notion of social exchange refers to the speaker's assessment of the costs and rewards of accommodating... Such accommodations are valued more positively if it is attributed to the speaker's desire to reduce social distance [...] The notion of inter-group distinctiveness comes into play when speakers employ distinctive linguistic markers of their own group to emphasize their own group membership and dissociate themselves from their interlocutor. Divergent accommodation is theretofore a strategy for maintaining social and psychological distance.²⁶

In my view the recognition of differences between the goals and effects of speech convergence and divergence within the field of CAT should take a special place in our understanding of the development of the *status dialects* that played a special role in early state formation by *naturalizing social hierarchy and difference*.

Let us first look at the contrast of "convergent accommodation" and "divergent accommodation." If we take as an example an early coastal community like Kutei in East Kalimantan circa 400 CE we can predict that local political actors seeking to

²⁵ Winford, *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics*, p. 110.

²⁶ Cited in Winford, *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics*, pp. 119-120. See also Howard Giles, Miles Hewstone, Ellen Bouchard Ryan, and Patricia Johnson (eds.), "Research on Language Attitudes," in *Sociolinguistics: An International Handbook of the Science of Language and Society, Volume 1* [Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, Band. 3.1], edited by U. Ammon, N. Dittmar and K. Mattheier (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006). pp. 585-597.

augment their status through the acquisition of prestige goods would have a high stake in convergent accommodation, adjusting their choices of phrasing and vocabulary with a view to minimizing linguistic differences with traders from the Indian subcontinent. This pattern of convergent accommodation would then be augmented during the period when a group of priestly (*brāhmaṇa*) settlers from the subcontinent brought with them the cultural formation that supported the erection and inscription of the Yūpa posts that are the most prominent remains of the polity of Mūlavarman in Kutei. These posts, defined in South Asia within the compass of alliances of priestly (*brāhmaṇa*) and warrior (*kṣatrīya*) “houses” and a Vedic ritual framework, would have served in Kutei as markers of the beneficence of the local ruler in fulfilling his ritual duty to the priestly caste. It is at this point that we can predict that divergent accommodation might have begun to play a role within the society of Kutei. This second stage of the picture of multiple language use can be understood as beginning to develop at the point when local political actors and their inner circle begin to mark off a separate domain of linguistic usage that “emphasize[s] their own group membership.”²⁷ Here we assume the background of a single matrix language that is then subject to a process of differentiation in which one set of speakers begins to maximize a distinct set of linguistic markers that sets them apart from speakers of other dialects of the matrix language. This sets up a dichotomy between speakers who have full access to an emergent code of linguistic behavior, and those who have limited access, in time leading to the formalization of an “elaborated code” that defines access to socio-political rank and power.

We do not have further records of the developments in Kutei beyond the Sanskrit inscriptions of the Yūpa posts of Kutei, and indeed we do not know whether the political formation around the Mūlavarman family survived beyond the period when the posts were inscribed. However, we do have in the Old Malay inscriptions of the seventh century CE a firm basis for studying the emergence of a specialized domain of linguistic usage from a background in code-switching that involves a Malay idiolect as

²⁷ Winford, *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics*, p. 119.

the matrix language and the Sanskrit of a learned group of scribes and priests as a “donor language” that must have originally been experienced in terms of convergent accommodation. While we will not further explore here the dimensions of this emergence of a specialized sociolinguistic domain from a matrix of Malay idiolects, we will call attention to this area of research as one among several promising grounds for further exploration of how language contact affects the kinds of socio-political developments that were once characterized under the terms of legitimation theory.

My principal claim here is that a sociolinguistic orientation toward the study of emerging polities can provide us with a basis for a more nuanced understanding of processes of accommodation and divergence that result in the formation of new socio-political practices drawing from a variety of translocal sources. This kind of approach can deal more adequately with the rather lengthy time frames we must consider in looking at the emergence of the early states of Southeast Asia than can an approach based on legitimation theory, which too often runs the risk of assuming the conscious appropriation of political and culture symbols at fixed points in a historical continuum, rather than the gradual processes that can be revealed through attention to sociolinguistic modes of enquiry.

Emphasament²⁸

As the inscriptional record reveals in great detail, the patterns of divergent accommodation that began to appear in Southeast Asia with the emergence of the historical record, in every case reflect either the massive influence of Sanskrit, or of a mixture of Sanskrit and Pali (Sri Lanka, Burma and later Thailand). This is not new information, but in terms of a sociolinguistic approach to the study of early state formation it means that we should look to particular groups of bilingual speakers who had both the will and the means to undertake extensive journeys in pursuit of their

²⁸ The term *emphasament* is based on Sanskrit *bhāṣā*, “language” and therefore should be correctly spelled *embhāṣāment*. However, for ease of use as an analytical term I prefer to retain the simpler spelling *emphasament*.

goals, and a firm commitment to a religious ideology that by the 2nd century CE was tied not only to specialized forms of linguistic usage, but to specialized forms of writing and inscription that were everywhere the handmaidens of the developments that led in time to the charter states.²⁹

Over the last decade I have begun to develop tools of textual analysis aimed at providing a basis for understanding the sociolinguistic processes that led to the emergence of Old Malay and Old Javanese as literized languages with a particular role to play in the emergence of the charter states of Java, Bali and the coastal areas of Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. I believe that similar studies can and should be developed for other areas where Sanskrit and Pali played a role in the development of early polities. It is natural to suppose that other tools will be needed to develop an understanding of the particular linguistic and textual forms that emerged as local vernaculars and languages like Sanskrit and Pali began to play a super-ordinate role in a matrix of diglossia. The tools for analysis discussed here are thus presented as examples based on particular textual regimes, and are not intended for analysis outside those domains without considerable adjustment to the conditions of other ancient polities and forms of pedagogy.

The key term in these studies is *em-bhasa-ment*, a process through which a local vernacular like Malay or Javanese was enriched through the incorporation of Sanskrit lexical items, in time producing a new literized language, or elaborated code that began to rival the status of Sanskrit as a specialized medium of communication intimately tied to the expressive needs of an emerging state. My claim here is that the ideal of producing a language formulated with the view of achieving the status of a “perfected language” (*saṃskṛta-bhāṣā*) was a conscious process that was widespread throughout Southeast Asia during the first millennium CE, and everywhere associated

²⁹ For a definitive study of the role of priestly actors in the spread of South Asian forms of political, religious and social organization in Indonesia, see F.D.K. Bosch, “The Problem of the Hindu Colonisation of Indonesia,” in *Selected Studies in Indonesian Archaeology*, edited by F.D.K. Bosch (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1961), pp. 1-22.

with the pedagogical regimes of the religious institutions that lay at the heart of the formation of the charter states. Local conditions, in both socioeconomic and linguistic terms, meant that the particular results of these processes of embasement were not uniform across a broad geographical spectrum. However, the conditions of political and religious life in 1st millennium Southeast Asia ensured a general tendency towards the development of specialized local vernaculars of the type studied by Pollock under the term “cosmopolitan vernacular.”³⁰ These vernaculars developed wherever Sanskrit was adopted as a specialized, super-ordinate language with a particular role to play in the formulation of religious and political ideals, and local political and intellectual actors were powerful enough to begin to assert new identities that were yet formulated within the horizon of the super-ordinate language.

The term embasement represents an attempt to suggest both the dynamics of a socio-linguistic process, and the aspirations implicit in a process that aims at achieving a “higher octave” in linguistic expression. I first developed the term in a seminar paper for a conference on “translation in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago” (Hunter 2002), and subsequently made further modifications in an effort to develop a term that gives an etic view of the processes by which local actors invested local vernaculars with lexical items, rhetorical structures and figural processes derived from Sanskrit in an effort to raise their status to a level equal, or nearly equal, to that of Sanskrit.³¹

I should point out here that the term *embasement* has some disadvantages in that *bhāṣā* is used most often in South Asian contexts to refer to local languages (and local musical idioms), and not so much in the sense of a *saṃskṛta-bhāṣā*, that is a “perfected, polished language.” One can also object that the terms used throughout the Old Javanese tradition for the transformation of Sanskrit literary materials into an Old Javanese form are not words that imply the “elevation” of local idioms, but rather

³⁰ Pollock, “The Sanskrit cosmopolis”.

³¹ Students of the works of Pollock will notice that my phrase “equal, or nearly equal to that of Sanskrit” echoes Pollock’s comments on the processes by which South Asian vernaculars were raised to a higher status during the period that saw the rise of what he has termed the “cosmopolitan vernaculars.”

derived verbs (*mrākṛta*, *pinrākṛta*) based on Sanskrit *prākṛta* “natural language” and the well-known notion of a hierarchy of linguistic types that assigned the “stage Prakrits” of the Indian theater to lower status characters (and women) and reserved Sanskrit for the leading male players, usually of royal or priestly social status. The ancient Javanese writers may then have conceived of the process of translating Sanskrit works into Old Javanese as a process whereby Sanskrit was “lowered” to a vernacular form.

The first objection is relatively minor, since it can simply be argued that in a term like embhasment the meaning of *saṃskṛta-bhāṣā* should be taken as primary, so that embhasment should indeed be understood as a process of bringing a local idiom closer to the “perfected” norm of Sanskrit.³² In the second case, the matter is more complex and brings up some interesting aspects of the point of view of the ancient Javanese intellectuals and poets who described their literary and didactic products in terms of the “prakritization” of Sanskrit materials.

As Gerow has pointed out for South Asia, the knowledge of Vedic social, ritual and linguistic practices—originally confined to the relatively small Brahmin communities of the Gangetic plain—went through a series of “universalizations” as more and more societies lying at the peripheries of these communities saw an advantage in adopting their modes of social and religious praxis.³³ By the time of Bhārtṛhari (c. 400 CE) this

³² If my memory serves me well my inspiration for the term *em-bhasa-ment* was a brief classroom communication (c. 1987) of the very estimable Sanskritist, Madhav Deshpande. However, I am not certain I understood him correctly on this point and thus take full responsibility for any deficiencies in my development of his idea. My understanding is that he spoke of a *bhāṣā* as a specialized, ideal language that was consciously moulded by its “learned” (*śiṣṭa*) users and set a standard that was then aimed for in the linguistic practices of other sociolinguistic groups striving to achieve something of the status and prestige of Sanskrit for their literized languages, which included Pali of the Theravada Buddhists and Ardhamāgadhī Prakrit of the Jains in what might be termed the “first round” of embhasment in South India, and the “cosmopolitan vernaculars” of a later area, which in my analysis should include Old Malay, Old Javanese, Old Balinese and Old Sundanese.

³³ Edwin Gerow, “Indian Poetics” in *A History of Indian Literature*, Volume IV, Fasc. 3, edited by J. Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977). See especially p. 273, n. 218 for Gerow’s discussion of the several “universalizations” of the Vedic world view. Gerow discusses Mammaṭa’s formulation of poetics as a “scientific discipline” (*śāstra*) a move that brought together “the various strands of local traditions and theories that had come each in their own way to be viewed as inadequate” and produced a new

had resulted in lively discussion among the schools of grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), hermeneutics (*mīmāṃsā*) and logic (*nyāya*) on the question of whether non-Sanskritic languages, which were described as *apabhraṃśa*, “corrupt or fallen”, could convey meaning in the same sense as the lexical items of Sanskrit, for which the linkage of signifier and signified was guaranteed through being grounded in the authority of the Veda. Bhartrhari’s account of these arguments, and his conclusion in favor of a more general acceptance of the unity of words and their meanings, suggests a move towards universalization in the understanding of language. As Deshpande (1993) has noted, the move towards a greater equality among linguistic types was carried further forward in the works of the later theorists on poetics (*alaṃkāra-śāstra*), beginning with Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin (c. 700-750 CE), for whom Sanskrit and Prakrit languages stand in a complementary relationship among other languages considered fitting to play a role in literary and dramatic works aimed at satisfying the tastes of a discriminating cosmopolitan society.³⁴

It is important to note here that in spite of the derivation of *prākṛta* (“natural language”) from the same base as *prakṛti* (“nature”), by the time of Daṇḍin and Bhāmaha the opposition of *saṃskṛta* and *prākṛta* languages no longer referred primarily to an opposition of “literary” vs. “natural” languages, but rather to an ensemble of literary dialects, each with its own role to play in the production of dramatic and literary works. By the time of Daṇḍinand Bhāmaha the various dialects that are now studied as the field of Prakrit studies were fully literized, and in fact there is less evidence to support a direct basis of the various Prakrits in spoken languages

solution, which was “faithful to the now recognized broader needs of universalization.” In the footnote cited above, he notes that this movement towards universalization reflects “the case of the older Vedic tradition, when it became clear that an all-India standard of ritual practice was required: hence *mīmāṃsā*, *dharmasāstra*.”

³⁴ As Deshpande has observed, this process was epitomized in the highly cosmopolitan stance of Rājaśekhara. It is doubtful that Rājaśekhara’s work ever had a direct influence in insular Southeast Asia, yet his acceptance as legitimate of a wide variety of cultural and social norms, whose origins cover most of the Indian subcontinent of the 10th Century CE, points to a cosmopolitan attitude that appears to have been shared by local poets and aestheticians of the archipelago. Madhav M. Deshpande, *Sanskrit and Prakrit: Sociolinguistic Issues* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993).

than there is for Sanskrit, which for Pāṇini (c. 400 BCE) was still a spoken language in the Gangetic plain and the northwest, his own area of origin.

The implications this has for Old Javanese are clear: when the poets of the kakawin speak of “prakritizing” a Sanskrit work they are not referring to a “lowering” of the Sanskrit original to a vernacular form defined as a “substandard” (*apabhraṃśa*) language, but to a conversion from Sanskrit into a literary dialect with a status nearly equal to that of Sanskrit, yet more easily intelligible to its audience. In this sense the Old Javanese terms *mrākṛta* and *pinrākṛta* represent the emic equivalent of embasament, an analytical term that simply describes the process by which a higher status literary dialect is moulded through the “enrichment” of a local vernacular with lexical, figural and rhetorical resources drawn from Sanskrit. In this sense we may also speak of a process of “Sanskritization,” so long as we are careful to note that uses of this term with reference to linguistic processes does not imply the social practices of “Sanskritization” first described by Srinivas as a process through which a “low caste was able, in a generation or two, to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, and by Sanskritizing its ritual and pantheon.”³⁵

Returning now to the use of a term like embasament in the study of the role of language in the development of the early polities of insular Southeast Asia, we can say that this process is immediately obvious in the linguistic structure of the seventh century Srivijayan inscriptions in Old Malay. Here we find that a Western Austronesian linguistic base has been modified through incorporation of Sanskrit lexical items into the affixal morphology of Old Malay. We might refer to the aim of this process as the production of a prestige dialect, a linguistic expression designed to express the political aspirations of a local elite in a translocal idiom that conferred status on its users in

³⁵ M.N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952). p. 32

ways similar to the possession and selective circulation of prestige objects derived (by the same elites) from the international trading network.

Looking back at the term embhasament from the vantage point of an understanding of a more general background of bilingualism and code-switching we can begin to see that embhasament represents the point at which processes of linguistic accommodation have begun to be formalized as a linguistic ideology. While the processes of linguistic accommodation that led to the formation of prestige dialects were largely conducted in the domain of spoken, interactional discourses, our evidence for processes of embhasament is largely through textual sedimentations that reveal the pedagogical trajectories of religious institutions central to the formation of polities during the era of the charter states. It is at this point that pedagogy begins to play a key role in the formulation of a linguistic ideology, a systematic presentation of social differences that is naturalized through linguistic processes.³⁶

The claim implicit in the development of a term like embhasament is that the textual record reflects sociolinguistic and pedagogical processes that may have been as important to the development of a new conception of the human role in cosmological and sociopolitical processes in ancient Southeast Asia as was the shift of focus from God to man at the beginning of the Renaissance in late 14th century Europe. In this new conception exemplified in the textual record of insular Southeast Asia, the

³⁶ I will not attempt here to delve further into the question of the role of linguistic ideologies in the development of the pre-modern states of Southeast Asia, or indeed into a discussion of the complex subject of linguistic ideology. A wide-ranging and expert guide to the subject of linguistic ideology can be found in Schieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity while works on modern Javanese and Indonesian by J. Joseph Errington have much to offer to an analysis of earlier stages in the development of linguistic ideologies in the archipelago. See Kathryn Woolard, "Introduction: Language Ideology as a Field of Inquiry" in *Language Ideologies, Practice and Theory*, edited by Bambi Schieffelin, Kathryn Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity [Oxford Studies in Anthropological Linguistics, No. 16] (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 3-50 ; J. Joseph Errington, "Exemplary centers, urban centers, and language change in Java," [Working Papers and Proceedings of the Center for Psychosocial Change] (Chicago: Center for Psychological Studies, 1989); J. Joseph Errington, "A Muddle for the Model: Diglossia and the case of Javanese," *Southwestern Journal of Linguistics* 101.1 (1991): pp. 189-213; J. Joseph Errington, *Shifting Languages, Interactions and Identity in Javanese Indonesia* [Studies in the Social and Cultural Foundations of Language No. 19] (Cambridge, UK and Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 3-50.

ordering of language in terms of its proximity to an ideal state represented by Sanskrit meant that asymmetrical status hierarchies were naturalized in terms of subtle linguistic processes that elude definition in terms of coercion or subjugation, instead joining the facts of domination to mythical and figural practices that appeared to give a natural form to the emergence of sharp differences in terms of political and social status.

The influence of Indian forms of the commentary on the development of Old Javanese (Old Javanese) as a literary dialect

While embasament represents a generalized theoretical term, the critical analysis of texts of the Old Javanese didactic and literary traditions calls for a more specific set of terms suited to the study of the minutia of the textual record.

Taking the approach that processes of embasament can be understood in terms of a principle of “micro-translation,” I have endeavored to describe a number of characteristic forms of rhetorical organization that I felt responded to the axis of translation in the India-Indonesia interface. I described these patterns as representing elements of “text-building,” using a term that is prominent in the works of A.L. Becker.³⁷ The elements of text-building that I described in those works can be summarized as follows:

- A dyadic technique: This refers to a form of rhetorical organization which was originally developed for use in explicating doctrinal texts of the Old Javanese theological tradition. In this case, text-building units consist of a Sanskrit verse,

³⁷ Becker’s seminal work on “text-building, epistemology and aesthetics” appeared in 1979. See A.L. Becker, “Text-Building, Epistemology, and Aesthetics in Javanese Shadow Theatre,” in *The Imagination of Reality*, edited by A.L. Becker and Aram A. Yengoyan (New Jersey: Ablex, 1979), pp. 211-243. This was followed by a series of stimulating articles on the dynamics of text-building and the limits of translation that reveal the close linkages between elements of structure operating at many levels in the “layered discourses” of language. Many of these papers were later collected and published in a volume taking the provocative title *Beyond Translation*. See A.L. Becker. *Beyond Translation, Essays toward a Modern Philology*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995).

almost always in *śloka* form, and its Old Javanese paraphrase. Examples from the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānan Mantranāya* and Old Javanese *Wṛhaspatitattwa* show that in many cases the Old Javanese paraphrases represent significant expansions of meanings recoverable from the Sanskrit verses, thus suggesting a highly developed interpretive tradition within the archipelago. In time this type of text-building device spread into the narrative tradition and offered a second form of structuring narrative that often combined with the “*pratīka* technique” (see below). Works like the *Tantri Kāmandaka* and *Korawāśrama* are among texts from the narrative tradition produced in this style.

- A *pratīka* technique: This refers to a format originally developed as a major element of structure in translation of the *Parvan* of the (Sanskrit) *Mahābhārata* into the *Parwa* of the Old Javanese tradition. This technique is centred around the use of phrases called *pratīka* (“reference markers”) to link Old Javanese texts with their Sanskrit originals. At times the *pratīka* consist of only a few words or phrases, while at others entire verses in *śloka* form are found as the “markers” that link the Old Javanese *Parwa* to the South Asian original. Zoetmulder’s text-edition of the Old Javanese *Udyogapārwa* represents a good example of how a careful philological approach can demonstrate the extraordinary degree to which these *pratīka* can be linked to the text of the critical edition of the *Mahābhārata*.³⁸

Following upon these studies I noted some initial similarities between works of the Old Javanese didactic tradition and Indian commentaries like those of Jayamaṅgala and Mallinātha and proposed that the Indian methodology for providing a running commentary on works of the Indian literary and didactic traditions might be reflected in the pedagogical practices first studied in terms of dyadic and *pratīka* forms of text-building. This led to the idea of looking at works of the Old Javanese didactic tradition

³⁸ P.J. Zoetmulder, *Udyogaparwa, Teks Jawa Kuna*. [Bibliotheca Purbajavanica 1] (Jakarta: Perwakilan KITLV Indonesia and Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana Press, 1993).

in terms of a comparison with the tradition of exposition and commentary known in the Indian tradition as *vyākhyā*, a “taking apart” (*vy-*) in order to give a “complete exposition” (*ā-khya*). An analysis of selected lines of the Old Javanese texts *Amaramala*, *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānan Mantranāya*, *Wṛhaspatitattwa* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* showed that composition of Old Javanese didactic texts followed most closely the structural format of the third among six forms of commentary listed by Goodall and Isaacson.³⁹ This is to say that the typical order of Sanskrit and Old Javanese phrases (or of Old Javanese phrases and secondary glosses in Old Javanese) in Old Javanese didactic texts showed close structural similarities with the form taken in the Indian tradition by commentaries like that of Pūrṇasārasvatī in his commentary on the *Meghaduta* of Kālidāsa:

[...] the words of the root text [are] given in the order that they appear therein, but intermixed with explanations and observations.⁴⁰

The conclusion to be drawn from these studies is that the didactic and prose traditions of ancient Java are strongly marked by the processes that must have emerged in the interface of a pedagogy based around the use of Sanskrit to impart the wisdom and values of Mahāyāna and Śaivāgama traditions with a local linguist matrix of Javanese. In this process, the familiar techniques of commentary and exposition drawn from the Indian tradition were moulded into tools of translation that became a primary conduit for the entry of South Asian lexical materials into the Javanese matrix, and thus a site for the production of Old Javanese as a literary language.⁴¹

³⁹ Dominic Goodall and Harunaga Isaacson, *The Raghupāñcikā of Vallabhadeva, being the earliest commentary on the Raghuvamśa of Kālidāsa, Volume 1: Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes*. (Groningen: Egbert Forstein, 2003). See pages xlv-xlvii for their discussion of the main forms of analysis found in the Indian tradition of commentaries.

⁴⁰ Goodall and Isaacson, *The Raghupāñcikā of Vallabhadeva*, p. xlvi.

⁴¹ Beginning with works like my seminar paper of 2002 I have called attention to the usefulness of Braginsky’s terms “connecting literature” and “zone-shaping literature” for the study of the early history of literary forms in the archipelago. Addressing himself first to the question of the lack of evidence for a Malay literature during the 1st millennium CE, Braginsky concludes that works of the Mahayana canon lay at the heart of a circle of literary forms whose peripheries may have been composed of the (oral) animal tales recorded in later works like *Bayan Budiman*. This would represent a “connecting literature”

Display and documentation in the inscripational record

I have proposed above that that a model of “divergent accommodation” can help us to account for the rise of distinct sociolinguistic domains that are reflected as diglossia (or hyperglossia) in the historical record of Southeast Asia. These manifestations are almost never exactly parallel among major instances. The Khmer inscriptions, for example, appear to align closely with Pollock’s model, and with his studies of the record for the Kannada country, where there is a clear compartmentalization of Sanskrit and the vernacular aligned with “expressive” and documentary aspects of the inscripational record. This contrasts with the inscriptions in Old Malay, which do not reveal a pattern of diglossia, but rather an advanced state of code-switching involving the incorporation of Sanskrit lexical items in an Old Malay morphosyntactic matrix that appears to have been consciously molded into a literized dialect suited to the needs and aspirations of the political center. The inscripational record of Java varies yet again. At the earliest stage only Sanskrit is found in the inscriptions, followed by a second stage in which both bilingual inscriptions in Sanskrit and Old Javanese are found alongside inscriptions with a shorter introduction in a heavily Sanskritized form of Old Javanese followed by a documentary section in a form of Old Javanese that appears to have been close to the vernacular Javanese of the 1st millennium CE. This is a pattern that mixes diglossia and the development of a literized dialect of Javanese out of an earlier matrix of code-switching that appears to parallel the development of inscripational Old Malay (and may have been inspired by the example of Old Malay).⁴²

that tied Old Malay and early Old Javanese literary efforts to a “zone-shaping” literature emanating from the Indian subcontinent. The development of classical Malay and literary Old Javanese can be seen in this light as the development of what Braginsky refers to as a fully self-conscious literary idiom that in turn began to shape its own literary zone. See V.I. Braginsky, *The System of Classical Malay Literature*. [KITLV Working Papers, No. 11] (Leiden: Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 1993).

⁴² See Hunter “Sanskrit in the Archipelago” for further discussion of the proposal that the development of Old Javanese as a literary dialect was stimulated by the model of Old Malay.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to comment on the wide variety of examples of multiple language use in Southeast Asia, let alone to open up a study of the palaeographic side of this picture. However, if only for the sake of initiating a discussion that may prove fruitful in the future, I will venture here a discussion of possible parallels between the forms taken by the languages of the inscriptions of insular Southeast Asia and the evolution of palaeographic form. The argument I want to propose here is that changes in palaeographic form may not arise wholly from factors internal to the writing process, or medium of writing, but may be linked to changes in perspective on the role of inscription, and its place in a sociopolitical setting.

This might mean that the movement between the monumental style of the inscriptions of Kutei and Sunda through the Later Pallava style of the Old Malay inscriptions notable for the evolution of a “principle of equal height” may not simply reflect the influence of writing on manuscripts of *lontar* palm (*Borassus flabellifer*), but may also represent change in perspective on the role of inscriptions.⁴³ In this model, the monumental style of the early inscriptions may have served well the interests of local political actors by maximizing the element of display and would thus parallel in the domain of inscription similar markers of status differentiation arising from the acquisition and distribution of prestige goods.

That there is a shift towards a principle of equal height in the inscriptions in Old Malay, but not a complete shift, might then be understood as a change in palaeographic form that might align with a greater focus on the needs of documentation rather than the element of display that were prominent in the early, monumental inscriptions. If we

⁴³ For a discussion of the principle of equal height and its appearance in the later Pallava script see J.G. de Casparis, *Indonesian Palaeography: A History of Writing in Indonesia from the Beginnings to c. A.D. 1500* (Leiden/Köln: E.J. Brill, 1975). He gives a very clear statement of the shift from a monumental style to one following the “principle of equal height” on pages 20-21 of that study: “The basic difference of this script in comparison with early Pallava is what may be described as the ‘equal height’ principle: the tendency to write all letters equally high, as though they were held in position between invisible base and top lines... The great significance of this principle is that it draws a clear dividing line between the

consider the political and social structures that are reflected in the Old Malay inscriptions, noting for example references to the role played by “scribes” (*kayastha*) in affairs of state, we might be tempted to assume an early movement towards rationalization that may have involved epistolary exchanges between the political center and its erstwhile allies among the *datu*, and an attendant shift away from a stress on the public aspects of documentation.

I believe that this argument can be fruitfully extended for analysis of the following two periods of palaeographic evolution on Java. Simplicity is a marked feature of the scripts that de Casparis (1975) termed Early Kawi and Standard Early Kawi. This feature may have made this form of script ideal for the lengthy and detailed expositions of the intertwined ritual and economic patterns typical of the “tax-transfer” charters that were issued upon the opening up of *sima* lands for the support of religious institutions. This type of clear but simple script is well-known, for example, from many charters issued during the reigns of Kayuwangi (856-882 CE), Balitung (899-910 CE), Dakṣa (910-919) and Mpu Siṅḍok (929-947 CE). However, a shift towards a more ornate style is noticeable from the reign of Dakṣa (910-919) and reaches full fruition in the Later Kawi script that appears with the inscriptions of Airlangga (1019-1042). As de Casparis has noted⁴⁴ this form of script is famous for its “painted serifs”, which lend it a heightened sense of stability that may have been fully intended as a reflection of the imperial model Airlangga brought to bear on the governing of East Java after a period of chaos initiated by the destruction of the capital of Dharmawaṅśsa Tēguh in 1006. If we take into consideration the development during this period of the “Kadiri Quadrate” style of ornamental inscription, then it becomes more than clear that palaeographic form could be moulded to suit the tastes and ideals of a particular set of political actors.

basic system of signs and the derivative or accessory symbols. It entails a separation of functions which facilitates reading and contributes to an orderly aspect of the written texts.

⁴⁴ De Casparis, *Indonesian Palaeography*, p. 41.

Display in the realm of figuration

Noting that the Early Standard Kawi script is ideally suited for rapid notation, and very likely reflects the practice of writing manuscripts on lontar palm, I assume this was primarily a documentary script that moved away from earlier monumental styles ideal for representing the elements of display that were crucial at an earlier stage of state development. This suggests a “de-monumentalizing” in the physical aspect of writing that lasted until the end of the first millennium and the ascendancy of a more stately form of inscription suited to the imperial needs of Airlangga and his successors.

However, not long after Early Standard Kawi comes into its own we find that the content of certain lithic inscriptions—most notably the famous Śivagr̥ha inscription of 856 CE—takes on a new form. In the case of the Śivagr̥ha inscription we have the first occurrence of the use of Old Javanese for a metrical composition in kakawin form. One of the most striking aspects of this inscription is the heavy use of ‘figures of repetition,’ or *yamaka*. These are figures made up of repeated strings of phonemes whose first and second uses must have differing meanings. Gary Tubb, commenting on the dual nature of meanings projected in *yamaka*, has noted that they are “likely to be used in connection with two identities that are both on public display.”⁴⁵ In the case of the Śivagr̥ha inscription the crucial point seems not to be the expression of two identities, but the strengthening of one, in this case the majesty of the reigning monarch. I thus see in this the development of a new form of “display” based on the adoption of a trope from the corpus of Sanskrit “figures of sound” (*śabdālaṃkāra*) that appears to have been understood as having almost magical effects. I will not expand on this theme further in this paper, but will pause to note that the evidence of the Śivagr̥ha inscription suggests that the intensive elaboration of figural elements in the content of

⁴⁵ Gary Tubb, “*Kāvya* with Bells On: *Yamaka* in the *Śiṣupālavadhā*,” Working paper for the Research Group on Sanskrit Poetry [Jerusalem: Institute for Advanced Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003].

public inscriptions should be studied alongside the question of the shifting back and forth between monumental, documentary and ornamental palaeographic styles.⁴⁶

Conclusion

In this paper I have been largely concerned with developing a theoretical model for the study of the role of language in early state development of Southeast Asia that is based in large part on the adoption of the tools of sociolinguistics to the needs of a diachronic analysis of the textual record. At the same time I have suggested that the lexical content of languages like Malay may reflect grounding in everyday practices of code-switching that should be studied alongside the more formalized patterns of linguistic accommodation reflected in written sources. Taking as basic an understanding of code-switching and the effects of convergent and divergent linguistic accommodation on the development of sociolinguistic domains, I have re-examined my earlier studies of the evolution of “literary dialects” like Old Malay and Old Javanese and shown that they may be understood in terms of the formalization of processes of code-switching whose end result was the formation of *high status dialects* that played a role similar in linguistic exchange to the role of (imported) prestige goods in the economic sphere. I have then claimed that this movement towards formalization represents a point at which a linguistic ideology emerges and begins to naturalize social and political hierarchies through the development of an elaborated linguistic code that determines the degree to which speakers have access to centers of political power and status. Carrying forward earlier work on the term *embhasament* I have linked processes of “enriching” local vernaculars with Sanskrit lexical items to the pedagogical practices of religious institutions that played an important role in the shaping of the “charter states.” Finally I have opened up a discussion of the possibility

⁴⁶ For a more complete exposition of the history of *yamaka* in the Indian and Old Javanese traditions, with special reference to their uses in the Old Javanese *Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa* and the Śivagrha inscription see Thomas M. Hunter, “Figures of Repetition (*yamaka*) in the *Bhaṭṭikāvya*, the *Raghuvamśa*, the Śivagrha Inscription and the *Rāmāyaṇa* Kakawin,” in *From Langkā Eastwards. The Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa in Literature and the Visual Arts*, edited by Andrea Acri, Helen Creese and Arlo Griffiths (Leiden: KITLV Press, forthcoming 2011).

that studies of palaeography should be conducted with an eye towards the sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts that may have shaped the form of inscription, and have suggested that movements between monumental, documentary and ornamental forms of inscription may parallel developments in the realm of figural and literary discourses.