

50 Years of Archaeology in Southeast Asia: Essays in Honour of Ian Glover edited by Bérénice Bellina, Elisabeth A. Bacus, Thomas Oliver Pryce and Jan Wisseman Christie (Bangkok: River Books, 2010). ISBN 978-616-7339-02-3

The twenty-one essays in this richly illustrated volume honour the research and mentoring of Ian Glover to his many students and colleagues. The topics and approaches are varied, and reflect well Ian's extraordinary breadth of knowledge as well as his active collaborations with others.

The book opens with homage by the editors where they acknowledge that despite the diversity of topics covered by the essays in the book that themes addressed by Ian merit further articles, including the definition of the Dvaravati culture of central Thailand, the transfer of animals and cultures between South and Southeast Asia, and the bronzes of Đông Sơn. While the animal transfers are not well represented, the cultural relationship between South and Southeast Asia that Ian knows so well comes up repeatedly in the volume.

The editors and River Books deserve praise for the presentation of this book: it is well laid out, with a thoughtful placement of images and text divided into five parts and accompanied by a very usable index. There are also a number of clear tables and maps inserted well to link to the accompanying text.

The first section contains overviews by David Bulbeck on 'Glover's Contribution to the Development of Archaeology in Island Southeast Asia' and Charles Higham with 'Ian Glover's Contribution to the Prehistory of Mainland Southeast Asia'. Bulbeck reminds the reader of Ian's work to facilitate chemical analyses for early bronzes from Bali and from Malaysia, his collation with Bronson of radiocarbon dates for Indonesia and his consideration of pre-human inhabitants in Wallacea presaging the recent finding of an archaic hominid, *Homo floresiensis* in Flores. Higham reviews the equally diverse record of Ian's research on the mainland where his interest in periods of transition and in metallurgy can be seen in his attention to the bronzes of northern Vietnam and his excavations at the rich Iron Age site of Ban Don Ta Phet, with its high-tin bowls with a gold sheen. In his excavations at Trà Kiêu, Ian's research into the life of the architect and archaeologist Jean-Yves Claeys uncovered a rare film archive giving vivid life to the colonial legacy of the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient. These overview essays profile not just the legacy of the scholarship of Ian and others, but the way these have contributed to the new issues that have emerged in both parts of the region.

The second part, titled 'Subsistence Strategies: Hunter-Gatherers to Early Agriculture' contains four articles that reflect Ian's work on this vital transition in settlement and subsistence patterns. All the essays use different regions to highlight the changing perspective on this period. Rasmi Shoocongdei, in her 'Subsistence-Settlement Organisation during the Late Pleistocene-Early Holocene: The Case of Lang Kamnan Cave, Western Thailand' shows how the occupation of Kamnan cave

was most probably seasonal, with hunting and collecting shifting between a range of upland and lowland habitats. In the following essay, Ryan Rabett and Graeme Barker on 'Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene Forager Mobility in Southeast Asia', extend this seasonal mobility to a 'locally-contingent' subsistence demonstrating the manner in which flexibility facilitated adaptivity in tropical foraging strategies. Both of the final essays in this section, 'From Bui Ceri Uato to Bui Ceri Uato Mane: a new archaeobotanical assemblage from East Timor' by Nuno Vasco Oliveira and 'Still too fragmentary and dependent upon chance? Advances in the study of early Southeast Asian archaeobotany' by Cristina Castillo and Dorian Q Fuller, highlight the important contributions being made in this field.

Ian brings to his scholarship a regional view that carries Southeast Asia to its eastern limits and also a keen insight into the complex relationships between South and Southeast Asia. Despite the caveat of the editors in the introduction, this theme underlies many essays and is particularly addressed in the third and fourth sections.

The third and longest part of the book, 'Social Complexity and Early States', contains seven articles, five on the mainland versus two on island studies and an overview of Southeast Asian adaptation. The titles of the essays highlight the balance between detailed site studies and regional considerations: 'The Jar-Burial Tradition in the West Mouth of Niah Cave, Sarawak: Burial histories, social identities, and changing perceptions of pottery and death' by Lindsay Lloyd-Smith and Franca Cole, 'The Iron Age of Thailand: Trends to Complexity' by Charles Higham 'The Archaeological Textiles from Ban Don Ta Phet in broader perspective' by Judith Cameron 'Uneven Development in Southwest Sulawesi, Indonesia, during the Early Metal Phase' by David Bulbeck 'Pan-Regional Responses to South Asian Inputs in Early Southeast Asia' by Pierre-Yves Manguin 'History and Archaeology at Trà Kiêu' by William Southworth and Ruth Prior, 'Ancient Roof Tiles Found in Central Vietnam' by Mariko Yamagata and Nguyen Kim Dung 'Interactions between Uplands and Lowlands through the 'Riverine Exchange Network' of Central Vietnam - A Case Study in the Thu Bon River Valley' by Tran Ky Phuong.

Virtually all these essays query previous assumptions, not all of which are resolvable into simple paradigms. Manguin for example shows how the persuasive argument of Sheldon Pollock (2006) on two phases of Sanskritization – a cosmopolitanism in the first millennium CE followed by a 'vernacularisation' at the start of the second millennium CE – is viable but could be widened to recognise the presence of a shared aesthetic in Southeast Asia. He cites in support of this the links between burial customs in central Thailand, central Vietnam, West Java and north Bali in the late first millennium BCE and early centuries of the Christian era. Further reinforcement for this shared sensibility is seen in the similarity between the *circa* 7th century CE plan and stucco decorations of Wat Phra Men, Nakhon Pathom (incorrectly labelled and described as U-Thong, p. 176), Thailand and Candi

Blandongan, Batujaya.¹ The comparable structure at Si Thep could be added to this list. Manguin convincingly argues that long-existing contacts sustained a regional ‘interaction sphere’. Together with tandem absorption of both Buddhism and Vaisnavism, this highlights chronological and cultural complexities drawing into question Pollock’s two clear phases.

The fourth part of the volume, ‘Craft Production and Exchange’ is more evenly distributed than the third in relation to mainland and island studies: ‘Continuity in Shell Artefact Production in Holocene East Timor’ by Sue O’Connor, ‘Movement of raw materials and manufactured goods across the South China Sea after 500 BCE: from Taiwan to Thailand, and back’ by Hsiao-Chun Hung and Peter Bellwood’, ‘Glass in Southeast Asia’ by Laure Dussubieux and Bernard Gratuze, ‘Megalithic High-Tin Bronzes and Peninsular India’s ‘Living Prehistory’” by Sharada Srinivasan and ‘Pottery manufacture and trade in Maluku Tengah, Indonesia: 35 years after Ellen and Glover’ by Matthew Spriggs and William Dickinson. Many of these testify to cultural continuity and Southeast Asian production centres, although the ethnographic study of Sharada Srinivasan documents an Indian tradition of metalworking and specialised copper alloys indicating that South Asia may have been the source of the technology seen in the high-tin bronze bowls found at Ban Don Ta Phet and Khao Jamook.

Ian also has incisive views on the interface of politics, nationalism and cultural heritage, an interest covered in two very pointed articles in the book’s final section, ‘Colonialism and Archaeology’. The first is ‘From Centres of Pilgrimage to World Heritage Sites: Religious Travel Between India and Indonesia’ by Himanshu Prabha Ray, who contrasts the universalist view of Rabindranath Tagore in a 1927 voyage and the 1912 thesis of Radhakumud Mookerji on Indian colonisation of Southeast Asia. Ray goes on to describe the mutability and pervasive appeal of the textual traditions of Buddhism transcending national borders in examples ranging from the edicts of Aśokan sites to late first millennium CE terracotta and stone depictions of the eight scenes of the Buddha’s lifetime. This bridges to a discussion of colonial interventions at Borobudur and Sanchi and finally a 7th century CE Chinese Buddhist temple at Nagapattinam destroyed in 1867 to allow Jesuit priests to construct a church. The article ends with this event to highlight the destabilisation of millennia-old patterns of maritime interchange pilgrimage sites through colonial interventions. This rather grim picture contrasts to the final article of the book, ‘We Should Remember with Gratitude: Reflections on Archaeology in Laos’ by Anna Källén and Anna Karlström, an emphatic and lively call for an ongoing critique of nationalist discourse embedded in post-colonial approaches to Southeast Asian archaeology.

This volume provides an unusual mix of articles, from specific technical studies

¹ Revire previously noted this error (2011: 207, fn. 28).

to significant summaries of the changing paradigms of Southeast Asian archaeology. As with the scholarship of Ian Glover whom it honours, it considers interchange within and beyond the region. The overall structure and purpose of the book, apart from a common valuing of Ian's research and mentoring is at times unclear. The editors could have provided a clearer template explaining the order and rationale of the articles included, or broken them down into smaller thematic groups. They do explain that the idea for the book arose from a panel honouring Ian that was organised by Bérénice Bellina for the 2008 International Conference at Leiden of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeology in which Ian played a founding role in the mid 1980s. Some of the book's articles were presented at the Leiden conference, with others selected from the many pieces received following a solicitation for contributions. These panel papers and the essays accepted from the solicitation provided a thematic framework aptly mirroring Ian's many areas of research and publications: Late Pleistocene/early Holocene, hunter-gatherers, Neolithic societies, craft production, Iron Age social complexity, exchange/trade systems, early states and colonialism and archaeology.

As it stands, this is a volume to consult for a parallel comparison, or source, more than a sequential exploration of the current views on issues affecting our perception of the past and present in Southeast Asia. It complements, for example, the 2004 publication *Southeast Asia: from Prehistory to History* (London: Routledge) edited by Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood, with articles by different scholars covering the prehistoric to historic transition across the region. That said, *50 Years of Archaeology in Southeast Asia: Essays in Honour of Ian Glover*, offers an extraordinarily informed set of essays with valuable reflections on the history of archaeology in Southeast Asia and the data supporting new issues and hypotheses. The editors, contributors and publisher are to be commended for their joint efforts to produce this handsome volume giving a clear perception of the breadth of on-going research contributing to our understanding of Southeast Asia as a coherent cultural region.

Elizabeth Howard Moore

References:

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