



12th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists

Leiden, 1-5 September 2008

Dr Marijke Klokke

Introduction

The main aim of the Association is to bring together every two years, at a location in Europe, scholars who are working in the field of Southeast Asian archaeology, including epigraphy, numismatics and art history, and to offer facilities to present and discuss new data. The Association strives to find funds for inviting Southeast Asian colleagues to participate in its conferences. It held its first conference in London in 1986. Since then the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists has held conferences in Paris, Brussels, Rome, Paris, Leiden, Berlin, Sarteano, Sigüenza, London and Bougon.

Hundred and four papers were presented during this conference. Answering to a call not to have a full one-week conference, the conference began on Monday afternoon and ended not too late on Friday afternoon. We decided to have enough time for discussion after each paper, so that there were 20 minutes for each paper and 10 minutes for the discussion of each paper. We also wanted to provide some time for visiting the National Museum of Ethnology and sightseeing Leiden and surroundings. As a result the papers could not be fitted into two parallel panels as we are used to and, for the first time, we had three parallel panels on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

A variety of subjects were represented, from prehistory to art history and epigraphy. We had a special panel to the honour of Ian Glover on Wednesday representing the various subjects he has been working on. Furthermore, a panel on recent advances in the archaeology of the Khra Isthmus, a panel on the Sivapadas of ancient Cambodia, both on Thursday, and elaborate sessions on the prehistory and the historical period of Thailand took place. Borobudur, historical Central Java, and Sumatra were well represented, and quite a number of papers were presented on the archaeology and art history of Burma and Cambodia, and Vietnamese, Laotian, and Philippine archaeology. Also, interrelationships between the various regions within Southeast Asia and with India and China were addressed.

Quite a number of scholars from Southeast Asia responded to our call for papers. We are happy to have been able to invite a number of colleagues from various countries in Southeast Asia and from India, thanks to the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the Boumeester foundations, the Research School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies (CNWS) in Leiden, and the Faculty of Archaeology in Leiden. The National Museum of Ethnology participated in the organization of this conference and was our host on Tuesday afternoon. Without the International Institute for Asian Studies and its efficient staff, this conference would not have been feasible.



Papers presented

The programme book will give insight into the individual papers presented. Please note that the papers by Daw Yee Yee Aung, Karokot Boonlop, Henri Dosedla, Rita Margaritha Setianingsih, Sachchidanand Sahai, and Arsenio Nicolas had to be cancelled because they could not make it for various reasons. Below an outline will be given of the research results per country.

Burma

Recent research providing evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures in Upper Burma changes and complicates the picture of Burma's archaeological past. Since 2001 the French Archaeological Mission in Myanmar is working on burial sites in Upper Burma. Two papers were presented on the results of excavations there. One (Coupey) focused on infant's jar burials and the material culture associated with it in Nyaung Gon (excavated in 2007) comparing them with infant's jars burials in Ywa Htin (excavated in 2003) and Myo Hla (excavated in 2004). The other (Rambault et al.) drew attention to copper-alloyed artefacts brought in by villagers and suggested to have come from the burial sites and to have been coffin ornaments. Bronze coffin decorations have been found at other burial sites in Upper Burma.

Most attention has traditionally gone to the 13x16 km vast area of the ancient temple site of Pagan (Bagan) on the Irrawaddy river which was found to have sheltered c. 3000 Buddhist temples and stupas built between the 11th and 13th century by the Burmese kings of Pagan. Two papers were presented on this glorious period in the history of Burma. One (Hudson) reported newly discovered temples mainly from the later Pagan period and associated unrecorded inscription stones, which suggest that between 1210 and 1280 AD construction was commenced on a new monument in the city every 11 days. The other paper (Lubeigt) noted that compared with the well-documented agricultural activities of the hinterland, the operations of the Pagan port zones and their trade are underestimated and should be reassessed. Recent field surveys suggest a strong relationship between the city-dwellers of Pagan and the Irrawaddy river.

Two papers dealt with other polities in Burma. One (Htin) focussed on early polities of Arakan in the Kaladan valley area, and the other (Gutman) focused on 11th century Thaton, contemporary to Pagan, but more to the south and the center of a Mon kingdom. Its access to the sea gave it an important position in the trade network. The material culture is eclectic and reflects the changing patterns of trade and the growing importance of this harbour city which made it attractive to rulers of neighbouring polities, such as the Khmer at Angkor and the Burmans at Pagan.

Two papers focused on a more recent period. One (Green) addressed mural paintings of the late 17th and 18th century and demonstrated the high level of uniformity in these paintings across the central dry zone of Burma. This indicates that during this time period an artistic and narrative canon was established that supported centralizing social, religious, and political trends, exemplified regional connections, and illustrated the strong links between secondary centres and the court. Another paper (Bauer) brought to our attention the little known custom of inscribing monumental bronze bells, which began in 1493 and was still attested in early 19th century and spread to northern Thailand.

Cambodia

Cambodia's past has left the world a rich archaeological heritage. The country is best known for the many temples that marked the apex of the Khmer Empire of the Angkorean period (9th to 14th centuries), leaving a lasting monumental legacy in stone. Even though recently more



attention is being paid to the prehistory and pre-Angkorian period, the Angkorean period still remains a major focus of archaeological research and well-represented in the papers presented at this conference. Surveys and excavations of Angkorean sites still yield new information and new interpretations are being made on the basis of material already known for years. One of the subjects that needs more research concerns the ceramic traditions. Recently (2007-2008) the National University of Singapore collaborated with APSARA (Cambodia) in excavations at Khmer kiln sites in order to gain a better understanding of Cambodian ceramic technology in the Angkor era. Another goal was to create a preliminary classification of ceramics. One paper (Miksic) presented the results of these recent studies. Another paper (Rachna) focused on the ceramic technology at one specific site, that of Thnal Mrech at Phnom Kulen.

While the Khmer temples have been documented and mapped from the early 20th century onward, the mapping of other structures, such as hydraulic works and occupation sites have not been mapped well yet. Recent advances include mapping the area to the northeast of Angkor. At the conference a paper was presented on a project to map the Phnom Kulen site, a site that must have been important because, according to epigraphic sources, it was the residence of the first king of Angkor, Jayavarman II. The mapping is being done on the basis of test pits and topographical surveys (Chevance et al.)

Extensive research on the inscriptions of Cambodia is being carried out by a team of scholars working from the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient. Published inscriptions are being retransliterated and retranslated with the knowledge we have now; unpublished inscriptions are being transliterated and translated, and surveys yield hitherto unknown inscriptions that wait to be deciphered. At the conference part of this research, that focusing on the "Sivapadas of Cambodia", was presented (Pichard, Gerschheimer, Soutif, Estève, Griffiths, Bourdonneau, Thach). While Buddhapada (footprints of the Buddha) and Visnupada (footprints of Visnu) were quite popular in ancient India, Sivapada (footprints of Siva) remain rare and obscure. The term was, however, an important term in Cambodia, where certain temples dating from the later Angkorian period (11th to 13th centuries) were called Sivapada. Apparently there were four of them (an eastern, southern, western and northern Sivapada). Due to the growth of the epigraphical corpus since 1971 it is now possible to identify the Ta Muean Thom temple on the Chong Samet pass in the Dangrek chain of mountains, as the eastern Sivapada. The discovery of an unpublished inscription in the Neak Buos temple confirms the earlier identification of Neak Buos as the western Sivapada. One paper demonstrated how such a temple functioned in relationship to surrounding temples. It seems to have functioned as a central temple. The satellite temples were dependent on this central temple and shared resources. This was governed both by economic considerations as well as by ideas of divine hierarchy. Another paper, on the basis of an unpublished inscription expands our understanding of the practise of cartography focusing on the appearance of the western Sivapada on one of the very rare maps that have been preserved on a doorpost of the northern Prasat Khleang at Angkor.

Three other papers focused on the period of the reign of Jayavarman VII (late 12th to early 13th century) and the momentous change to state Buddhism after centuries of state Sivaism. The extent of Jayavarman VII's politically motivated campaign of Tantric Buddhist initiations that required a significant overhaul of the king's temples and the creation of a new series of sacred icons becomes more and more clear (Sharrock). More temples may have been Buddhist than was previously thought (Roveda). A bronze statue of Lokesvara is evidence of contacts during this period with Sri Lanka (Vincent).

French scholars, most importantly Philippe Stern from 1928 onwards, have suggested a chronology of Khmer temples based on a stylistic study of ornaments found on these temples. This chronology still stands by and large till today. Within this broad outline of a chronology



refinements can, however, be made as was demonstrated by a paper (Polkinghorne) that appraised the nature of work-teams by reviewing nearly five hundred lintels dating between the 7th and 11th centuries as assemblages of motif combinations. Tendency towards design standardization suggests that artistic workshops became larger in scale and more formalized in their management and organization, consistent with broader developments of the Angkorian political and economic milieu.

Indonesia

Java has traditionally received more attention than other Indonesian islands for several reasons. Recently more and more temples are being found in Sumatra, for instance at Jambi. At the conference an interesting paper was presented on a longer known group of temples thought to date from the 11th to 14th century at Padang Lawas in the province of North Sumatra. The ancient settlements in Padang Lawas are now being excavated by a team of archaeologists from France and Indonesia. Excavations at the Si Pamutung site in Padang Lawas brought to light the remains of a large complex with stone temples, houses, and a former port (Muara Tambang). Archaeologists also found the remains of a gold mine that was exploited here, and many sherds of ancient Chinese as well as Middle Eastern pottery. The inscriptions they found were in different languages, among them Old Tamil, Old Javanese, Old Batak and Old Malay. These prove that a multi-cultural population lived there between the 10th -14th centuries, a mixture of local inhabitants and people originating from Asia and the Middle East. The find of a gold mine suggests the reason why a centre arose here in this otherwise rather barren landscape that never could have supported a dense population.

Even though more research has been done on Java, still much evidence of Java's past lies covered under the ground. Three Indonesian scholars presented material from two of the most spectacular finds of the last few years: the site of Batujaya in West Java and the site of Kedulan in Central Java. The site of Batujaya was known from the 1980s, but only recently the importance of this site became known when tens of Buddhist votive tablets were found in association with a temple that was being excavated. This find made clear that this was a Buddhist site and that it might represent a link between Buddhist southern Sumatra known from late 7th century inscriptions and Buddhist Central Java known from late 8th century inscriptions. One paper (Indradjaya) focused on the votive tablets found at Batujaya comparing them with votive tablets from other regions (for instance southern Burma and Thailand) dating from the same period and other later votive tablets in Indonesia. The other paper (Akbar) gave insight into one of the other interesting aspects of the site of Batujaya, the fact that it also includes burial sites of the period (500 BC- 500 AD) preceding the "Indianized" period of the temples (7th to 10th centuries AD). These burial sites (showing a material culture belonging to the Buni cultural complex) are in particular interesting because they indicate the progression of Indian influence, from trade connections only to a fully Indianized society. The third paper by an Indonesian scholar (Haryono) shows that even for the Central Javanese period (one of the best documented early periods) we may expect more finds. He informed us about the recently discovered temple of Kedulan, a temple that was covered under a layer of lava and is still in the process of being excavated, and the two inscriptions that were found with it, that shed light on the water management in this area.

Four papers addressed problems connected with the interpretation of Borobudur. One (Chutiwongs) reopened the discussion on the reason why the hidden base was covered. It suggested that new arguments are in favour of religious/ritual motivations for this. Another paper (Levin) gave new interpretations of the 120 reliefs depicting an assortment of Jatakas and Avadanas that have not received adequate scrutiny yet. It suggested political motivations besides religious ones. Two papers discussed the problem of the integrity of the monument from different angles referring to research that claims that a radical change in the planning of

the monument not only affected the architecture but also its meaning and symbolism. One (Fontein) demonstrated that this hypothesis of a drastic change in the meaning of the monument is not supported by the visual evidence of the bas reliefs and contradicts the tenor and spirit of the texts that have been illustrated. The paper demonstrated that the reliefs capture the ideals of Mahayana Avatamsaka Buddhism in one grand design. The other (Klokke) showed that the ornamentation does not change significantly from one gallery to another. Minor differences can be shown to demonstrate changes, but the overall design was maintained. A fifth paper (Degroot) readdressed the suggestion made long ago by an artist (W.O.J. Nieuwenkamp) that Borobudur was planned to float in a lake as a lotus flower. Research on the paleo-environment of Borobudur makes clear that there was a lake near Borobudur but not at the time Borobudur was built.

Another paper on Central Java (Guy) presented evidence in the form of bronze bells of the Chalukya period that suggest that Central Java had close connections with the Andhra territory of the Chalukyan kingdoms in India. The paper by Lunsingh Scheurleer demonstrated that the iconographic type formerly called 'portrait statue' but better called deification statue, has a longer tradition which goes back to the Central Javanese period.

Central and East Javanese art are particularly rich in narrative art. Borobudur contains 1460 panels of narrative art and in East Java almost any temple contained bands of narrative relief. Four papers focused on this narrative art: one (Ong) demonstrated various hands working on the Ramayana reliefs of Loro Jonggrang (Central Java), another (Kieven) presented a new Tantric interpretation of the Panataran temple complex in East Java on the basis of the narrative series focusing on the hero Panji, still another (de Vries Robbé) demonstrated that a stone relief of unknown origin kept in the National Museum in Jakarta comes from the site of Mleri in East Java, and the last one (Santiko) identified an unidentified series of reliefs on the Sukuh temple as a visual representation of the story of Bhima Swarga known from Balinese manuscripts.

Finally, one paper focused on the capital city (at Trowulan, East Java) of the kingdom of Majapahit, the first fully-fledged urban centre in Indonesia dating from the 14th to 15th century. It discussed early maps made of Trowulan and its *kraton* (palace), by Wardenaar (interestingly his plan of Majapahit from 1815 that was considered lost was refound at the British Museum), by B. Nobile de Vistarini of 1930 (an excavation map which reveals the northern part of the vanished royal palace), and by W.F. Stutterheim of 1941. This material is important because it shows where future excavators should search for the *kraton*.

Laos

Vientiane and large parts of Laos in general have been white spots on the map of Southeast Asia almost since the beginning of archaeological research in the area. Vientiane province has, however, recently been acknowledged as an area with a remarkably large amount of material remains from the second half of the first millennium CE, mainly *sema* stones (boundary stones) and Buddha statues. One paper (Karlström) presented the results from archaeological surveys and excavations in Viengkham and Say Fong in Vientiane province. These places were both, in different ways, crucial to the development of urban Vientiane. The results of these excavations add to various debates: the extension of the Dvaravati kingdom of Thailand and its relationship with the Mon in this part of Laos; how far north the Khmer empire reached; and what the foundations were for the first Lao kingdom, Lan Xang, in the 14th century.

Malaysia

The Great Cave at Niah is recognized as one of the most important archaeological sites in island Southeast Asia with evidence for burials dating back c. 42,000 years. One paper



(Lloyd-Smith) presented 40 new radiocarbon samples that provide the first secure chronology for Neolithic mortuary practice at the site. Another paper (Cameron) discussed fragments of archaeological textiles (basketry, matting, and textiles) excavated at the cave-site in the 1960s and in the 1990s including the earliest extant textiles found in Southeast Asia. Another paper (Barker et al.) presented the preliminary archaeological results of the Cultured Rainforest Project (2007-2010) that investigates the long-term and present-day interactions between people and rainforest in the Kelabit Highlands of Sarawak. Radiocarbon dates from rock shelters and sediment cores hint at a prehistory stretching back at least 6,000 years.

Philippines

Two papers focused on burial traditions. One (Ragrugi) showed that the Sorsogon jar burial tradition in southern Luzon can be considered a distinct jar burial tradition. It shows a remarkable consistency in terms of vessel forms, associated artefacts, and placement in the landscape etc. Another paper (Baretto-Tesoro and Reys) discussed relatively recent tombstones in Manila as extensions of identity in order to gain more insight into this aspect of burial traditions.

Thailand

It was only in the 1960s that excavations at Non Nok Tha and Ban Chiang in Northeast Thailand revealed Bronze Age cemeteries that were in use within the period 1500-1000 BC. Since that time the prehistory of Thailand is one of the major subjects of Southeast Asian archaeology. Papers on this subject included papers on the correlation of health and social ranking at two sites (Cekalovic and Domett), the recent discovery of infant jar burials in Ban Chiang (Wangthongchaicharoen), links between craft specialization, ceramic technology, mass production and socio-economic integration at local and regional levels (Vincent), a comparative petrographic study of ceramic samples from 14 sites collected during the last 10 years and dating from the late period of Ban Chiang culture (Bubpha et al), a study of non-metrical dental traits and stable isotopes from human enamel of seventy nine adults in order to determine the scale of migration in Northeast Thailand (Cox et al.), the chronology of Ban Non Wat based on 75 radiocarbon determinations (Higham), continued archaeological research at this site (Chang et al. and Domett et al., Higham), and an amazingly old fragment of cotton found at Ban Don Ta Phet (Cameron).

Until recently the Khra Isthmus of southern Thailand did not yield material earlier than that connected with the early polities that adopted Sanskrit as an elite language and Hinduism and Buddhism as religions. Recent research, however, demonstrates an earlier phase of contacts with India, one of trade relations but no signs of "Indianization" yet. One panel (Bellina, Proan Silapanth, Castillo, Bouvet, Murillo et al., Peronnet) on Tuesday was entirely devoted to this research carried out by a French-Thai archaeological programme in Khao Sam Kaeo, in the upper Thai-Malay peninsula. This programme intends to define the sequence of early socio-cultural developments of this region that is thought to have been pivotal in trans-Asiatic exchanges. It includes a study of this late prehistoric settlement and production centre and its palaeo-environment and technological analysis of the onsite craft systems (ceramics, glass, stone ornaments and metallurgical artefacts) involved in these exchanges. This approach is intended to ascertain more precisely what role the peninsular region played in these exchanges. Four years of investigation demonstrate that Khao Sam Kaeo was a significant early polity involved in Trans-Asiatic exchange bearing signs of urbanization and possibly centralization. Papers included a general overview of the programme, a presentation of the results from remote sensing interpretation and ground survey, a presentation of systematic analysis and identification of plant remains collected from the excavations, and a survey of the glass and hard stone productions. Interestingly



besides the more common “rouletted” wares found also in other Southeast Asian sites of this phase, also the so-called Northern Black Polished Ware of India, but made locally, was found, dating back earlier (4th-2nd BC). *Kendis* (pitchers) were found that were made locally using available raw material but an exogenous know-how, leading to the suggestion that Indian craftsmen were working at the site and raising the question of the status of the ceramics. Archaeo-metallurgical analysis suggests that a combination of South Asian and Southeast Asian production techniques were represented. Finally an overview was given of the different pieces of evidence (bronze mirrors, arrow head, axes, ceramics, seals, tiles and ornaments) that document exchange between China, specifically Han China, and Southeast Asia in the late centuries BC to the early centuries AD.

Important advances are also made in the study of Southeast Asian glass. Although preliminary results suggest that most of the glass found at Southeast Asian sites dating from the 1st millennium AD was South Asian in origin, on closer inspection and with further analytical data, the story appears to be considerably more complex. Based on over 200 glass analyses from Khlon Thom, a trading and manufacturing centre on the west coast of the Thai/Malay Peninsula (c. 2nd to 7th century), one paper (Lankton) demonstrated that there is evidence for extensive imports of glass cullet and finished artefacts from western sources, but that 40% of the glass analysed is not clearly imported, and much of this glass is chemically similar to the large quantity of partially formed raw glass found at the site.

Dvaravati is considered to have been one of the earliest historical polities of Thailand. It is one other subject that needs more research. At the conference two papers dealt with the material culture of this early polity. One (Murphy) focused on boundary stones (*sema*) that have been found in great abundance in Northeast Thailand. Another (Khunsong) focused on recent excavations of the Department of Archaeology at Silpakorn University Bangkok (March 2007) at Kishkindha, a Dvaravati city, in Central Thailand.

Finally four studies were presented on more recent Thai iconography: one on the funeral scenes in the Ramayana paintings at the Emerald Buddha Temple (Chirapravati), one on a terrifying Buddhist image (Paul-Gupta), one on Buddha images and their biographies (Chiu), and one on relationships between Thai and Sri Lankan Buddhas (Tingsangchali)

Vietnam

All papers on Vietnam focused on Central Vietnam. One (Mariko et al) gave a report of an excavation at the Hoa Diem site in Central Vietnam carried out by a Vietnamese-Japanese team of archaeologists. On the basis of the pottery of this site the Sa Huynh-Kalanay pottery tradition suggested fifty years ago can be revised. Another (Lambrecht) gave a report of excavations at the Cham kiln site of Go Hoi. A third paper (Dung) gave an overview of the excavations at Tra Kieu and Go Cham. A fourth paper (Southworth) reopened the debate on the date of My Son A1, one of the temples of the My Son group in Central Vietnam for which 7th and 10th century-dates were proposed earlier. Other papers included a paper (Schweyer) on the interest of two important Khmer kings (Suryavarman II and Jayavarman VII) in the maritime trade route on the coast of the Chams in Central Vietnam which led to the creation of a port city at Vijaya, an analysis (Sharrock et al.) of glass found in Vietnam which suggests that glass was produced at several glass making sites and that at some places there might be a connection to Chinese glasses, and a paper (Guillon) that attempted to give more insight into the birth of Cham and Mon (Dvaravati) civilizations by exploring the transition from late prehistoric cultures to these early historic cultures.

International relationships

A number of papers took a more international perspective, for instance a paper (Hazarika) on prehistoric cultural affinities between Southeast Asia, East Asia and Northeast India, a paper



(Spriggs) on the potential of obsidian to track mobility and exchange in the pre-Neolithic and Neolithic periods in Southeast Asia, a paper (Borell) on the analysis of Han period glass vessels from Guangxi in southern China which shows a composition related to that found in glass objects found in Southeast Asia as well as in Arikamedu in Southeast India, which contributes to the evidence for maritime long-distance connections in the Han period, as also indicated in Chinese written sources, and a paper (Manguin) on the earlier period of Southeast Asian contacts with India (4th-8th centuries), suggesting pan-regional responses to Indian inputs in early Southeast Asia as opposed to the individual responses of post 8th century states, and the importance of earlier developments in proto-historic craft industries (such as beads, bronze drums) and exchange patterns (such as those of Indian rouletted wares) to understand these responses.

Cultural programme

On Monday evening we had a wonderful performance of Sharada Srinivasan who is a performing artist specializing in the South Indian classical dance of Bharata Natyam and an archaeometallurgist at the National Institute of Advanced Studies in Bangalore, India. In her performances she combines her knowledge of South Indian metal images with that of Bharata Natyam which makes her performances unique. This performance was in the LAK theatre in Leiden and it was hosted by the Friends of the Kern Institute on the occasion of this conference. Sharada was also a participant in the conference presenting a paper on a comparison between South Indian and Southeast Asian metal images.

On Tuesday afternoon the conference participants were invited to the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden. Dr Pieter ter Keurs, curator of insular Southeast Asia, introduced us to the Indonesian collection and the cooperation project of the museum with the National Museum in Jakarta. He announced an upcoming exhibition on Sumatra on display first in Indonesia and then in Leiden. We were free to walk around in the museum. Dr Nandana Chutiwongs (retired curator of Mainland Southeast Asia and participant in the conference) was there to answer questions on the special temporary gallery exhibition showing old 19th-century photographs of the so-called hidden base of Borobudur (by Kasian Cephas). The hidden base of Borobudur contains 160 panels of relief illustrating the Buddhist Mahakarmavibhanga text. The original base of the monument was, even while the reliefs were still being carved, covered by a thick wall. In the late 19th century the wall was opened in order to photograph the reliefs. Then the wall was put back in place again, so that at present the reliefs, except for a few in the northeast corner of the monument, are not visible today. The visit of the museum exhibitions was followed with drinks in the museum.

On Wednesday afternoon drinks and a dinner were organized for a select group of participants presenting papers in the panel to the honour of Ian Glover.

On Thursday afternoon we had tour guides to guide us around in Leiden in small groups. They told us about many fascinating aspects of the history of Leiden. Fortunately the rain stopped and we even had some sunshine. It was good to have some walking after sitting in conference rooms for hours. All groups met at the Burcht, and from there we walked to the harbour of Leiden where we got onto a boat and had a very nice dinner with beautiful views of the Dutch polder landscape. The atmosphere was very relaxed and pleasant. It was nice to have all participants being able to join this event.