

REVIEW ESSAY: COMPARATIVE BORDERLANDS ACROSS DISCIPLINES AND ACROSS SOUTHEAST ASIA

William B Noseworthy (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

ABSTRACT

Early in the colonial period, many studies examining upland Southeast Asia focused on ethnography and ecology as a means for the colonial state to better understand the region's geography. This process resulted in the construction of physical, social, and intellectual boundaries that sought to maintain control of the colonial enterprise. The natural borderlands of the region defied such easy definition – the highlands, the plains at the edges of deltas, and heavily forested regions – became a fascination of colonial study. In the climate of pending Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) integration, which promises to begin the process of loosening restrictions for border crossing between Southeast Asian states by area residents, the study of borderlands has risen again. Because many of these border areas have pockets of highlands culture, continued study of the uplands is particularly relevant to deepening an understanding of the region. This review of several books on the Southeast Asian uplands explores historical and cultural strategies of individuals, particularly in Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, the Dayak community on the island of Borneo, and the Cham community in Vietnam and Cambodia, as well as some of the challenges that they face regarding 'the borderlands'. Putting these studies in conversation can help develop an interdisciplinary dialogue between scholars in Anthropology, Political Science, Linguistics, Ethnomusicology, and History, allowing for a more integrated international perspective.

KEYWORDS:

Cham, Dayak, Kammu, borderlands, interdisciplinary approaches

INTRODUCTION

This essay reviews: *At the Edges of States: Dynamics of State Formation in the Indonesian Borderlands* (Eilenberg 2012), *Along the Rivers of Central Kalimantan: Cultural Heritage of the Ngaju and Ot Danyum Dayak* (Klokke 2012), *Forests of Struggle: Moralities of Remembrance in Upland Cambodia* (Zucker 2013), *Bounding the Mekong: The Asian Development Bank, China and Thailand* (Glassman 2010), and *I Will Send my Song: Kammu Vocal Genres in the Singing of Kam Raw* (Lundstrom 2006). The most difficult aspect of bringing these diverse studies into conversation is the nature of the differing geographic spaces examined and methods used in each work. Nevertheless, certain themes, tropes, and foci illuminate links between them.¹

Lundstrom's (2006) study of upland Kammu (also: Khmu) vocal traditions from Laos is useful in highlighting humanistic approaches (ethnomusicology and oral history) that may be used to understand Southeast Asia's upland peoples. The focus on orality connects Lundstrom's studies with those of Eilendberg (2012), whose focus on the highland Dayaks of Borneo – thousands of kilometers away – along the border of Indonesia and Malaysia.

Klokke's (2012) work also focuses on the Dayak people, predominantly relying on black and white photographs, while

¹ Reviews of these books originally appeared in a series for newbooks.asia – a program run by the International Institute of Asian Studies from Leiden University. I recently partnered this program with the Center for Khmer Studies, leading to the broadening English language scholarly materials now available at the Center for Khmer Studies Fellows Library in Phnom Penh. This review has been substantially edited, updated, and extended with additional information from the author's current research while based in Cambodia (summer 2013 through winter 2013) and Vietnam (winter 2014 through spring 2014). I thank IIAS, the editors of *Asian Highlands Perspectives*, the Center for Khmer Studies, and the Department of History and Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison for assistance.

including an essay on the Hindu-influenced Kaharingan religion.² Klokke and Eilendberg's works can thus be combined to provide a better understanding of Dayak populations in the uplands of Borneo. These studies of the Dayak may also be combined with Zucker's (2013) anthropological and historical study of the Cardamom Mountains of Cambodia to highlight the ways in which upland regions problematize the 'miracle' development schemes of both national leaders and international organizations throughout the region.

In a similarly critical vein, Glassman (2010) employs a political economy approach to critique the Asian Development Bank's approach to the Greater Mekong Sub-region, a region that includes Cambodia, lower Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and parts of China. These are essentially the territories adjacent to the Mekong River and can be used to highlight issues surrounding the development of upland regions.

Finally, throughout this review, I relate elements from these studies to my own research on the Cham population of Southeast Asia. Although the Cham are a lowland people, they are transnational, being split between the neighboring states of Vietnam (~162,000) and Cambodia (~400,000-500,000), and hence face many of the challenges that transnational upland populations face. Certain elements of Cham tradition connect them to upland peoples throughout the region (Noseworthy 2013c; Noseworthy 2013b). These connections are not only through the entholinguistic connections that exist between the Cham and the five other Austronesian upland peoples (the Koho, Raglai, Churu, Rhade, and Jarai) of Cambodia and Vietnam, they are also evident in the parallels between the history and religion of many of these populations. To explore these issues further, it is helpful to review historical concepts of borders and boundaries in Southeast Asian history.

² According to Mahin, *kaharingan* means 'life' in the priestly language of the Dayak, as well as in the group's everyday language. It is also described as the 'primordial' or 'ancient' religion, as well as the 'religion of the ancestors' (Klokke 2012:33).

HISTORICAL CONCEPTS OF BOUNDARIES AND BORDERS

Dating back to the fourth century of the Common Era, it is possible to find notions of borders and boundaries between lowland Vietnamese and lowland Cham societies. At this time, the Võ Cảnh inscription appears, marking the use of and adaptation of Sanskrit in Southeast Asia. The project of 'state-making' and delineating space continued to shift conceptually, and writing became a marker of 'state-space'. First histories, such as the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư*, the *Sejarah Melayu*, the *Jinakamali*, and *Preah Ko Preah Keo*³ recorded historical events and culturally important tropes with the rise of palm leaf manuscripts. 'History', at this time, included genealogies of kings and semi-historical legends. Examples of such literature can be found in the Malay *hikayat* and *syair* genres, as well as the Cham genres of *akayet*, *dalakal*, *ariya*, and *damnuuy*. It is important to note that many of these records have been retained by scholars and state organizations across the region for the sake of research purposes. However, as Weber (2012) has noted, the retention of these materials among the lowland Cham, who subsequently became a group 'without a state', relied heavily on a performative oral tradition. Shine (2009) noted that literacy has been used as a symbolic cultural marker of ethnic boundaries used to distinguish the upland Raglai peoples and the lowland Cham. In this regard, Scott (2009:220-237) argued that orality gave texts greater pliability, malleability, and wider reach.

While *literacy* has been used popularly and in scholarship as a distinguishing characteristic between the uplands and the lowlands throughout Southeast Asia, it should be noted, as Thongchai (1994) has argued, that *geography*, or the establishment of a *geo-body*, became a critical element of state-making processes from the early to mid-twentieth century onward. Thongchai noted that this process was rooted in the nineteenth to twentieth centuries, when concepts of

³ David Chandler, a historian of Cambodia, has argued that this story of the capture of the Khmer capital of Longvek in 1594 was tied to a nineteenth century political context (Zucker 2013:145).

state-like geographic areas began to further drive a wedge between the lowlands and the highlands.

Concepts of geography in Southeast Asia have varied over the course of the twentieth century, and frequently relied upon highland/lowland dichotomies as well as constructions of identity and insider/outsider politics. Subsequently, political concerns have encouraged historical foci on the South China Sea and the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) (Glassman 2010). Meanwhile, there have been intellectual concerns, such as those highlighted in discussions on Zomia.

Finally, irredentism⁴ has been influential throughout Southeast Asian history, as seen in the development of state concepts such as the Thai-nationalist imaginings of *suvannabhumi* – *bhumiputera* policy in Malaysia, and being related to territorial disputes between Cambodia and Vietnam, and the ongoing dispute in the South China Sea (Biển Đông: 'Eastern Sea').

Irredentist movements' border disputes, and a post-WWII climate of American exceptionalism, have left scars across the region, in both highlands and lowlands. In Laos, the largest ethnic group makes up less than fifty percent of the population and the majority of the population lives on less than two US dollars a day. This legacy of crippling uneven colonial development, when coupled with the reality that Laos was the most thoroughly bombed territory in world history by the end of the Vietnam era, has made Laos one of the region's most important 'state-based' case studies for development. In Laos, Cambodia and the southern portions of the Annamite Chain along the border of Vietnam and Laos, illiteracy is mostly interpreted as a condition of poverty, as it is in predominantly lowland Cambodia. However, unlike Laos, Cambodia is generally considered a 'lowland' state with very little upland terrain (Killeen 2013)

In Cambodia, the Thai capture of Angkor in 1431/ 1432 was manipulated into visions of the DK Regime (Zucker 2013:145). The Khmer Rouge targeted every group that was not seen as 'Khmer'. If

⁴ Irredentism is "the doctrine... [that a space]...should be controlled by a country that is ethnically or historically related to it" (Baird 2010:167).

other groups assimilated into this politically, ideologically, and ethno-linguistically exclusive category, they hypothetically avoided persecution. As an aspect of Khmer Rouge policy, highlanders from the Cardamom Mountains region were targeted for their allegiance to the 'White Khmer' royalist forces of Prince Norodom Chantaraingsey (1924/ 26-1976), which emerged in the mid-1960s (Zucker 2013:41). By the 1970s, promotions within the local administrative hierarchy were used to encourage 'spying'. Buddhists as well as 'White Khmers' were marked for execution (Zucker 2013:41). Meanwhile, 'ancestor worship' was rooted out. The practice of building *phnom yong khmaoch* 'funerary towers for the ancestors' was a particular target, creating a border between the past and the present, as communication with the ancestors ceased. Eliminating ancestor worship directly resulted from a long-standing state policy that continued into the 1980s.

THE DAYAK AS A BORDERLAND PEOPLE

A similar narrative, although it appears to have deeper roots, can be found among the Dayak of Borneo. The history of the borderland and border construction on Borneo is equally tied to nineteenth and twentieth century colonial impositions. Early in the twentieth century, the forced resettlement of the Dayak by the Dutch turned the literal borderlands from 'untouched forests' to a vicious battleground. Border elites repositioned themselves as clients and brokers, while the colonial state made its own assertions. Seeking to enforce 'law and order', a 1904 treaty aimed at eliminating head-hunting targeted the Dayak, who were viewed as the major population engaged in the practice. This policy may be viewed as a first attempt to shape Dayak religion.

In 1945, the Indonesian state mandated that religious groups must adhere to the '*pancasila*' policy, which stipulated that, to be a recognized religious community, any belief system needed a holy book, a prophet, regular meetings, monotheistic practices, and

connections to a global community. Hence, the Dayak Kaharingan religion was classified as an *agama suku* 'spiritual grouping' or *adat* 'tradition', rather than a 'religion'. The *pancasila* policy effectively eliminated the Dayak from state-level discourse on religion, constructing a boundary of belief between the Dayak Kaharingan practitioners and the Sunni Muslim majority. This formal exclusion was coupled with attempts to 'pacify' the Dayaks through Indonesian support of medical trade missions.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Indonesian military used food rations and medical supplies to 'court' the local Iban Dayak populations. Meanwhile, a young Dutchman, Dr. Klokke, observed that in the Ngaju Dayak territory of South Kalimantan (now Central Kalimantan) smallpox, malaria, dysentery, worms, and tuberculosis – all treatable medical conditions – were common. This meant that the medical missions could be easily viewed as successful, while they also acted as a mediating force in Dayak controlled areas.

In Borneo, the 1967 Basic Forestry Law No. 5 granted the Indonesian state authority over all forestland, regardless of local claims, even if small tracts of forest were controlled by Dayaks or Malays. This was a clear attempt to formalize the border between Indonesia and Malaysia. Consequently, contemporary Dayak are an international cross-border minority population, use two state languages, live in two time zones, use at least two currencies, and many elites have two houses. However, this circumstance will likely change, the result of a local economic depression due to the 2005 ban on logging (Eilenberg 2012). This population not only stretches across state borderlands, but also religious divides and local administrative divides.⁵

⁵ Mahin (2007) recently stated that the island of Borneo has Southeast Asia's largest population of Hindus besides the island of Bali. Hinduism is common among the Ngaju Dayak (900,000 total population across the Malay-Indonesian borderlands), as well as the Luangan, Ma'anyan, Tuman, and Sian Dayaks (Central Kalimantan), Merantus (South Kalimantan), the Tunjung and Benuaq (East Kalimantan), and the Ot (Oud) Danum (80,000, mostly in Kahayan and Kapuas (West Kalimantan). Furthermore, "thousands of Balinese transmigrants to Central Kalimantan" have

It is within the above contexts of colonialism, persecution, and land appropriation that peoples of the borderlands in Southeast Asia have continued to develop what Scott (1985) has dramatized as 'weapons of the weak'. The terms of Scott's argument can be extended to additional contemporary cases that have emerged after the publication of his initial study, as well as ethnic minority groups, with slight tweaking that acknowledges that one of the 'weapons of the weak' was a strategic move of playing with the process of state construction. In essence, strategic petitions seeking incorporation into the state on the part of certain members of the Ngaju Dayak community prevented the erasure of their community in the face of the larger construction of 'Indonesian' or 'Malaysian' identity. Meanwhile, borderlands, highlands, and other cross-border populations were frequently portrayed as 'fugitives' and violent outlaws, including in Scott's class-based analysis.

In cases of certain communities such as the Ngaju Dayak, the adaptation of the 'weapons of the weak' framework emphasizes the extensive intellectual and non-violent project of re-forming communal identity in a literal borderland. For many minority communities, a critical 'weapon of the weak' was contrary to what Scott would have suspected. Individuals used the formation of public institutions and the institutionalization of religious practice to secure continued survival in the face of incorporation and assimilation. In the process, religious elites emerged as dominant figures after sustained periods of discourse and impacted religious practices that explain their contemporary forms.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Iban Dayak leaders were predominantly rebels, although they played both sides of the colonial conflict. Meanwhile, in 1859 the Ngaju Dayak eliminated the practice of sacrificing slaves of the deceased's family during Tiwah ceremonial feasts, as a direct result of their incorporation into the colonial state and mediation of their religious practice with colonial expectations. Initial waves of Christian missionizing caused a decrease in ancestral

additionally moved to this area because it has been a hotspot for Hindu revivalism (Schiller 1996:412-413).

worship until the 1940s when the 'Japanization' of occupied territories in Southeast Asia encouraged a revival of animism.

The Christian Ngaju Dayak, Tjilik Riwt, converted back to animist practices and, in 1945, the Japanese urged him to give his movement a new name. He then chose 'Kaharingan' 'the religion of life' (Baier 2007:567). Just one year later, the Indonesian state formed the 'Department of Religion' (Indonesian [I]: *Departement Agama*) – which effectively barred 'Kaharingan' from being a 'religion' (I: *agama*). Instead, it was relegated to an *adat* 'movement of traditional practices' (Schiller 1996:410).

In adapting, Kaharingan religious leaders organized their first religious conference in 1950 and continued attempting to gain recognition as a 'religion.' However, the polytheist nature of Kaharingan prevented it from being recognized under the *pancasila* policy. This inspired a critical shift in Tjilik Riwt's philosophy. In a 1953 publication, likely drawing on his earlier Christian beliefs and perhaps merging them with Islamic influence, he reordered the family members of the Kaharingan deity 'Ranying Hatalla Langit'. They were demoted from godly status to the status of 'angels', while promoting the status of 'Ranying Hatalla Langit' to a senior deity in a further attempt to meet the *pancasila* policy. Further shifts in the relationship between the Kaharingan community and the state followed.

Further institutionalization of Kaharingan practices came with formation of religio-political organizations that aided their official recognition by Indonesian state officials. After decolonization in 1957, Tjilik Riwt became the first 'Indonesian' governor of Central Kalimantan. The Dayak community continued to form new relationships with state officials, eventually resulting in the foundation of the 'Union of Kaharingan Dayaks of Indonesia' (I: *Sarikat Kaharingan Dayak Indonesia*) (Baier 2007:567; Schiller 1996:412-413). A decade later, the Dayak further adapted, forming a 'work group' organization known as 'GOLKAR' (I: *golongan karya*) that worked with the 'New Order' regime (Schiller 1996:413). This organization afforded the Kaharingan community minor protection

in what was otherwise a disastrous period of Indonesian history. In the 1970s, the political climate continued to shift as the Dayak formed 'blood brother' relations with Indonesian state officials, hoping to ensure the continued benefits of minor protections (Eilenberg 2012).⁶

Similar institutionalization of religion can be found in non-highland minority communities in Southeast Asia during the same time period. For example, in the Cham and Khmer communities in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s, a series of movements led to the foundation of communal religious organization for Cham 'Ahier' – Hindu-influenced populations, Cham Awal – Muslim-influenced populations, Cham Sunni Muslims, and Khmer Buddhists. While the teaching programs affiliated with these organizations suffered from a lack of formal funding, they did partner with teaching programs that targeted the survival of minority languages.⁷ However, these examples contrast with the example of the Kaharingan religion, suggesting that parallels within highland and lowland populations are subject to a 'lowland bias' in educational institutions. For example, Kaharingan was still not recognized as a religion in Indonesia in 1979 and the religious community of the Kaharingan could not formally teach the Dayak language (Baier 2007:567). Nevertheless, the Kaharingan continued to shift and change their practices, slowly approaching compliance with the *pancasila* policy.

An important step in the reformulation of Kaharingan in compliance with *pancasila* was the first official publication of their holy book *Panaturan: Tamparan Taluh Handiai [The Origins: The Sources of All Being]*. According to Baier's (2007) Kaharingan history, the book dates to the colonial era. However, it was reorganized in 1973 in accordance with *pancasila*. The book's official (re)publication in 1996 further solidified the Kaharingan as a religious group. Meanwhile, the eventual setting of regular 'congregations' was perhaps the last critical step in the

⁶ This practice was revived when forming relations with Malay timber barons in the 1990s (Eilenberg 2012).

⁷ Open University in Ho Chi Minh City was allowed to hold Cham language classes in 2011. Cham language teacher preparation was taught at the University of Quy Nhon in 2007.

institutionalization of Kaharingan. While in some communities the weekly congregations were held on Friday mornings, the majority scheduled them on Thursday evenings, indicating a clear distinction from Christian and Muslim groups.

Finally, the setting of regular feast days was also critical. Recognition of May Harvest Day and the general feast/ New Year ceremony was important. Furthermore, the celebration of a special harvest day dedicated to Bawi Ayah, an incarnation of the Hindu goddess, Saraswati, who is also recognized in Bali, was a helpful move in the Indonesian state finally recognizing Kaharingan as an official religion and a form of Hinduism in 1980 (Baier 2007:566-570).

The eventual recognition of the 'Kaharingan religion' demonstrates how highland traditions were eventually incorporated into the state. As institutional boundaries shifted and were reformed over the course of the twentieth century, the place of the highlands as an abstract concept has come to be increasingly recognized in the scholarly literature on Southeast Asia. Examples of 'highland regions' have become more broadly defined and recognized as sub-regions capable of producing their own independent identities (Klokke 2012). Zucker (2013:115) observes that the Cardamom Mountains in Cambodia are "not only... a site of destruction, chaos and violence, but... also capable of producing and reproducing society and individuals."

This outside scholarly recognition has very real effect, impacting images of the highlands and 'the highlands' constructed as a scholarly imaginaire. For example, the recognition of the diversity of the highland regions of Southeast Asia has reached a peak, not with the identification of the extreme diversity of wildlife present throughout the region, but with the recognition that the highlands of Southeast Asia are the world's genetic rice bank, with high yield varieties, government subsidized seeds, maize, rising numbers of rubber crops, and a dramatic increase in black cardamom production (*Amomum aromaticum*) (Michaud and Forsyth 2011:70, 112, 116). It is thus unsurprising that the highlands have gained recent attention in Development Studies. Meanwhile, much still needs to be said for

the need to address the gaps and ruptures in communities that were created through American intervention in the region in the 1960s and 1970s. Importantly, this intervention created a global diaspora of Southeast Asian peoples that has greatly complicated the understanding of the cultures of the region. Maintaining an international perspective allows a better understanding of these studies' contributions.

FOLKLORE, RELIGION, AND RECONCILIATION

During the 1960s and 70s, when American and European scholars were barred from entering Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, scholars responded by approaching Southeast Asia from a new angle. In this context, Lundstrom's 2006 ethno-musicological exploration of the oral repertoire of Kam Raw, a Kammu from upland Laos, offers a potential model for working with the diaspora communities. Lundstrom's study was conducted as a Kammu diaspora emerged from the conflict in Laos,⁸ and focuses on Kam Raw, an ethnic Kammu who left northern Laos in 1974, fleeing the expanding power of the Pathet Lao communists as well as the contemporary civil war in Laos. As a child in upland northern Laos he had learned several genres of oral tradition, which became increasingly important to him after he left Laos. These traditions became a means of remembrance, connecting him to his ancestral traditions.⁹ He then joined the Kammu folklore project, which had been founded in 1972 at Lund University, Sweden.

Similar to the collaboration in Klokke's book, as well as Mahin's explanations of the Kaharingan religion, the Kammu folklore project was a collaborative documentary work, focusing on

⁸ 'Working From Next Door' is a similar program that studied the cultures of the People's Republic of China through Chinese refugees living in Hong Kong at a time when the PRC was closed to foreign researchers.

⁹ More specifically, he had learned *team*, *trneam*, and *hrlii* vocal genres, referring to occasions of feasting, a genre of orally transmitted poetry and non-feasting occasions.

transcribing a compilation of Kammu folklore, with audio material included on a CD. The account is valuable primary source material providing great depth of detail that may eventually be used to promote the understanding of the Kammu community in Laos. It may also act as a stepping stone to reconciliation between the community and the state, as eventually happened with the recognition of the Kaharingan religion of the Dayak community of Indonesia in 1980 – as well as a potential reconnection with the ancestors through Tiwah ritual feasts and the *sandong* 'houses of the ancestors'.¹⁰

Collaboration was important to Klokke's contribution and also helped broaden the audience familiar with Dayak beliefs. Without UNICEF's penicillin providing an inroad of exchange into Dayak communities and Dr. Klokke's camera, and head nurse Emil Rabu (and his unnamed father who was a priest) who accompanied Dr. Klokke, the world might have lost a better understanding of the Dayak people, particularly in light of German and Swiss Christian missionaries' attempts to convert them. Dr. Klokke's project was also an outgrowth of Indonesian state medical missions that sought to incorporate the Dayak. With the help of figures such as those who inspired Dr. Marko Mahin's study, Agama Hindu Kaharingan was recognized as an official religion in 1980, providing a form of reconciliation between the Dayak community and the Indonesian state.

Another success story of reconciliation may be found in Zucker's (2013) studies of Cardamom Mountains where the devastation created by the Khmer Rouge has left many rifts in local communities. Zucker's story involves an elder Buddhist layman and an *acar* 'assistant to the monks' and former Khmer Rouge member. Because of his ties to the Khmer Rouge, he was shunned by his

¹⁰ For more on spirit houses, see Harrison (1996). A description of the role of these spirits appears in Rigg (1993:283). On connections between spirits and land in general in Thailand see Terwiel (1976:267), and Pathawee and Reichart (2007). See also Appendix One for cross-regional commonalities regarding spirit houses and deities.

former village, but was incorporated into the social fabric of another nearby community.

This story is worth telling because his former villagers never attempted revenge. An aspect of this potentially tenuous balance was that the *acar* did not understand himself as an *acar*, but rather that he served the community of *acar* and Buddhist monks, hoping to become an *acar* in his next life (Zucker 2013:77-84). For Zucker (2013) this is a clear example of 'intentional forgetting' to maintain favorable social and communal relations. Meanwhile, it is also clear from Zucker's studies that, within this process of 'intentional forgetting', certain elements of remembering must be brought to attention as 'memorialization' continues to emphasize the relationship between individuals, their ancestors, and the natural environment. This relationship is important when considering the potential impact of unchecked development in the region.¹¹

THE COST OF DEVELOPMENT?

The cost of development in the Southeast Asian highlands is a question to be explored from a regional perspective. The contours of this perspective, however, are in flux. Although the history of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) as a concept are rooted in the era of American intervention in Southeast Asia, Glassman (2010) argues that today's GMS is the brainchild of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The actions of the ADB regarding this region have greatly impacted, both negatively and positively, the lives of upland peoples and will continue to do so if the current scheme of development is continued.

The deeper context of the history of the GMS, combined with Glassman's (2010) warnings of the ADB's neo-colonial tendencies, add weight to the importance of a scholarly approach to the question of development in the Southeast Asian uplands. Glassman argues

¹¹ This statement could be extended to other cases, potentially world-wide, but also in the case of the uplands of China and other portions of Asia.

that the development schemes of the ADB in the GMS are closely tied to networks of state-oriented elites because they have established, to borrow from Walker (1999), 'regimes of regulation'. In the uplands of Borneo, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Burma, and Thailand, the timber trade boomed in the 1980s, before these 'regimes of regulation', partially imposed through cooperation with timber barons, began to shift the political economy of the uplands. Glassman's familiarity with the political structures of Thailand ensures that his argument holds up well in that particular case.¹² However, if Glassman really sought to make a class-based analysis, why did his data set omit class structures in Cambodia and Vietnam? The more open climate for international academics in Thailand was a likely factor.

Regardless of issues in Glassman's data set, he provides a crushing critique of the overall structures of the GMS development plan, as guided by the ADB. Glassman argues that the ADB is based on a US-Japanese hegemony that controls an average twenty-five percent voting share of the membership board of the ADB, effectively blocking new members from joining the board. Furthermore, only three states, none of them Southeast Asian, are guaranteed positions on the ADB board. Finally, Indonesia, which has little to no connection with the geography of the Mekong, is the only country from Southeast Asia that has managed to operate with notable power in the ADB (Glassman 2010:42-44). It follows that within each country, class-based analyses might be employed to bring 'outliers', 'borderland peoples', 'non-state peoples', and 'highlanders' into the

¹² Here he defines the 'elites' as the 'Royal Family of Thailand' as well as 'Thaksin Sinawatra and the Shin group', the leaders of the Siam Cement Group (130 subsidiaries in China and Southeast Asia by 1998), the richest non-royal in Thailand: Charoen Sirvadhanabhakdi (head of Thailand's 'king of beers' Beer Chang), the Yunnan Hongta Group (a Chinese corporation with a twelve percent share in the Xiaowan Dam and a thirty percent share in the Yunnan Dachaoshan Hydropower Corporations), the advocates of the West to East Transmission Project (WETP) in China, The Western Regions Development Program (Xibu Dakaifa), the leaders of the economic reforms of the *Đổi Mới* era from Thailand, and investors in hydropower and mining industries (mining was the greatest increase in Laos from 1998-2005) (Michaud and Forsyth 2011:55-73; Glassman 2010:59-62, 71-87, 144).

state complex. From a global perspective, equitable development schemes demand greater representation from Southeast Asians. Development might then focus less on elite classes, guided by the neo-liberal assumption that benefits trickle down.

One must note that this is not always a desirable end for certain groups. Members of ethnic and religious minority groups may disagree on appropriate approaches to communal development. Greater attention to each individual case is required in future studies. In the struggle to promote a better understanding of marginalized populations, it is important to remember that 'borderlands' peoples are present in cities, towns, and small coastal villages that stretch across Southeast Asia, in addition to the highlands regions. It is only through developing a conversation that crosses disciplinary fields that scholars can gain a better understanding of the complexities of the borderlands of Southeast Asia and how these borderlands compare to other borderland regions across the globe.

APPENDIX ONE: SPIRIT HOUSES AND DEITIES IN THE ASIAN HIGHLANDS

These *sandong* may resemble 'spirit houses' familiar mostly to the untrained observer through the proliferation of imagery from Thai and Vietnamese cultures. However, the *sandong* differ from spirit houses in that burial pots are in their center. Occasionally, there are also statues said to hold the essence of ancestral spirits that are positioned outside the houses as part of the funerary rituals. The white paint on the faces of the statues outside the *sandong* is reminiscent of the white paint on the statues of ancestral gods of the Ahier Brahmanist-influenced Cham religious group in Vietnam today.¹³ Nevertheless, the Kaharingan religion appears to differ slightly from the Ahier religion of Vietnam based on the Kaharingan concept of the 'total deity.' The Ahier appear to have maintained the polytheistic elements of Hindu tradition, as the Kaharingan have

¹³ See image of the statues Po Klaong Car and his wife from the temple of Palei Craok – Bàu Trúc, Ninh Thuận, Việt Nam in Noseworthy (2013a).

shifted toward monotheistic beliefs in contemporary practice. The 'total deity' of the Kaharingan is represented by the figure of the '*sanggaran*' – a pole with a pot at the center of the pole and a *naga* snake.¹⁴ There are also eight spears that protrude up (four on each side) of the *naga* snake and a *tingang* 'hornbill' that symbolizes the upper-world of Mahatara.

The imagery of the 'total deity' in the Kaharingan religion parallels many images found across Southeast Asia, mostly in lowland regions.¹⁵ The *naga* snake appears prominent in the iconography of such historically and geographically disparate sites as Angkor Wat and Suvannaphumi Airport, Bangkok. However, the symbolism of the 'total deity' of the Kaharingan religion differs in that this *naga* snake symbolizes the underworld of the deity Jata.¹⁶ 'Jata' harkens to the Sanskrit term meaning 'to be born' or 'brought into existence'. In the Kaharingan context, it may be understood as paralleling Christians notions regarding 'original sin'. In Southeast Asia, terms related to 'Jata' are diverse and widespread.

In Vietnam, the term 'Cham Jat' has occasionally been used by scholars to refer to the Ahier group of Brahmanist-influenced Cham. However, Sakaya (2013) recently clarified that the Cham Jat in Vietnam are actually a group of Cham who practice ancestral worship and shamanistic traditions. Meanwhile, in Cambodia, the term Cham Sot – 'Sot' being the Khmer pronunciation of the Sanskrit 'Jata' – has an entirely different meaning.

In Cambodia, the 'Kaum Imam San' or 'Bani of Cambodia' are an Islamic minority group who maintain Cham spirit possession rituals linked to ancestor worship. Pérez-Pereiro (2012) noted that in Cambodia, 'Cham Sot' is a Khmer language term and might be rejected due to its potential pejorative connotations. The variance of

¹⁴ *Naga* is Sanskrit for 'snake'. The image of the *naga* snake can be found throughout Southeast Asia in various forms.

¹⁵ This deity has been described as 'Ranying Hatalla Langit – Jata Balawang Bulau' – "a high god with male and female aspects" (Shiller 1996:412).

¹⁶ *Jata* is also associated with 'the water' and, according to nineteenth century accounts, was also known as 'Kaloe' in earlier oral narratives (Baier 2007:566).

the local usage of the term 'Jata' or 'jat' across the region demonstrates that its usage in the Kaharingan religion warrants further examination of the connections these terms have with Indic tradition.

The figure Mahatara 'great Tara' in the Kaharingan religion may harken to Indic traditions.¹⁷ According to Hindu traditions in India, Tara brought \square iva back to life after he consumed the poisonous *halalaha* plant. Hence, Tara, like the goddess Kali, has generally been associated with the underworld. However, in the Kaharingan religion, Mahatara is associated with the heavenly realm. It thus remains a possibility that certain Buddhist notions regarding the figure 'Tara', a bodhisattva, have influenced the Kaharingan faith. Despite these parallels, the Kaharingan religion has several unique images including the Batang Garing tree of life, the *sangiang* half deities who bear the same name as the priestly language, and the Tawing Tempon Telon (Rawing – the owner of the slave Telong) narrative with its emphasis on Dayak identity.¹⁸

¹⁷ Early European accounts recorded 'Mahatara' as 'Hatalla' and '*hatara*'. This deity has also been referred to as 'Bhatara Guru' (Baier 2007:566).

¹⁸ Baier (2007) notes that accounts appeared during the colonial era of Pataho deities (protectors of individual villages), and deities known as Indu Sangaman and Bapa Sanguman who watch over wealth and well-being. Tempon Telon watches over the protectors of individual spirits in the transition between this world and the next (Baier 2007:566).

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