Rethought paper

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Globalizing Indian Religions and Southeast Asian Localisms:

Incentives for the adoption of

Buddhism and Brahmanism in 1st Millennium CE Southeast Asia

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Religious and economic systems originating in India and China have been instrumental in shaping and defining the local cultures of Southeast Asia. This was recognized by the earliest European explorers and resulted in the initial designation of the region as "Indo-China" – midway between and culturally part of both of the larger and more popular metropoles to the north and west. However, deploying "Indo-china" imposes a narrative on understanding the region: that Southeast Asia is not only mid-way geographically between these two larger locations, but also can be understood culturally through comprehending India or China and, therefore, was and is largely imitative of these larger entities.

Added to the impact of the derivative "Indo-china", the nations of Southeast Asia, from the time of their colonization – partly as a riposte to the colonizers – have stressed their religious backgrounds as essential to their identities. Indeed, religion is not so much background as foreground in these nation's statements of themselves on the world stage. This recourse to religion to substantiate nationhood places unwarranted restrictions on the complexities behind the comprehension of their evolution.

The recourse to religion as a core statement of identity as well as our understandings of the "objective" archaeological record both pose problems in identifying and describing the most reasonable narrative for making sense of the appearances of, especially Indian, religions over time in the lives of Southeast Asians. In contrast, the apparent "colonization" and

thousand-year occupation of what is now northern Vietnam by the Chinese seem to permit us to understand more easily the nature of the evolution of the contemporary Vietnamese culture and religion we see today.[1]

Theoretical "Orientations"

The above introduction raises the question of what is the more persuasive, reasonable narrative for the expansion of Indian religions into Southeast Asia. As cogently pointed out by Knappett (this volume), a theory that dynamically incorporates space and time, geography and history, is required. Globalization in his eyes is a macro-scale phenomenon with factors such as the frequency, strength, and content of the connectivities acting as some of the most salient features. These factors provide useful indicators in our exploration of the nature of interactions between South and Southeast Asia. The archaeological record dated to the early- to mid-first millennium of the Common Era provides a complex inventory of contacts and the exchange of goods and ideas (Ray 2014) across what O. W. Wolters termed "the single ocean", the "Indian" Ocean (Wolters 1999:38). Monica Smith (1999) showed that neither Indian polities nor Southeast Asian chiefdoms needed material goods nor ideas from each other at the beginning of the Common Era. Materials from Southeast Asian forests and hinterlands which were later to become important to the Indian trade could be obtained on the subcontinent; additionally, Indian polities had yet to amass the economic, administrative, and religious coherence to become engaged in intercourse with a larger world to the east.

In other words, the differences between Southeast Asia and the Indian sub-continent had not become so great as to make the contacts – that must have been occurring, albeit by

boats hugging shores – apparent in the archaeological record.[2] There may have been a "single ocean", but essentially undifferentiated units communicated locally around it.

Thus, a theory that explains the emergence of differentiation at the same time as it brings specific questions to bear on the direction, frequency, strength, and content of interactions (cf. Knappett, this volume) is required. Employing these concepts permits a sensitivity to lacunae in the archaeological record as it helps to explain the peculiar kinds of interactions – incentives – that would have occurred that might not be reflected in the record but were essential parts of this cross-oceanic communication. Of these incentives religion and trade played formative roles.

Globalization theory encourages this questioning, as it places issues of contact and exchange within a larger framework. Globalization does not necessarily mean "the whole planet"; it "describes the world-encompassing outcomes of human connectivity that . . . ha[ve] epitomized human societies for millennia" (Robertson, this volume). Southeast Asia in its crucial geographical location in the Euro-African-Asian continental system and the encompassed "single ocean" has been formative in channeling as well as providing opportunities for global trade. While Southeast Asia's peninsula and islands may appear to pose barriers to commerce, contrarily, its location, resources, and people provided attractive destinations and way-stations. Southeast Asia has been termed a "crossroads" (e.g., Neher 2000); by this is meant not only a place "to cross over or around", but also a provider of significant "outcomes of human connectivity" – localisms – in its own terms. Meanwhile, the emerging urban polities of Southeast Asia became ripe for the ideological and administrative developments provided by increasing contact with the complex and multivocal traditions of the subcontinent. Therefore,

the use of the term “glocalization” – signifying the creative employment by local inhabitants of ideas and aspects of material culture arriving “globally” – may be appropriate (Pitts and Versluys 2015: 13-15).[3]

Increasingly “dense” contacts between India and Southeast Asia likewise brought about an increasingly dense bi-directional flow of material goods and religious ideas between the two regions, through the genesis of a “deviation-amplification mutual-causal system” (Maruyama 1963). Imports from the wide variety of South Asian religious systems became extremely important to the further exploitation of the goods necessary to perpetuate and expand this trade; the more trade expanded, the more intense the religious connections between the subcontinent and Southeast Asia.[4]

However, not all cultures of Southeast Asia were equally eager for the inroads of these new ideas. Varying responses to economic and religious stimuli took place. This phenomenon reflects the unevenness inherent in the process of globalization as highlighted by Jennings (this vol.). Smith (1999: 19) for instance, posits a configuration based on distance from India: those systems closer to the North Indian heartland may have been exposed to stronger ties leading to closer affiliation, while those more distant may have employed Indian symbols to strengthen local sovereignty, and those most distant may have used these symbols to balance increasing pressure from China for closer affiliation.

The hypotheticals raised in Smith’s formulation and the eight trends of globalization identified by Jennings (this vol.) lead to necessary explorations into the dynamics of relationships between donor and receiver cultures that become evident in “glocalisms”. Wolters (1979) and Ray (2014) show that influences from India were not hegemonic. Ray

(2014:148) notes that India possessed a "shared . . . literate tradition . . . that extended across not only South Asia but also the Indian Ocean . . . that included Brahmins[,] . . . Buddhist and Jain ascetics, as well as navigators and trading and crafts groups." Wolters points to the opportunism of those who left the subcontinent and the doctrines and rituals they propounded. These influences met with opportunities and constraints in local emerging environments – in this context, Cambodia – of "overlordship" conjoined with a local awareness of differential capacities for achievement, organized under the rubric, "men of prowess". The presence of Khmer inscriptions from the seventh century CE of language "reflect[ing] Pāśupata doctrine" allows Wolters to propose the presence of these "startling [Śaivite] ascetics, covered with ashes," in Khmer royal entourages. Their relative indifference to Indian brahmanical injunctions concerning Vedic sacrifices and travel across the oceans, coupled with beliefs "that Śiva's grace prevailed over the law of *karma*", Wolters proposes, would have made a Khmer overlord "Śiva's foremost worshipper" (Wolters 1979:429-433). We shall further explore this example and its implications towards the end of this essay.

Archaeology is uniquely disposed to explore the dynamics of "glocalization", the vagaries of globalization in an environment of differential directionality and strength of contacts with varying frequency and multivocal content. Southeast Asian archaeology provides an excellent landscape on which to chart glocalization in its intricacies and convolutions.

Urbanism as a diagnostic tool

Emerging urbanization provides subtle archaeological indicators of the increasingly intensified contact between India and Southeast Asia in the mid-first millennium CE. Polities

emerged around moated settlements and/or walled cities. Southeast Asian elites sought new and sophisticated ways to legitimate their rule, addressed by the arrival of Buddhist and Brahman[5] religious adepts propelled by the quest for resources and the administrative coherence of Indian polities. This exchange gave these new arrivals opportunities to receive patronage from local elites in return for their support. Buddhist and Brahmanic ritual frameworks delivered mutually reinforcing support to raise local rulers to semi-divine status. Brahmanism provided Śaivite beliefs and the construction of temple complexes to present and re-present microcosms of the heavenly realms, allowing rulers to claim they ruled by divine fiat. Buddhist concepts such as the *bodhisattva* (Buddha-to-be), the *cakravartin* (universal Buddhist monarch), and the *dhammaraja* (the king who rules in accordance with Buddhist principles) provided vehicles for the kingly amassing of merit and power (Hanks 1962).

The carriers of these religions brought written Pali and Sanskrit languages and more centralized ethical and moral codes.[6] Sheldon Pollock (2006) demonstrated that, by the first millennium CE, Sanskrit had been transformed from a purely sacred to a more broadly based language, particularly concerning royal and political matters. It provided expression not only for ritual and religion, but also for the praise of royalty and political authority. Southeast Asians quickly adopted this literate cosmopolitan culture and the new political visions it encouraged (Pollock 2006: 123-5, Ray 2014).

Simultaneously, new programs of architecture, urban planning, and monumental religious sculpture in stone and bronze arrived. A new vocabulary of religious symbolism and architecture overlay more local symbols, allowing elites to promote their rule through merit-

making and sponsorship of large-scale religious building programs, including stupas, monastery complexes, and religious imagery (cf. Wyatt 2001 regarding a slightly later time).

Ethically these religions provided rulers with a sense of moral and theological supremacy over neighbouring polities – as Wolters (1979) elaborated, by creating Hindu worlds on the Southeast Asian landscape – while providing the masses with new mechanisms for aligning with kingship and salvation. Altogether, these elements led to significant cultural change. In many ways, these incoming religions acted as catalysts for the emergence of the region's early states.

"Indianisation" and "Indigenisation"

Over the past four to five decades the views of scholars such as Georges Coedès (1968) and Ramesh Majumdar (1955) concerning successive waves of Indian colonization and the "civilizing" of local inhabitants have become discredited; recent archaeological interpretations point to the selective export of Indian concepts and discriminating adaptations by Southeast Asians [see Mabbatt (1977), Smith (1999), Wolters (1999), Stark (2006)]. Bentley (2005: 4-5) talks of globalization in terms of large-scale historical processes, stating that close attention must be paid as to how local human actors sought ways to take advantage of opportunities presented by such a phenomenon.

From ca. the early 1950s, scholarship shifted toward seeing members of Southeast Asian societies as active agents; local elites consciously sought out Indian concepts for their own ideological and political ends. Paul Mus (1975), Jacob van Leur (1967), and others (e.g. Bekker 1951; Chandler and Mabbett 1975; Mabbett 1977, Wolters 1979) were prominent voices in this

shift. This change was linked to the evolving post-colonial Southeast Asian political landscape, roughly coinciding with the independence of the French, British, and Dutch colonies. Victor Lieberman (2003: 1-20) observed corresponding trends regarding scholarship in Southeast Asian history, suggesting a similar process took place throughout the social sciences.

Since this reconceptualization, scholars have argued that the process by which Indian concepts, beliefs, and ideas were amalgamated into Southeast Asia was inextricably linked to urbanisation, maritime trade, and the development of complex society (Bellina and Glover 2004: 68-83; Manguin this vol.). As societies evolved throughout the region's prehistory, settlements became larger, administration more coherent, and trade networks more extensive, resulting in significantly increased contact and connections with India and China. Consequently, exposure to new ideas, concepts, technologies, and arts resulted. Globalization and the dynamics of local cultures, not colonization, were the driving factors.

In order to substantiate this model, archaeologists had to find evidence for sufficiently advanced societies (viz. metal age cultures, preferable a well-developed Iron Age) in the region. This need, as well as attempts to illustrate wide-scale trade networks with India and China, has driven much archaeological research in the region from the 1960's onwards (see for example Bellina and Glover 2004; Higham 1989, 2002, Higham and Thosarat 2012, Revire and Murphy 2014).

The shift from seeing Indianisation occurring due to the impetus of Indians towards that of placing the initiative in the hands of Southeast Asians was referred to as "indigenisation" or "localisation" and was summed up by David Chandler and Ian Mabbett (1975: viii) as follows:

> It is easy . . . to find evidence that indigenous practices in all spheres of life persisted largely uninfluenced, and that the apparently Indian forms were really local ones in disguise – local gods with Indian names, local architectural motifs or local legends with Indian top dressing.

Gosline (2006) defined the process of indigenization as one aspect of socialization. A similar process took place within India itself. Over time local cults and deities became appropriated by both Brahmanism and Buddhism (see Guy 2014: cat. nos. 14-16; Padma 2013). Pollock (2006: 530-532) noted that the process of Sankritisation in India was contemporaneous with that taking place in Southeast Asia. The ability of these religions to fuse with local deities and practices goes some way to explaining how they could successfully replicate this process in a Southeast Asian context.

Concurrently, Indianization was not a uniform phenomenon (Smith 1999). Globalizing influences were felt to differing degrees in different locations over the *longue durée* (Braudel 1976). Furthermore, an all-encompassing homogenous Indian culture never existed. Indian societies had, and still have, extensive regional variations in terms of languages, cultures, histories, religions, and traditions. Influences came to Southeast Asia from various Indian hearths throughout the first millennium. While we can propose some fixed points of reference such as the Guptas in northern India, the Pallavas in southern India, and, from the 8th century onwards, the Pala in northern India and, in particular, the site of Nalanda, attempts to explain Southeast Asian change under a single overarching concept of Indianization belie its complexity.

The following discussion singles out four regions at particular times to highlight processes of selective adoption, socialization, and the overall impact of globalization on

Southeast Asian cultures. The Pyu in Myanmar, Dvaravati in Thailand, the Thai-Malay peninsula, and Pre-Angkorian Cambodia provide clear examples of the adoption of Buddhism and/or Brahmanism from the mid-first millennium CE onwards. Buddhism and Brahmanism, never mutually exclusive, set these societies on new trajectories, the effects of which remain in motion today.

State Buddhism

Whether it be King Bimbisara's donation of the first monastery at Veluvana during the lifetime of the Buddha or Emperor Asoka's transformation two centuries later, the conversion of rulers to and their subsequent patronage of Buddhism has a distinguished history. Through such translations, rulers came to embody concepts such as the *dharmaraja* (the king who rules in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha), the *cakravartin* (universal Buddhist monarch), and the *bodhisattva* (the Buddha to be). As Buddhism arrived in Southeast Asia, local rulers found a religion which would not only serve their spiritual needs, but also, and more importantly, greatly facilitate their political aspirations. Over approximately two centuries, forms of state Buddhism arose with local rulers and elites monopolizing their patronage and support of the religion, expressed through the production of religious art and architecture. Some of the earliest evidence for the adoption of state Buddhism in Southeast Asia comes from Pyu culture in today's Myanmar and Dvaravati culture in central Thailand. Both developed forms of state Buddhism which are indicative of how the religion shaped, and was in turn reshaped, by the cultures it encountered.

The Pyu are the earliest historic culture identified in central Myanmar. Chinese texts dating from as early as the 4th century CE name them; however, the British historian Gordon Luce preferred to call them "Tircul", the term by which they referred to themselves (1985: 47). The Pyu were the forerunners of contemporary Burmans and the kingdom of Bagan. They were the dominant ethnic group in central Myanmar, while southern Myanmar as well as Dvaravati in central Thailand were the domains of the Mon (Diffloth 1984). Archaeological evidence for Pyu comes from three main sites: Halin, Srikestra, and Beikthano. One of the Pyu culture's distinguishing features was the adoption of Buddhism and the development of large-scale brick architecture and religious sculpture based around urban centres (fig. 1).

"Dvaravati" refers to the earliest proto-historic – historic culture that flourished in today's Central and Northeast Thailand from ca. 5th – 11th centuries CE (for a full discussion see Skilling 2003; Murphy 2010: 39-85, Murphy forthcoming; for Northeast Thailand see Murphy 2014). Its emergence has been inextricably linked in scholarship to the arrival and wholesale adoption of Buddhism by local elites. However, this viewpoint may need to be tempered somewhat as Revire (forthcoming) has shown that they also sponsored Brahmanism to varying degrees. That said, Dvaravati produced some of the finest Buddhist sculpture of the period, adapting Indian modes of representation and infusing them with an indigenous aesthetic, embodying the essence of the Indian "global" combined with the local (fig. 2).

Beikthano and Srikestra

The ancient settlement of Beikthano (BTO) is located in the Yin valley of central Myanmar, north of the modern village of Kokkogwa, Taungdwingyi Township, Magwe Division.

It is situated between a number of streams, all of which flow westward to the Ayewaddy River, making the surrounding region ideal for rice cultivation (Moore, 2007: 155). The site is roughly square and enclosed by walls of fired brick, surrounding an area amounting to 8.81 km^2 (Stargardt 1990: 156). Numerous brick structures are located here, including a monastery complex (KKG2), a large stupa (KKG3), and a palace (KKG5) (Stargardt 1990: 157, 173-5). Unlike the site of Srikestra, no significant Buddhist sculptural tradition has been identified at Beikthano, raising the possibility that the Buddhism practiced here focused more on aniconic ritual such as stupa-worship. However, it may be that while Buddhist architecture developed early, stone or bronze sculptural workshops were established later. In 2003, excavations at site BTO-13 uncovered a small bronze Buddha image (H. 13cm) dated stylistically to the 5th-6th centuries (San Shwe 2012: 279-80, fig. 26.9). By comparison, this discovery and the numerous examples of Buddha images from the site of Sriksetra suggest that worship of Buddha images was part of the site's religious practice.

Some of the most substantial evidence for state Buddhism at Beikthano is present in the architectural triad of monuments KKG2, KKG3, and KKG4. Janice Stargardt (1990: 190-204) shows that they represent a monastic complex of considerable scale located at the heart of the urban settlement. KKG2 is a rectangular, almost symmetrical building with an entrance chamber in the middle of the east façade. The building is divided into eight separate cells with an access corridor along the long axis on the eastern side (see isometric drawing in Stargardt 1990: 194). Aung-Thaw noted that this architectural design, whereby a group of small cells is placed off an adjoining corridor, closely follows that of Buddhist monasteries excavated in Nagarjunakonda in Southern India, specifically site 20 (Aung Thaw 1968: 16; also see Sakar

1960: pl. XLVIII). Stargardt agrees that site 20 at Nagarjunakonda was the most probable prototype for KKG2.

Approximately 40 metres east of KKG2 lies KKG3 and KKG4. KKG3 represents the remains of a stupa while KKG4 may be an associated shrine (fig. 3). KKG3 is a large cylindrical structure that survives today to a height of about 3 metres and has a diameter of approximately 9 metres (Stargardt 1991: 200-1). Four square projecting platforms (*ayaka*) adjoin KKG3 at the cardinal points; Brown notes this formation is characteristic of Andhra sites in Southern India such as Amaravati or Nagarjunakonda or perhaps sites in Sri Lanka (2001: 35). KKG3 and KKG4 are ringed by two large circular walls, giving the entire monument a diameter of 42 metres. These walls create a corridor which might have facilitated the circumambulation (*pradakshina*) ritual. Stargardt (1991: 204-5) argues that this monument was an attempt to create a *mahācetiya* or “Great Stupa”. Stupa worship was an integral part of Buddhist religious practice from early in its history.

This structural triad is located in the heart of the BTO settlement (San Shwe 2012: 277). The scale of the structures’ construction and their proximity to the palace (KKG5) suggests linkages between the two; it is likely the monastery complex was built under royal patronage. Only the ruling elite had the manpower and resources to undertake such a large-scale building program. By visibly supporting Buddhism, this complex not only advertised the ruling elite’s munificence and power through the control of labour and resources, but it also provided a stage upon which the elite could promote its spiritual superiority through rituals and offerings. Collaboratively, by supporting the upper echelons of society, monks found themselves owning a substantial monastery complex to promote their spiritual and secular ambitions.

At Sriksetra, similar processes took place. Located in the modern town of Pyay, Bago Division, Central Burma, 6 kilometres west of the Ayeyarwady, it is the largest known Pyu settlement in Myanmar. Unlike Beikthano, its walls are circular with a circumference of approximately 14.6 kilometres, enclosing about 30 km^2 (Moore 2007: 167). Five inscribed stone funerary urns provide 7th–8th century CE dates; four bear the name of a single individual in Pyu with interlinear Brahmi.[7]

As with Beikthano, evidence for a large palace near the centre of the settlement has come to light; the Bawbaygyi stupa, standing 46 metres tall, reflects the practice of constructing monumental Buddhist architecture (fig. 3). Architectural parallels in India can be seen in monuments such as the Demek stupa in Sarnath. As with stupa KKG3 at Beikthano, the Bawbaygyi's scale supports the argument that it functioned as a *mahācetiya*. However, unlike Beikthano, Sriksetra provides ample evidence for surviving Buddhist material culture.

Some of the clearest evidence for direct royal support of Buddhism at Sriksetra comes from a headless Buddha image and a reliquary (Guy 2014: cat nos. 27 and 41). The Buddha image is seated cross-legged on a throne, hands in *dhyāni mudrā*, indicating meditation. Stylistically dated to the 7th century (Brown 2001: 37-8; Guy 1999: 21), a Pyu and Sanskrit inscription is directly below the Buddha's legs. This states that the image was donated by Prince Jayacandravarman, expressing his wish that adherence to the Buddha's teachings continue until the end of the world (Duroiselle 1930).

Further association of royal names and Buddhist iconography comes from a gilded silver reliquary found in 1926 at the Khin Ba mound (Moore 2007: 175). When Charles Duroiselle (1930: 171-81) inspected the mound, he discovered the remains of a brick stupa with an intact

relic chamber covered by a large stone slab with a stupa carved in relief (see Luce 1985: pl. 27; Guy 2014: cat. no. 26). The silver reliquary casket was centred in the approximately 1m^3 chamber. The casket, 66 cm high and approximately 37 cm in diameter, has high-relief Buddha images depicted on its four sides, each image flanked by smaller images of disciples. The names of the four Buddhas are inscribed in Pyu and Pali on the casket's upper rim while the names of disciples and donors are located on the bottom (Guy 1999: 19; Stargardt 2001). The donors' names, Śrī Prabhuvarman and Śrī Prabhudevi, are in Sanskrit. The suffix "*-varman*", adopted throughout Southeast Asia, denotes kingship of Southern Indian origin (Guy 1997: 93). Śrī Prabhudevi most likely refers to Śrī Prabhuvarman's Queen; "*-devi*" is the Sanskrit root for the divine female aspect. Guy raises the possibility that the use of "*-varman*" on both reliquary casket and headless Buddha image may reflect dynastic continuity between respective donors (1999: 21).

Dvaravati

As with early Pyu sites, Dvaravati culture adapted and adopted Buddhism from its beginnings. It emerged as the main political and cultural force in Central Thailand from the 6th century; over the course of three to four centuries it produced some of the most sublime sculpture in Southeast Asia. Key sites such as Nakhon Pathom, U Thong, Si Thep, and Khu Bua developed into urban centers bequeathing significant architectural and sculptural remains.

The moated site of Nakhom Pathom provides an excellent example of the impact of Buddhism on Dvaravati culture. The presence of monumental Buddhist architecture and sculpture as well as inscriptional evidence from coinage provides some of the clearest evidence

for state Buddhism in the Dvaravati period. Nakhon Pathom is one of the period's largest and most highly developed urban centres, with an elite that embraced and incorporated religion into their social and urban fabric.

The ancient settlement covered an area of 3,700 by 2,000 metres (740 hectares). It is situated on the west bank of the Ta Chin River, about 60 kilometres directly west of modern day Bangkok. Two large stupas are at the settlement's centre. The first, Chula Pathon Chedi, was excavated in 1939 by the Fine Arts Department of Thailand and Pierre Dupont (1959, 2006), while the second, Phra Pathon Chedi, 400 meters to the west, was recently excavated by the Fine Arts Department (Nguanphinphak 2009: 145-9). Dupont's 1939 expedition also uncovered an additional stupa, Wat Phra Men, located approximately 1 kilometre outside the moat to the southwest.

All three stupas were of fired brick with façades decorated with stucco ornaments and motifs. Chula Pathon Chedi was faced with terracotta plaques depicting Buddhist narratives (Krairiksh 1974). Four or five colossal stone Buddha images are reported to have come from Wat Phra Men; none were found *in situ* (Revire 2010: 82-4). These statues, over 3.5 metres tall, are seated with legs pendant and the right hand in the teaching gesture (*vitarka mudrā*).

Nakhon Pathom evidences many similarities with Beikthano and Sriksetra: monumental Buddhist architecture and sculpture produced by royal sponsorship in an urban settlement. Chula Pathon Chedi and Phra Pathon Chedi were part of a large scale monastic settlement located at the city's heart. The latter stupa most likely functioned as a *mahācetiya*. Their sizes and central location point to the possibility that they were part of a royal monastery. Wat Phra Men, located outside the settlement, may have been part of a smaller monastery. Despite this,

it continued to receive considerable patronage. The Wat Phra Men stupa constitutes one piece of evidence for sponsorship. The four large Buddha statues which supposedly sat at its cardinal points, perhaps forming a *mandala* (Revire 2010: 115), constitutes another.

Additional evidence for the adoption of Indian forms of kingship at Nakhon Pathom comes from inscribed silver coins, stone tablets, and *dharmacakra* (wheels of the law). Coins, often with conch or *śrīvatsa* (abode of the goddess Sri) images on their obverse, are symbols of Indian kingship (Indrawooth 2004: 133). One coin is inscribed with the epitaph *śrīdvāravatīśvarapuṇya*, translated, “meritorious deeds of the King of Dvaravati”. Stone tablets identified as ritual trays may have been used in the *abhiṣeka* royal consecration ceremony outlined in the Vedic text *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (Indrawooth 2004: 136). This kingship ritual is depicted on a lintel from Wat Eng Khna in Cambodia in a Śaivite context (discussed below), illustrating that both Central Thailand and Cambodia, whether professing Buddhism or Śaivism, adapted concepts and rituals from the same wellspring (see also Guy 2014: cat. no. 88).

The *dharmacakra*, “Wheel of the Law”, provides further evidence regarding concepts of Dvaravati kingship. These large stone wheels, having their origins in India, are some of the most distinctive artistic and religious symbols of Dvaravati culture. Each consists of three stone parts, the *cakra*, “wheel”, mounted on a *stambha*, “pillar”, with a square *socle* uniting them (fig. 4). A *cakra* measures between approximately 60 cm to 2 metres in diameter while the *stambhas* can be 2 metres tall; once assembled, a *dharmacakra* is an imposing monument.

The *dharmacakra*’s symbolism is multivalent. In India, *dharmacakra* are early aniconic forms of the Buddha, shown in reliefs at Amaravati (Huntington and Huntington 1985: 175). *Dharmacakra* also represent a specific episode in the Buddha’s life, when he set his teachings

(the *Dharma*) into motion by preaching at the Deer Park in Sarnath. The most significant political meaning is contained in the conflation of *dharmacakra* with *cakravartin* (universal emperor). This first appears in Mauryan India when *dharmacakra* appear as iconographic elements on Asokan pillars. This link is explicitly made in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (3.58 ff.) of the *Suttapiṭaka* which states that just as the Buddha leads all to enlightenment, so the universal emperor conquers all and rules righteously.

Dvaravati *dharmacakra* simultaneously functioned as representations of the Buddha and his teaching and of the ruling monarch who presumably commissioned them. Brown records over 42 *dharmacakra* throughout Central Thailand, numerous examples coming from Nakhon Pathom (Brown 1996: XXVI). Pinna Indorf (2014) suggests that each wheel represented a king or ruler and that they were essential to the *rājasūya* consecration ceremony. Thus *dharmacakra* were symbolic of the amalgamation of Buddhism and kingship and part of larger royal representational programs. They have been found near stupas at a number of sites (such as U Thong stupa no. 22). In effect, the ruler asserted synonymy with a *bodhisattva* (Buddha-to-be). *Dharmacakra* provide clear examples of an Indian symbol adopted and adapted to local royal ideology and performance practice.

Converting to and actively supporting Buddhism, rulers of Dvaravati and Pyu polities possessed a new symbolic and religious toolkit to promote and legitimate their rule. Sponsorship of monastery complexes and the production of Buddha images provided ample opportunities to illustrate munificence and power. Buddhist monks, in return for support of local rulers, became direct recipients of this patronage. *Dharmacakra* encapsulate this conflation of religion and politics. These monumental freestanding stone symbols, placed in

front of stupas or monastery complexes, proclaimed both the temporal power of the ruler and the spiritual supremacy of Buddhism. Furthermore, by facilitating the construction of religious structures, the most prominent of which functioned as *mahācetiya* (great stupas), the upper echelons of Pyu and Dvaravati societies styled themselves benefactors *par excellence* of this new religion. They not only obtained considerable spiritual merit in the eyes of the faithful, but they also legitimated and strengthened their rule and place in the social order.

The arrival and adoption of Buddhism in Pyu and Dvaravati cultures highlights the mutual amplification processes of globalization. On the one hand, Buddhism's arrival transformed these societies into ones possessing monumental architecture, a developed sculptural tradition based on Indian models, new ethical and moral codes, and new modes of political expression. On the other hand, simultaneously, in monopolizing these incoming global religious currents, the rulers of these societies adapted these inspirations and rituals to their own socialization templates. Rulers seized these opportunities to strengthen their positions in the existing social order. This interpretation provides a counterpoint to Robertson's (this volume) assertion that globalization acts to destabilize the status quo and vested interests. In the Southeast Asian context, it had the opposite result.

Brahmanism

While Buddhism took hold across large parts of Myanmar and Thailand, in Cambodia a Brahman variant became ascendant. A local form of state Śaivism emerged in the kingdom of Zhenla, the precursor to the Angkorian Empire, located in northern Cambodia, southern Northeast Thailand, and southern Laos. Another Brahman variant, Vaiṣṇavism, took root in the Thai-Malay

peninsula and southern Cambodia from as early as the 5th century and became the religion of the early coastal polity of Funan located in the lower Mekong Delta based around the sites of Oc Eo (in modern day Vietnam) and Angkor Borei (in modern day Cambodia).[8] The sculptural tradition that emerged in this region provides one of the best examples of how Indian modes of representation became localized over the course of two to three centuries. We shall turn to the Vaiṣṇavite material of Funan, followed by a discussion of state Śaivism in Zhenla, to illustrate that, as was the case with Buddhism in Myanmar and Thailand, Brahmanism transformed and was in turn transformed by the cultures it encountered.

A corpus of Viṣṇu and Harihara[9] images from peninsular Thailand and Cambodia spanning three to four centuries provides an evolving timeline of how the global became local. While these statues' initial presence may be best explained by trade routes [cf. Dalsheimer & Manguin (1998)], mercantile factors hardly explain the longevity of this tradition, with political expediency becoming a more likely cause [cf. Lavy (2003)].

The timeline begins with a Viṣṇu statue from Chaiya, in Surat Thani province, southern Thailand, most likely dating to the late 5th to early 6th century (fig. 5); some scholars have argued for a date as early as the 4th century (Lavy 2014; O'Connor 1972). Three additional Viṣṇu images from Nakhon Si Thammarat have the same approximate date. All exhibit typical Gupta sculptural characteristics with the relief images at cave 6 at Udayagiri in Madhya Pradesh providing clear stylistics comparisons. Tall floral mitres with bas-relief leaf and vine patterns, u-shaped sashes, and conch-on-hip configurations have antecedents in Kusana period Mathura and Gupta India of the 2nd–5th centuries (Lavy 2014: 157-160; O'Connor 1972: 32-40). These

early images evidence the adoption of Indian models and norms from the early stages of Vaiṣṇavism in Southeast Asia.

The evolving sculptural tradition over the following two centuries exemplifies localization. The tall mitre becomes refined, losing its floral motifs; the position of the conch switches to the upper left hand and the lower left hand now holds the club. The statues' physiques morph from short and fleshy figures to tall, larger-than-life-size sculptures with defined pectoral and chest musculature (see Guy 2014: cat. no. 60 and fig. 105). This tradition evolves to its apex in the 7th–8th centuries and is best represented by a group of Vaiṣṇavite images from Phnom Da (see Dupont 1955: pls. II-VI), a hill sanctuary south of Angkor Borei, and a Harihara figure from Prasat Andet (Jessup & Zéphir 1997: cat. no. 27). These sculptures embody a fully developed Khmer aesthetic; the Harihara's facial features are modelled on those of the indigenous population (fig. 5). These pieces present the creations of artists no longer aping received modes from India. This art is their own with artists producing works reflecting uniquely Southeast Asian aesthetics.

What political or cultural factors explain the popularity of Viṣṇu and Harihara? Lavy shows that Viṣṇu, from his first appearance in Southeast Asia in a rock cut inscription from Ci-aruton in west Java, was associated with kingship and the conquest and expansion of territory (2003, 23-5). Jan Gonda (1969: 164-7) notes that an Indian ruler is an avatar of Viṣṇu.[10] Kamaleswar Bhattacharya (1964: 72-8) argues that the monumental eight-armed Viṣṇu from Phnom Da represents a local king in divine garb. Paul Lavy (2003) convincingly argued that Harihara appear to embody a tactic by Śaivite rulers of Zhenla in northern Cambodia to exert their dominance over the Vaiṣṇavite Funan to the south.

While these examples illustrate the growing presence of Vaiṣṇavism in peninsular Thailand and southern Cambodia, Śaivism became the dominant state religion in the polity of Zhenla to the north from ca. 7th century onwards (Lavy 2003, 32-3). Śaivism had long been associated with Indian kingship. However, Śaivism also appears to be more malleable in grafting itself onto indigenous Southeast Asian cults than Vaiṣṇavism. The Liṅgaparvata, a mountain overlooking Wat Phu in southern Laos worshipped as a natural *liṅga* (fig. 6), best illustrates this malleability. The *liṅga* is a phallic, aniconic representation of Śiva; over time the depiction shifts from anatomically naturalistic to stylized forms. Śiva, in his earliest manifestations in Southeast Asia, often appeared as a *liṅga*. A number of examples erected by the ruler Citrasena in the Dangrek mountain range of Northeast Thailand show that *liṅga* were associated with the conquest of territory (Dupont 1955: 56-7, 119-121; Lavy 2003: 26-7).

Based on Chinese sources and 5th-6th century Khmer epigraphy, Bhattacharya argued that, prior to the arrival of Śaivism, an indigenous religion was present at Wat Phu focused on worship of the mountain's spirit, *Podouli* (1997: 36-9). Śiva is known as Giriśa or Giritra, "Lord of the mountain" or "Protector of the mountain" respectively, while his consort, Parvati, is "Daughter of the mountain". The close association between Śiva as a god of the mountain and the *liṅga*, a symbol of the god's fertilizing energy, made it readily adaptable to local cults. Using Śaivism to unify local deities, rulers exerted religious and political control over newly acquired territories, illustrated by erecting *liṅga*.

Zhenla included the Wat Phu sanctuary. This early polity developed in central and northern Cambodia in the 7th–8th century. Its influence likely spread north of the Dangrek range to the Mun River area of Northeast Thailand. The capital was Īśānapura, modern Sambor Prei

Kuk in Khampong Thom province, Cambodia (Coedes 1968: 70-1). Finot (1912) first suggested this identification and Dupont (1955: 80-1) confirmed it by finding an inscription at the site. Īśānapura is located on the west bank of the Sen River; today numerous brick sanctuaries survive in varying states of preservation. As at Wat Phu, numerous inscriptions and *liṅga* give evidence for Īśānapura's adoption of Śaivism (Lavy 2003: 32-3). Inscription K.612 on a doorjamb in Īśānapura's southern group records the 627 CE foundation of a *liṅga* by King Īśānavarman I. More importantly, inscription K.80 equates Īśānavarman I directly with Śiva, indicating that the Khmer fully embraced the concept of kings as gods invested with divine authority.

As with the Liṅgaparvata at Wat Phu, at Īśānapura we see the adaptation of indigenous religion to Śaivism and Śaivism to indigenous forms. Michael Vickery, analyzing Khmer period inscriptions, concludes, as did Mus (1975), that the Khmer remained true to their indigenous, local deities, while incorporating elements of Indic religion. Sanskrit epithets were frequently used; the most common added the suffix "*–īśvara*" to a god's name, thus associating the deity with Śiva. However, it is likely that these were local gods renamed with Sanskrit titles rather than the wholesale import of monolithic Śaivism directly from India (Vickery 1998: 139-46, Wolters 1979). For instance, the form of Śiva worshipped at the Liṅgaparvata (Wat Phu) was called Bhadresvara. Vickery, reviewing 7th–8th century inscriptions, identifies five instances where gods are clearly of local origin; he argues that they could best be referred to as Neak Ta, indigenous guardian spirits, whose worship survives today (1998: 144). Similarly, Vickery also proposes that the popularity of the goddess Durgā Mahiṣasuramardini at Īśānapura and elsewhere may represent a grafting of this female deity onto a local cult (1998: 154). Despite sculptural representation during this period (Jessup & Zéphir 1997: cat. no. 18; Guy 2014: cat.

nos. 63-66), Durgā Mahiṣasuramardini is never mentioned in inscriptions. As the slayer of the buffalo demon, perhaps she became equated with buffalo sacrifice, a ritual well attested to throughout Southeast Asia. Either way, in the 6th–7th century local rulers cloaked their indigenous gods in Indian garb, exalting the old while revering the new.

Using these approaches to the gods, local rulers styled themselves using Indian kingship models. They added Indic royal suffixes to their titles, commonly the South Indian "*–varman*", "shield", a tradition that continued into the Angkorean period. They invited Brahmins to their courts, not only associating themselves with the incoming religions and their rituals, but also benefitting from the skills and technical expertise these specialists possessed. The Pāśupata sect of Śaivism seems prevalent in 7th– 8th century Cambodia. This sect was well-established in India; practitioners were famed for their skill in Sanskrit grammar and knowledge of various philosophical and religions systems, including Buddhism (Bhattacharya 1997: 40). Pollock states, Sanskrit cosmopolitanism was a "…way of political being" (2006: 133); Wolters (1979) points out the conditions under which cosmopolitanism was transmitted.

The temple complexes at Īśānapura indicate that Khmer kings not only utilized Indian ideologies and rituals; they also employed monumental architectural programs to promote their reigns. Īśānapura temples are grouped into three complexes: north, central, and south (Shimoda & Shimamoto 2012). The north temple complex has a quincunx groundplan that continued into the Angkorian period. The octagonal temples are built of fired brick. However, doorjambs and lintels are sandstone, some of which are elaborately carved with floral and bas-relief narrative.

To the west of the three temple groups is a large moated city approximately four square kilometres in area where 82 sanctuaries have been recorded (Shimoda & Shimamoto 2012: 24-25). To the east of the temple zone, three causeways stretch toward the Sen River, one from each temple group. Ichita Shimoda and Sae Shimamoto's suggest the city was entered via the river along these causeways (2012: 17-25). Thus visitors would be first greeted by the monumental architectural structures of the temple groups before entering the moated city zone, impressing on them the power and munificence of the rulers of Īśānapura.

By equating themselves with Indic gods, especially Śiva, the Khmer rulers of Zhenla successfully adapted the incoming religion to their own ends. A clear visual example of adaptation comes from a lintel discovered at the contemporary temple of Wat Eng Khna, 20–30 kilometers south of Sambor Prei Kuk (see Guy 2014: cat. no. 88). It contains two scenes, one within the foliate garland arching along the upper part of the lintel, the other below it. The upper scene depicts the *lingodbhavamurti*, the myth that explains the origins of the *liṅga* (Bhattacharya 1961: 80). In this episode Viṣṇu and Brahma argue over which created the universe. A pillar surrounded by flames appears. Viṣṇu attempts to find the pillar's bottom, Brahma its top. Unsuccessful, they acknowledge the pillar as their superior. Śiva's head then appears in the pillar, revealing that this is his *liṅga*; this results in his superiority over both gods.

The lintel's lower scene depicts a king's coronation ceremony (*abhiṣeka*) replete with Brahmin ascetics and court officials flanking both sides. By placing the coronation scene directly under the *liṅgodbhavamūrti*, the Khmer king equated himself with Śiva. Presumably this lintel was placed at an entrance to a royal temple, making apparent the connection between Śiva and the king to all who entered.

The arrival of Brahmanical worship in Southeast Asia did not end local autochthonic deities. A synergistic effect occurred in which local gods acquired Indian epithets, thus manifesting themselves anew under the patronage of local kings. While these sculptures owed their origins to their Indian predecessors, they evidenced entirely indigenous aesthetics. These sculptures were, in turn, housed in monumental brick temples administered by a new Brahmin elite in service to the king. As with the Buddhist polities of Dvaravati and Pyu, the rulers of Zhenla and Funan employed the new religion's ceremonial and ritual trappings to impress upon the populace their power and munificence. Buddhism and Brahmanism became localized while maintaining sufficient sophistication and global cachet to insure their dominance and continuing state support. No better example of this can be put forward than the construction of a *liṅga* on Phnom Kulen in 802 CE as part of the consecration ceremony of Jayavarman II, the act that ushered in the beginning of Angkorian history and over three hundred years of uninterrupted state Śaivism.

Conclusion

Seen through a contemporary lens, early- to mid-first millennium Southeast Asian societies appear particularly receptive to global currents. Consisting of emerging polities nurtured through increasing trade across "the single ocean", they had neither a developed writing system nor a unifying ritual basis. While processes of local socialization had clearly taken place throughout prehistory, these societies had not reached levels of density to fend off incoming South Asian global currents of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Sanskrit cosmopolitanism.

Southeast Asians successfully managed the twin processes of globalization and localism, adapting Buddhist and Brahmanical practice to suit their situations. They capitalized on India's increasing interest in trade, the coherence of its cosmopolitan political and religious systems, and the perhaps fortuitous appearance of Indians of many persuasions on their shores to create autonomous polities with their own ideological systems, in other words, "glocalities". From the perspective of the *longue durée*, Southeast Asia in the mid-first millennium CE represents one of the crucial moments of globalization. Open to possibilities presented by incoming South Asian religious adepts spurred by the economic, administrative, and ideological structures of the Ganges Plain, Southeast Asian elites adapted and localized global currents. This fusion facilitated a transformation of their societies, setting them on trajectories leading to the formation of fully fledged, unique Southeast Asian Buddhist and Brahmanical states.

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[1] See Taylor 1983 and Jamieson 1993 regarding the Chinese colonization of Vietnam and its impact.

[2] See Revire and Murphy 2014 for several excellent articles devoted to this issue.

[3] For bringing the idea of "glocalization" to our attention, we wish to thank Miriam Stark and specifically cite Pitts and Versluys (2015) and the application of this concept to the Roman world.
[4] Ray 2014 points out the multi-vocal nature of the South-Southeast Asian connection; this essay emphasizes trade as well as religion because the former is more visible in the archaeological landscape.
[5] "Buddhist" and "Brahman" are terms of convenience. As we have and will continue to note, the tentacles stretching out from the Indian subcontinent toward Southeast Asia were neither hegemonic nor univocal.
[6] Evidence today comes primarily from inscriptions. However, while palm leaf manuscripts must have been a much more common medium of transmission, due to climatic conditions they do not appear in the archaeological record of this period.
[7] The Burmese scholar San Win proposed a somewhat earlier dating sequence spanning the 4th century CE. He used dates based on the Gupta as opposed to the Burmese era, as Blagden did (Moore 2007: 173). San Win's proposal is not accepted or rejected, re-emphasizing that further research into Sriksetra dating needs to be undertaken.
[8] This polity is known almost exclusively from Chinese sources. However, archaeological excavations over the past half a century have attempted to match textual descriptions with on-the-ground evidence. For Oc Eo see Malleret (1959-63) and Khoo (2003); for Angkor Borei see Stark (2003).
[9] Harihara is a composite deity made up of a union between Viṣṇu and Śiva, see Guy (2014: cat. nos. 91-92).
[10] The King of Thailand, Rama IX, is an avatar of Viṣṇu; Rama himself is an avatar of the same god.