



Issue 6 – September 2018

Note from the Editors

The [Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme](#) is a transformational programme that aims to further the understanding and preservation of ancient to pre-modern Buddhist and Hindu art and architecture in Southeast Asia. The Programme is supporting over 90 scholarships between 2014 and 2019, funds three fully endowed academic posts at SOAS and establishes conferences, symposia and master-classes in London and Southeast Asia.

SAAAP is designed to strengthen SOAS' research expertise and existing institutional links to create a vibrant network linking the art, archaeology and heritage organisations in the Southeast Asian region.

This edition of the SAAAP Newsletter has been edited by Peter Sharrock (SAAAP Outreach manager) and Chloe Osborne (SAAAP Programme Administrator). If you would like to be involved in the production of future editions of the Newsletter, or if you would like to report on any news from the region or any SAAAP-related activity you've been a part of, please do let us know – we'd be delighted to hear from you! Please contact Chloe Osborne at co20@soas.ac.uk



Note from the Chair: Dr Tamsyn Barton

It's a pleasure to introduce the sixth edition of the SAAAP Newsletter, which covers an extensive array of the Programme's activities over the summer months and looks ahead to new projects for the coming academic year. As the fifth year of the Programme begins, and SAAAP welcomes a new cohort of incoming Alphawood Scholars, it seems appropriate that this edition of the newsletter is built on the theme of 'New Beginnings'. Over the past year, SAAAP has continued to establish its presence amongst the global Southeast Asian Art and Archaeology community, and our increasingly connected alumni network are seeing ever more successful collaborations and contributions into cutting-edge research in the field. With two returning Alphawood Scholars taking up awards to study for a PhD, the fruits of the Scholarship programme have truly begun to show and we are very excited to see the development of these outstanding Scholars. Yet whilst we are delighted to welcome back these Scholars,

it is with some sadness as well as pride that we say goodbye to our first graduating PhD Scholar Heidi Tan, who has recently submitted her Doctoral thesis and will be qualifying over the next few months. Heidi and our new Scholar Sokha Seang have kindly written a piece each for this issue of the newsletter reflecting on their time (both past and future) at SOAS.

Our Scholars, Alumni and academic staff have been involved with a huge number of SAAAP -sponsored projects and occasions both in-region and out of SOAS, and this edition reports on a number of these. Dr Ashley Thompson has been involved with the planning and delivery of numerous events in London and Bangkok, and she provides an update here on the timetable for the next round of SAAAP talks and workshops with the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies. Editor Dr Peter D. Sharrock reports on the latest Singapore Summer Programme which took place in July, and reflects on the Asian Civilisations Museum exhibition on 'Angkor: Exploring Cambodia's Sacred City' which was displayed from April until July. Alphawood alumna and SOAS PhD Scholar Udomluck Hoontrakul writes about SOAS's panel on 'Decolonising Southeast Asia's Past' at the recent Thammasat University Annual Conference, and Lia Genovese reviews the recently published 'Engaging Asia: Essays on Laos and Beyond in Honour of Martin Stuart-Fox'.

As Chair of SAAAP, it is wonderful to see the work the Programme has done over the past year, summarised in this edition by SAAAP Administrator Chloe Osborne. I look with anticipation to the year ahead with high hopes for the continued success and achievements of the Programme.

Tamsyn Barton is Chair of the Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme Board and a Trustee of SOAS University of London.

The Alphawood Scholarships at SOAS

Each September, we must say goodbye to our outgoing group of dedicated and inspiring Alphawood Scholars as they graduate from their programmes of study. We are extremely proud of the dedication and positive spirit that they have shown, and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate each and every one of them on their success so far. We are confident that they will go on to even greater achievements when they return home, and we look forward keenly to hear about their future progress!



Graduating Alphawood Scholars (2017/18)

Sanda Linn (Myanmar; Diploma), **Kyaw Minn Htin** (Myanmar; Diploma), **Christa Hardjasaputra** (Indonesia; Diploma), **Sopheara Chap** (Cambodia; Diploma), **Hninn Wut Yee Latt** (Myanmar; Diploma), **Thi Tu Anh Nguyen** (Vietnam; Diploma), **Vuthyneath Khut** (Cambodia; Diploma), **Akphivath Vitou** (Cambodia; Diploma), **Van Tho Nguyen** (Vietnam; Diploma), **Chanraksmei Muong** (Cambodia; MA), **Rotha Chy** (Cambodia; MA), **Thon Tho** (Cambodia; MA), **Conan Cheong** (Singapore; MA), **Selina Chong** (Singapore; MA), **Ye Myat Lwin** (Myanmar; MA), **Nachanok Wongkhaluang** (Thailand; MA), **Kittikhun Janyaem** (Thailand; MA), **Karuna Srikureja** (Thailand; MA), **Praphaphan Chuenkaek** (Thailand; MA), **Chonthicha Khunthong** (Thailand; MA), **Liliek Suhardjono** (Indonesia; MA)

Reflecting on the past academic year: Highlights from 2017-2018

Chloe Osborne looks back on the SAAAP highlights of the past academic year

Over the past year, SAAAP has seen the realisation of a great number of projects, publications and events, some of which had been in the works since the conception of the programme in 2013. After a long period of honing the plans for a co-published series on Southeast Asian Art and Archaeology with NUS Press, the Research & Publications Sub-board led by Professor Ashley Thompson were able to finalise the design and contracts for the project, as well as announce the Editorial Board in May 2018. This vital and exciting project will play a critical role in publishing new research over the coming years, and SAAAP are delighted to be able to support such a worthwhile initiative. Elsewhere on the research front, the official launch of *Pratu*, the postgraduate journal of Buddhist and Hindu Art, Architecture and Archaeology of Ancient to Premodern Southeast Asia, which was initiated and is being run by a group of Alphawood and SOAS PhD candidates, was a momentous development, and we look forward with anticipation to the first issue of the journal which is due to publish next year.



SOAS Director Valerie Amos and
'Vibrancy in Stone' editor Vo Van
Thang at the catalogue launch,
January 2018

This year has also seen the publication of the Da Nang Museum of Cham Sculpture catalogue 'Vibrancy in Stone'. The catalogue marks the centenary of the Museum and is the first catalogue produced by the Museum itself of its world-leading collection. The catalogue brings together the work of the leading international and local scholars and SOAS alumni, and is edited by Museum Director Vo Van Thang, leading Vietnamese art historian Tran Ky Phuong and Peter Sharrock of SOAS. The next SAAAP catalogue project was launched in the summer with the first meeting of the editorial board at the Museum of Vietnamese History in Ho Chi Minh City.

SAAAP has been honoured to support a great number of individual research projects throughout the year, including trips for academics and students at SOAS and beyond, as well as attendance for Alphawood alumni at conferences, notably at the 7th Southeast Asian Studies Symposium 2018 in Indonesia, the IPPA 2018 conference in Hué and the Thammasat University Conference. Other supported projects include ongoing support for the E. Moore Anthropology Library Annex and collection at Yangon University Campus, Myanmar,

where SAAAP In-Region liaison Professor Emerita Elizabeth Moore has set-up a hub for students and academics to meet and network.

Continuing on from previous years, 2017-2018 saw the third annual Summer Programme take place in Singapore, led by SAAAP's Dr Peter Sharrock and co-sponsored this year by the Freer|Sackler Galleries Washington, the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) Singapore and the Shaw Foundation Alumni House of the National Museum of Singapore (NUS). The Programme presented research into the ancient

Buddhist and Hindu art collections of the museums of Southeast Asia, as well as the evolving role of museums in society. The Programmes are attracting growing attention from institutions and scholars of the region and a two-volume proceedings book is under preparation from papers given at the first two events.

Elsewhere, the annual Master's trip to Paris took place over the Easter holiday with the addition this year of two nights in Amsterdam to explore the Tropenmuseum and Volkenkunde Museum's extensive array of Indonesian Buddhist and Hindu art. The trip was expertly led as in previous years by Professor Ashley Thompson, and the addition of Amsterdam was thought to be a real success by students and staff.

Last year saw the launch of the SAAAP Postgraduate Internship Scheme, and two of our graduating Master's students were offered the opportunity to undertake an internship with the Royal Asiatic Society over a 6 week span. The Scholars gained valuable experience in archiving and cataloguing, and the scheme will continue this year with two further placements including one with the British Museum. Finally, SAAAP were very pleased to sponsor a number of fascinating talks and workshops last year



Alphawood interns Pawinna Phetluan and Aria Danaparamita at the Royal Asiatic Society during their SAAAP sponsored work placements in 2017

with the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies at SOAS, including 'Archaeology at a Crossroads: New Approaches to Understanding Early Southeast Asian Polities' and 'The Multiple Manifestations of Hindu-Buddhist Gods: Angkor and the Dynamics of Art History'. We look forward to announcing a further programme of events later in the year, and in the meantime details can be found online at www.soas.ac.uk/cseas/

Chloe Osborne is SAAAP Administrator.

An interview with Sokha Seang

SAAAP welcomes our incoming Alphawood PhD Scholar and asks about his future studies and hopes for his time at SOAS

Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about your academic and professional background?

Sokha: “My main academic interest has always been in the ancient inscriptions of Southeast Asia with special focus on old Khmer inscriptions. At previous schools, my academic tasks always centred on Khmer epigraphy, including assignments, term papers, and dissertation. At work, I have been involved for more than a decade in a variety of projects on the epigraphy of Southeast Asia.”

In my leisure time, nothing is more enjoyable than to read and try to decipher newly discovered inscriptions brought to me by colleagues and friends. Recently, I have also started working on projects related to heritage and art at the National Museum of Cambodia, and have taught undergraduate students on subjects related to art and history of Cambodia and Southeast Asia at the Royal University of Fine Arts.”



Sokha Seang on campus at SOAS

What is the focus of your PhD research at SOAS?

Sokha: “For my PhD thesis, I will extend the research from my SOAS MA dissertation on Angkorian bureaucracy and temples. I will examine in greater detail the aristocrats of Angkor as a whole. The title of my proposed research is ‘Angkorian Administration from 9th to 12th Centuries: A Study of Aristocrats and Their Temples Based on the Conjunction of Epigraphic, Archaeological, Architectural, and Artistic Evidence’. The purpose is to shed more light on Angkorian bureaucracy, especially non-royal, which is currently under-studied, as more attention has generally been given to monarchies and important temples at Angkor.”

Why have you chosen SOAS to undertake your PhD, and what do you hope to get out of studying here?

Sokha: “I believe that the PhD programme at SOAS will provide me with the invaluable experience, skills, knowledge, and challenges that I need to achieve my goals. The first is my academic goal: since my undergraduate days, I have always dreamed of becoming a professor in the field of Southeast Asian epigraphy. I aim to write books to enable better education about these ancient languages, especially a workbook for beginners, as I have experienced myself how difficult it can be to attain competence in an epigraphic tradition. For the future, my current job at the National Museum will allow me to continue working on heritage matters in Cambodia. I wish some day to work on this subject at the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts at a higher level. Earning a PhD from SOAS will allow me to realise both of these goals.”

Reflections from SAAAP's First Outgoing PhD Scholar

Heidi Tan looks back on her time as an Alphawood Scholar at SOAS

Having just bound and submitted my thesis to the Doctoral School two days ago, my thoughts turn to the many friends and colleagues who have contributed to bring the research to fruition, not least Alphawood scholars who have shared their thoughts and experiences or helped to translate documents brought back from fieldwork in Myanmar. Although the life of a doctoral research student can sometimes feel quite lonely, my experience was punctuated by periods of collective thinking and discussion, whether formally through classes or workshops or simply through a sharing session around cups of tea in the dayroom of Paul Robeson House. To be able to engage with other students from Southeast Asia, to seek their thoughts on my field of study, was both reassuring and a rare opportunity that could only have emerged under through this unique programme at SOAS supported by the Alphawood Foundation. In addition to our community in London which reconfigured itself with each new intake, the growing alumni corresponded with feedback from afar.

The study concerns the pagoda museum in Myanmar and how it underwent changes during the period 2013 to 2016. An understudied aspect of comparative museology, the pagoda museum offers possibilities for understanding museums as places for local communities to create meaningful places within sacred spaces. As a number of Alphawood scholars work for national museums, the topic offers a salient reminder of the value of local knowledge to other more hegemonic forms of museum-making. I would like to take this opportunity to record my gratitude to Myanmar colleagues who took part in fieldwork interviews whose work is the subject of this study.

I would also like to thank also those who were vital to the academic endeavour – Louise Tythacott for her thoughtful guidance as thesis supervisor and for creating moments within her curriculum for me to share fieldwork observations with postgraduate students on the courses Curating Cultures and Collecting and Curating Buddhist Art in the Museum; thesis committee members Stacey Pierson and Christian Luczanits for their encouraging feedback and an invitation to contribute to the annual conference of the UK



Heidi Tan handing over her Doctoral thesis to Kiraz Aslan at the SOAS Doctoral School on the 13th September, 2018.

Association of Buddhist Studies (UKABS); and Ashley Thompson for opportunities to present at the annual seminar programme organised by the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies. I thank Elizabeth Moore for her encouragement to pursue a career in Southeast Asian art history since we first met in the mid-90s and her continued support throughout this time and Peter Sharrock who brought the Alphawood scholarship programme to my attention.

And finally I thank Simone Green, Liam Roberts and Chloe Osborne for their attentive development of the Southeast Asian Academic Art programme which is contributing profoundly to the lives of its recipients. Through SAAAP, the Alphawood Foundation has been key not only to embarking on the PhD but also to several periods of fieldwork in Myanmar, the United States and Germany, whilst a Santander Mobility award and the SOAS Doctoral School provided additional support for fieldwork and participation at the American Council for South Asian Art conference at Harvard University in 2017.

Heidi Tan is the first Alphawood PhD Scholar to complete her studies in History of Art and Archaeology of Southeast Asia.

A note from the outgoing SAAAP Newsletter Student Editor

Selina Chong looks back on her time as an Alphawood Scholar at SOAS

Time works in a strange way – we bury our noses in the SOAS library in stretches that can feel interminable, yet in a flash, we’re staring at the end of our sojourn in London. This present moment is a bittersweet one. As I remember the wonderful memories forged with new friends, I also rue the passing of a season.

I recall the exhilaration of receiving an email from Liam notifying me I had been awarded an Alphawood scholarship. Throughout our time in SOAS, both Liam and Chloe have been anchors, providing us tremendous support and friendship – thank you both. I cherish the joy I felt walking out of every single class I attended, my heart and brain full. To all my teachers, I am deeply grateful. And of course, in London, we have access to some of the best museums and coffee in the world. To all my friends, I am thankful for the moments we shared exploring, musing, collaborating, learning, eating, chatting, connecting.



SOAS has held – and will always hold – a special place in my heart. It is where I’ve shared laughs with like-minded individuals from all corners of the earth, agonised over readings and assignments, and grown in unexpected ways. The school is but a place; I take heart in the connections I’ve made in SOAS, which I’m sure will transcend our brief stop in this shared space.

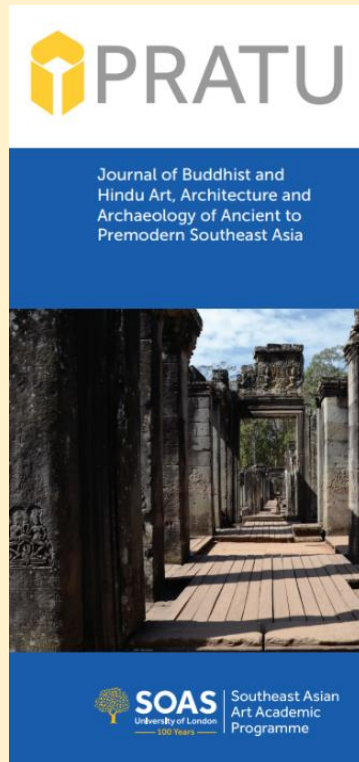
Post-dinner joy in Paris!
(l-r Karuna Srikureja, Saubin Yap, Bryan Angelo, Liliek Suhardjono, Chanraksmei Muong, Brian Lee, Chia-Han Chou, Conan Cheong and Selina Chong)

Selina Chong has just completed her studies at SOAS as an Alphawood Scholar in the MA History of Art and Archaeology programme

Approved projects

Pratu welcomes new submissions and expressions of interest

The new *Pratu* journal sent out a call for papers in June 2018 and has since received several articles from scholars whose work speaks to the journal's remit of ancient to premodern Buddhist and Hindu visual and material culture of Southeast Asia. The articles submitted to date cover the diverse cultures



and regions of Southeast Asia. They are now in various stages of peer review for the inaugural issue in January 2019. This includes articles on early Vietnamese archaeology (in Vietnamese), Hindu-Buddhist art, specifically the crowned Buddha images in Thailand, archaeological research on the Khmer civilisation in Cambodia, Buddhist art – Jataka scenes - in Java and an investigation of pre-Pagan art in Burma.

A flyer has been printed and circulated at international conferences including the LATU conference held at the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University (Thailand) between 13th-14th September and at the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association (IPPA) conference in Hue, Vietnam from the 23rd to 28th September.

The journal's editorial team welcomes expressions of interest and new submissions on an ongoing basis and updates on submission deadlines will be advertised throughout the year.

Pratu Journal Editorial Team

Third annual SAAAP Summer Programme: Singapore 1-7 July 2018

Peter D. Sharrock reports on this year's programme

The 3rd SAAAP week-long Summer Programme this year focused on Southeast Asian museum collections and the major defining museum issues of our time, drawing sponsorship from the celebrated Smithsonian Freer|Sackler Galleries in Washington and the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) in Singapore.



The emergence of Singapore in recent decades as the region's leading centre of innovative and well-funded museums was recounted by ACM Founding Director Dr Kenson Kwok. He explained how his museum structured the gallery displays around the central Southeast Asia galleries to show the depth and variety of Asian cultures contributing historically to the unique identity of Singapore. Dr Kwa Chong Guan, former Director of the National Museum of Singapore, said Singapore inherited a 'house of dead things' in the form of the colonial Raffles Museum filled with the flora, fauna and ethnography of the Malay peninsula and Straits Settlements. What independent Singapore wanted was a living museum where Singaporeans discover the stories of where they come from and who they are today. This new focus on identity was to lead to Kenson Kwok founding the Peranakan Museum, celebrating the lives, arts and tastes of the 'hybrid' culture of the local born Chinese community speaking a creolised Malay inlaid with Hokkien words. This sparked a 'Me too' movement as people across the island, including the Prime Minister, identified themselves as being Peranakan.

ACM curator Clement Onn represented the new direction the museum is now taking – moving away from telling the story of Singapore. His lecture included the permanent display of a Tang Chinese shipwreck, bought whole and somewhat controversially, by the government. Along with the 25-ton bulk cargo of 70,000 relatively inexpensive bowls, the vessel carried an octagonal pure gold wine cup – the largest known example from the Tang dynasty.

'Why would a cargo ship bound for Java and the Middle East carry such precious gold objects? Could they have been gifts for foreign rulers? Or was the indebted Tang government forced to sell gold and silver to foreign merchants, who desired sophisticated Chinese objects?' he asked.



Why the Singapore state purchased a Tang cargo that sailed in the 9th century when Singapore was hardly on a map remains a hotly debated question in the intellectually vibrant island city.

SAAAP's contribution to museums in the region was illustrated by Alphawood scholar Duyen Nguyen, who spoke about collaborative catalogues like the recent *Vibrancy in Stone* publication on the collection and history of her own Da Nang Museum of Cham Sculpture. Duyen was also invited to deliver an evening lecture on this catalogue to a large audience, including Alphawood President Fred Eychaner, in the ACM auditorium.

Christina Kreps from Denver showed another form of collaboration in a 'bottom-up, community and culture-based approach' to folk museums in Thai villages that combines local knowledge, assets and resources with external professional museological technologies and practices.

Art object repatriations from western museums was another major subject, addressed, among others, by Alphawood MA alumnus (and new Alphawood PhD scholar) Seang Sokha from the Cambodian National Museum, Panggah Ardiyansyah from Borobudur Conservation and Melody Rod-ari from the US Loyola Marymount University, who was personally involved in the Norton Simon Museum return to Cambodia of a large 10th century Koh Ker statue of Bhima. Melody's hard-hitting intervention entitled 'Who owns the past, and who should own the future?' drilled into what she called the 'systematic problems related to Euro/American colonial and imperial enterprises related to cultural heritage' and looked at innovative new loans of objects from 'source' country museums to museums like Cleveland and Denver who returned unprovenanced artworks.



ACM Senior Curator Stephen Murphy talked about the large ACM exhibition 'Angkor: exploring Cambodia's Sacred City' organised in partnership with the Musée Guimet, Paris. Emma Stein, curator from co-sponsor Freer|Sackler, discussed her work on relating artworks to the landscapes in which they were created.

Peter D. Sharrock is SAAAP Outreach and Scholarships Sub-board member.

SAAAP Events in London

SAAAP Research series at SOAS's Centre for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) 2018-2019

Ashley Thompson introduces this year's lecture plans

I am happy to welcome PhD candidates Udomluck Hoontrakul and Heidi Tan to join me this year in hosting the SAAAP Research series at SOAS's Centre of Southeast Asian Studies. Setting ourselves the goal of highlighting work which speaks to the experience and interests of our large research student community while also broadening horizons, we have devised a Term 1 line-up bringing together archaeologists and art historians with a diversity of regional, topical and methodological interests. This includes talks by Benjamin Wreyford on the 'foreigner' in early Southeast Asian art; Phacharaphorn Phanomvan on land usage and trade in 3rd-10th c. mainland Southeast Asia; and Cristina Castillo on recent archeobotanical work in the region. We look forward also to hearing from art historian Claudine Bautze-Picron and archaeologist Heng Piphall – among others in the 2019 component of this year's series which is still under development. Watch this space!

To find out more and to register for upcoming events, see the SAAAP Facebook and Twitter pages and the CSEAS website, at <https://www.soas.ac.uk/cseas/events/>

From the Region

Updates from the Region

SAAAP In-Region correspondent Elizabeth Moore updates on regional activities from Yangon, Myanmar

The Alphawood Myanmar Alumni group has grown to ten as of August 2018, and we're pleased to be able to report on updates from them all:

1. **Hninn Wut Yee Latt** successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Arts at SOAS and is back at Dagon University. She is also preparing her paper on the Myanmar *Chinthe* for her presentation at the end of September IPPA conference in Hué ([visit https://sites.google.com/site/ippasecretariat/headline2/panel-sessions/panel-s25](https://sites.google.com/site/ippasecretariat/headline2/panel-sessions/panel-s25))
2. **Kyaw Minn Htin** successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Arts at SOAS and is now Expert Advisor for two committees: the Nomination Dossier preparation of the UNESCO World Heritage for Mrauk-U, and the UNESCO Memory of the World (MOW) for the Anandacandra pillar inscription. He is also serving on the Academic Committee for the 3rd SEAMEO SPAFA 3rd International Conference in June 2019.

3. **Sandar Linn** successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Arts at SOAS and has moved to Mandalay University where she joins the Department of Archaeology as Assistant Professor.
4. **Saw Tun Lin** has been surveying ceramic production sites in preparation for his doctoral work at SOAS. He revised Don Hein's Ceramic Classification System into a Myanmar excel sheet version for recording his material. His central Myanmar survey was focused on surface finds at settlement sites, finding some shards that matched those produced in Lower Myanmar from the 15-17th century. At other sites like Innwa, the capital from the 14th to 16th century and the 18th century so that exposed materials tended to be the second period.
5. **Sulatt Win** attended the SOAS-ACM Museums Workshop, Singapore in July.
6. **Swe Zin Myint** has been surveying at the ancient Pyu city of Maingmaw in preparation for her presentation at IPPA conference in Hué in September 2018.
7. **Thet Mon Htoo** has been surveying and drawing monasteries around Mandalay for her presentation at the IPPA conference this year as well.
8. **Thu Ya Aung** has been teaching Cultural Heritage Management to Mandalay Distance University Teachers Union. He has also put established a webpage for the Myanmar Archaeology Association (visit <http://www.myanarch.org/>)
9. **Win Myat Aung** convened the 'Forum on Kaleidoscopic Myanmar' conference at SEAMEO CHAT Yangon in July, and represented CHAT at 'The First SEAMEO Centres Policy Research Network Task Force Meeting' in Bangkok during February
10. **Yamin Htay** gave a paper on Bagan Conservation at the *Architecture for the Future* conference held by the Association of Myanmar Architects at the National Theatre, Yangon and now is completing her civil service training before joining the Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Religious and Cultural Affairs in September



Yamin Htay delivering paper on Bagan conservation at the *Architecture for the Future* conference held by the Association of Myanmar Architects at the National Theatre, Yangon.



Dr Kyaw Minn Htin (2nd from right) at meeting for the Mrauk-U Nomination Dossier for the UNESCO World Heritage Committee

At the E. Moore Collection Anthropology Department Library, Yangon University our Facebook Membership has grown to 464.

- Teachers from the Departments of Anthropology and Archaeology have been sending students from the new B.A., M.A. and PhD cohorts to use the library.
- Khin Ma Ma Mu, Nan Kyi Kyi Khaing and Ngwe Ngwe Soe have established a 'Book Fund' to support purchase of new books published in Myanmar, and several teachers have donated a copy of their doctoral dissertations.

- Nay Myo, the Library Manager has almost finished filing A-Z the valuable collection of important articles that are not available online. He is also in the final stages of discussion and layout to publish the fourteen online articles of the *Proceedings of the Bagan Metropolis Conference* held in Yangon and Bagan last year (<https://www.soas.ac.uk/news/newsitem122992.html>)



Su Latt Win with Dr Peter Sharrock and fellow Alphawood Alumni, Suppawan Nongnut in Singapore



Dr Sanda Linn at the Department of Archaeology, Mandalay University



Saw Tun Lin and colleague Dr Pyiet Phyo Kyaw with monastic ceramic collection at Hlegu, east of Yangon

Panel 25 – IPPA Conference Hué New Research on Myanmar Art and Archaeology

[Elizabeth H. Moore](#)¹ and [Baptiste Pradier](#)²

¹SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), University of London

²University of Paris Nanterre

The last few years have seen an increase in cutting edge investigation of Myanmar's past, led by the development of new research questions on prehistoric and historic eras. This session will bring together researchers working on all aspects and periods of Myanmar's past with innovative and multidisciplinary approaches to address socio-cultural and economic dimensions of Myanmar's past. The panel welcomes paper proposals on past Myanmar cultures to discuss and illustrate the current dynamic of research in this country and its contribution within regional and global frameworks.

BLOCK 1

[Developments in the Late Prehistory of Upper-Central Myanmar Since 2014](#)

T.O. Pryce

[The Hard Stone Ornament in Late Prehistoric Central Myanmar, Late 2nd to Early/Mid 1st Millennium BC](#)

Cloé Gerjon, Yoshiyuki Iizuka, Bérénice Bellina, and T.O. Pryce

[Two Millennia of Burial Practice, as Observed at Cemetery HL29 at Halin, Mandalay Region, Central Myanmar](#)

Baptiste Pradier, Than Thike, Tun Tun Aye, Tin Tin Win, Frédérique Valentin, T.O. Pryce, and Kinga Alina Langowska

[Prehistoric Medical Intervention in Myanmar: A Bioarchaeology of Care Approach](#)

Anna Willis, Baptiste Pradier, Tin Tin Win, Aye Aye Mar and T.O. Pryce

BLOCK 2

[Intertwined Histories, Intertwined Regions: The Art of Arakan and Banga](#)

Kyaw Minn Htin and Ye Myat Lwin

[Research on Pottery from the Palace Sites, Bagan](#)

John Miksic, Goh Geok Yian, Daw Baby

[A Study of Secret Entresols Discovered at Some Bagan Temples](#)

Sanda Linn

[Mapping Wider Bagan](#)

Elizabeth Moore

[Is the Myanmar Chinthe a Lion? Buddhist Art of the 11th-13th Century](#)

Hninn Wut Yee Latt

BLOCK 3

[Maingmaw: Trade and Pyu Cities](#)

Swe Zin Myint

[Silver Bowls from Sri Kstera: Observations on Interactions Between the Pyu and Tang Dynasty China](#)

Stephen Murphy

[Water, Ritual, and Prosperity at the Classical Capital of Bagan, Myanmar \(11th to 14th Centuries CE\): Preliminary Exploration of the Tuyin-Thetso “Water Mountain” and the Nat Yekan Sacred Water Tank](#)

Gyles Iannone, Pyiet Phyo Kyaw, Scott Macrae, Nyien Chan Soe, and Saw Tun Lynn

[State Buddhism and Bagan Art](#)

Win Myat Aung

BLOCK 4

[The Influence of Islamic Art on the Buddhist Decorative Glazed Tiles and Ceramics at Mrauk U](#)

Saw Tun Lin

[Technical Study of Regional Ceramics of Myanmar](#)

Nick Kivi and Pamela Vandiver

[Ancient Monasteries in Mandalay](#)

Thet Mon Htoo

[Zaykabar Museum of Ancient Buddhist Art](#)

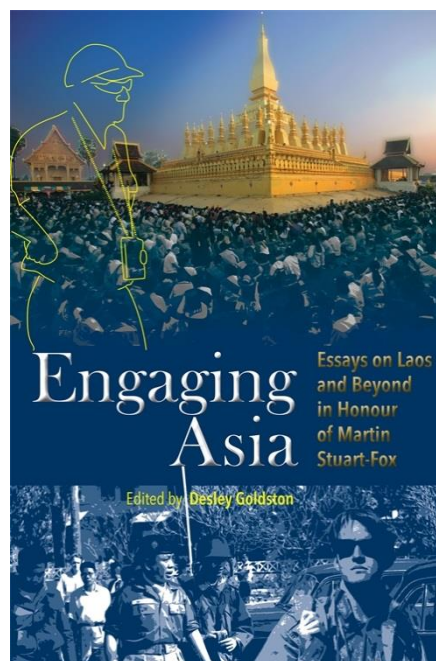
Sulatt Win

Elizabeth H. Moore is SAAAP Outreach Sub-board member, Scholarships Sub-board member and In-region liaison.

Book review: 'Engaging Asia: Essays on Laos and Beyond in Honour of Martin Stuart-Fox'

by Lia Genovese

This volume of essays is dedicated to Martin Stuart-Fox, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Queensland, Australia, and former United Press International correspondent in Vietnam. He is the author of several books on Laos, including *Historical Dictionary of Laos* (1992, 2001, 2008), *A History of Laos* (1997), *The Lao Kingdom of Lan Xang* (1998), *A short history of China and Southeast Asia* (2003), *Naga cities of the Mekong: A guide to the temples, legends and history of Laos* (2006), *Festivals of Laos* (2010) and numerous other titles. The 18 essays are arranged in chronological order, from Prehistory and Protohistory to the French colonisation and independence, into the 20th century. The essay by the Lao academics Pheuiphanh and Mayoury Ngaosrivathana discusses the Ayutthaya-Lan Xang frontier from 1357 (first unification of Laos by King Fa Ngum into Lan Xang, or "land of a million elephants"), to 1827, surrounding a failed insurrection against the overlord of Siam which resulted in the gruesome death of the Lao King Anou Vong in Bangkok. In the Prehistory section is also included an essay by SOAS Alumna Lia Genovese, detailing the events and personages which in 1929 led the École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) to embrace Prehistory as a branch of study in Indochina. Essays for the second half of the 20th century deal with the 1960s and the post-independence struggle between the Pathet Lao (Lao communists) and the Royal Lao Army backed by Gen. Vang Pao's Hmong soldiers and the CIA. Other essays discuss the country's ethno-religious identity, interactions with immediate neighbours and Buddhist meditation theory. The American photojournalist and Vietnam War veteran Steve Northup, a trustee of the Indochina Media Memorial Foundation, contributes a photographic essay. The volume is edited by Dr Desley Goldston, author of a doctoral dissertation on the 1975 revolutionary seizure of power, for which Prof. Martin Stuart-Fox was her supervisor, and is slated for publication a few months before Prof. Stuart-Fox's 80th birthday.



Due for publication in September 2018

Dr Lia Genovese is a SOAS alumna working as an Independent Scholar in Southeast Asia.

Thammasat University Annual Conference – Art History Subpanel in 'Decolonising Southeast Asia's Past'

by Udomluck Hoontrakul

A conference entitled 'Decolonising Southeast Asia's Past' was organised at Thammasat University, Bangkok, by two SOAS PhD candidates and Alphawood alumni as part of the efforts to create a multi-disciplinary, collaborative network of scholars emerging from the Alphawood scholarship programme. The conference, supported by SAAAP and Thammasat Faculty of Liberal Arts, brought together archaeologists, art historians, and historians, many of them Alphawood alumni.

Prof. Ashley Thompson opened the conference with an address on *'Early Theravadin Cambodia: What's in a Name? (De)colonizing Perspectives from Art and Archaeology'*. Conference organiser Pipad Krajaejun, Alphawood MA alumnus and current PhD candidate at SOAS, followed this with a paper entitled *'The Convergence of a National Hero and Buddha Image: The Politics of Creation U-thong Art and Its Relation with Post-Bayon Art'*.

In the afternoon History of Art panel, three Alphawood scholars presented their research. Selina Chong, MA candidate at SOAS, spoke on *'Hindu-Buddhist Art Historiography in Postcolonial Southeast Asia'*; Panggah Ardiyansyah, Alphawood alumnus from the Borobudur conservation in Indonesia, talked on *'Producing Southeast Asia's Past: A Circuit of Ancient Objects in the Colonial Period'*; and Duyen Nguyen, Alphawood Scholar and SOAS PhD candidate, presented her research on *'Champa Sculpture: Issues in Defining and Curating the Style of Tra Kieu'*.

In the last panel of the day, four Alphawood scholars presented their research. Pawinna Phetluan elaborated her work on *'Buddhism in Si Thep during the Dvaravati Period: A Call for New Art Historical Interpretations'*; Karuna Srikureja gave a paper on *'The Construction of Ideal Queenship in Candi Jago'*; Conan Cheong spoke on *'Sovereignty and Procreation in a Pyu Period Visnu Anantasayin Stone Relief from Sriksetra'*, and Rotha Chy presented on *'Female Fertility symbolism: A Reflection on the Art Objects and Ritual Practice in Phum Samrong, Kampong Cham Province, Cambodia'*.

On 14 September, Dr Mandy Sadan of SOAS History Department presented on *'Decolonising the History of the Borderlands of Burma/Myanmar'*. Udomluck Hoontrakul, Alphawood alumna and SOAS PhD candidate presented her research under the title *'In the Mist (Myth) of the Margin: Reconsidering Highland Politics of the 13th-15th Centuries in the Thai-Myanmar Borderland'*.



Keynote speakers - Prof. Ashley Thompson and Dr Mandy Sadan (SOAS); Organisers – Pipad Krajaejun and Udomluck Hoontrakul – PhD candidate SOAS; Convener – Associate Prof. Rasmi Shoocongdej – Silpakorn University; and the conference board committee – Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University (cr. LATU conference)

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Exhibition at Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM): Angkor – Exploring Cambodia's Sacred City

by Peter D Sharrock



Pre-Angkorian 7th-8th century Avalokitesvara from Tan Long, Mekong Delta

Singapore's ACM countered the decolonising tide this year and staged a lavish exhibition of more than 100 artworks loaned by the Musée Guimet, Paris. It records and celebrates the way France fell in love with the art and architecture its archaeologists began discovering in the forests of Cambodia in the late 19th century. The exhibition took off from, and embellished, a 2014 exhibition in the Guimet on the work of the Louis Delaporte, naval officer, explorer, archaeologist, collector and remarkable artist. His superb watercolours stripped the trees and creepers from the temple ruins and fired the imagination of Europe with the huge, carved mediaeval stone temple complexes of Angkor. The first 130 pages of the sumptuous catalogue elaborate on France's re-discovery and eventual celebration in imperial exhibitions of the wholly unexpected art and architectural treasures it found in its new protectorate. Some pages are devoted to the recent scientific re-scaling of Angkor using Lidar aerial sensing technology -- showing it to be the largest city on earth outside China in the 12th century and covering an area the size of Los Angeles. But the emphasis of the exhibition is on the 19th century with Delaporte's splendid paintings projected onto the walls of the galleries and setting the scene. These even include scenes of statues being carried down rivers on rafts on their way to Parisian collections. The Guimet's generosity extended to loaning some of its most stunning Khmer statues, like the 10th century, 4-faced Hindu god Brahma from the Koh Ker temple complex northeast of Angkor, and the 12th century naga-enthroned Buddha from Preah Khan temple at Kompong Svay east of Angkor. ACM Director Kennie Ting notes in his Foreword that 'quite a few of the pieces featured in the exhibition are leaving France for the first time.' Mr Ting says the ACM's mission 'is to explore encounters and connections between East and West from an Asian perspective' but the perspective in this event is decidedly European.



12th century Naga-enthroned Buddha, Kompong Svay



Brahma, Koh Ker

Peter D. Sharrock is SAAAP Outreach and Scholarships Sub-board member.

‘Roads Taken and Not Taken in the Work of Michael Vickery (1931-2017)’

Lia Genovese reports on Professor Ashley Thompson’s Siam Society lecture, Thursday 20th September

On Thursday 20 September 2018, Prof. Ashley Thompson, Hiram W. Woodward Chair in Southeast Asian Art, SOAS University of London, delivered a talk at the Siam Society in Bangkok upon the invitation of Dr. Lia Genovese, SOAS Alumna. Prof. Thompson’s lecture dealt with the life and career of the American historian and Khmer scholar Dr. Michael Vickery, who passed away in Battambang, Cambodia, in June 2017, aged 86.

Vickery was a giant of Southeast Asian scholarship, fluent in a dozen languages and a prolific writer. Born in April 1931 in Billings, Montana, into a family of modest means, in 1977 Michael obtained a doctorate from Yale University, with a thesis and analytical comparison of the Thai and Cambodian Royal Chronicles. He sought to fill the gap in our knowledge of Cambodia’s 15th century history, devoid of inscriptions and extant historical sources, with direct consequences for the “history of the polity for the 15th century ... even for such details as titles and names of kings and their approximate dates”.

As well as teaching English in his early career, Vickery's writing and lecturing was concerned with Cambodia's pre-Angkor period and the social structures of ancient Cambodia. A fierce promoter of shared histories, he challenged biases of histories rooted in 20th-century geo-political academic enclaves, pitting Thai against Khmer.

Vickery was a controversial figure who attracted admiration for his fierce intellect but also disdain for his blunt approach to academic debate. Early on in his life, he broke away "from the pack" to maintain a ferociously independent stance. Spending much of his time between Thailand and Cambodia, he showed contempt for material comforts, relying on the support of friends and sympathisers in his later years.



In her talk at the Siam Society, Dr. Thompson attested to Vickery's exceptional and sustained commitment to revising histories of Southeast Asia – "those established by his scholarly predecessors and contemporaries, as well as his own". As a point of departure, her talk used as a base one of Vickery's last revisitations, a yet-to-be published collection of revised essays, the bulk of which first appeared in the Journal of the Siam Society. Comprising work spanning more than four decades, the volume reveals the construction of a steadfast vision of the shared history of Siam and in the wake of the Angkorian empire.

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The SAAAP Newsletter is published three times annually, with contributions from across the SAAAP Community – Alphawood Scholars and alumni, SOAS academics and key international project partners. The Newsletter is edited by Dr Peter Sharrock and Chloe Osborne. We also welcome the engagement of guest editors from the Alphawood Scholarship community – if you are currently on award at SOAS and would like to get involved in producing the next edition, we would love to hear from you.

The Newsletter is open for new contributions and submissions from Alphawood Scholars, alumni, academics and partners – if you are interested in having your article featured in the Newsletter (or if you are interested in Student Editing a future edition), please contact Dr Peter Sharrock at ps56@soas.ac.uk.

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