

## Book Review

***50 Years of Archaeology in Southeast Asia: Essays in Honour of Ian Glover***, edited by Bérénice Bellina, Elisabeth A. Bacus, Thomas Oliver Pryce & Jan Wisseman Christie, River Books 2010

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This compact and well illustrated volume celebrates the career of one of Southeast Asia's best known archaeologists, Ian C. Glover. Over the past 50 years he has carried out research on a wide range of topics, periods and regions of Southeast Asia, including East Timor (for his doctoral research), Vietnam (at the Cham site of Tra Kieu) and Central Thailand (at the Iron Age site of Ban Don Ta Phet). After being based initially at the Australian National University in Canberra, he moved to the Institute of Archaeology at the University of London in 1970. From here he became not only one of the main researchers on Southeast Asian archaeology, but perhaps more importantly one of the leading teachers of this sometimes neglected subject area in the discipline of archaeology. The proof of Ian's teaching prowess can be seen in the make-up of this book with many of the contributors being his former students.

The book is divided into five parts, which reflects both Ian Glover's research interests and those of his students who have built and developed further our knowledge of these areas. Part I is an overview of Ian's work by David Bulbeck and Charles Higham. Part II takes us back to Ian's earliest research interests, that is, hunter-gatherer societies with chapters from Rasmi Shoocongdej, Ryan Rabbett and Graeme Barker, and Nuno Vasco Oliveira providing a good overview of this subject

matter. Part III looks at an area in which Ian focused most of his research on, that is, the origins of complex societies and early states. Chapters in this section focus on Ban Don Ta Phet in Thailand and Tra Kieu in Vietnam as well as contributions from Island Southeast Asia. Students and researchers of Southeast Asian archaeology and history should find this section useful as it provides a good example of how archaeologists have attempted to research and find answers to questions regarding social complexity and early state formation in a Southeast Asian context.

Part IV, “Craft production and exchange” explores issues of technology and production in Southeast Asia. Hsiao-Chun Hung and Peter Bellwood’s article highlights some interesting issues in regard to the extent of trade networks after 500 BCE while Srinivassan’s paper provides a welcome ethnographic component in her attempts to explain high-tin bronze production in India. High-tin bronze bowls were one of the most important finds from Ian Glover’s Ban Don Ta Phet excavations. Other chapters in this section, while significant, may prove too technical in some aspects to readers who are not experts in these fields and the editors could perhaps have asked the contributors to have pitched them at a somewhat more accessible level. Part V “Colonialism and Archaeology” while containing two thought-provoking essays on the subject, unfortunately feels like a somewhat token gesture due to its brevity. This section really needed at least two more chapters to do this important area of archaeology the justice it deserves. The editors could have reduced Part III from eight chapters to six or perhaps five and increased Part V to four or five. This would have given the volume as a whole a more balanced feel while allowing for a more in depth discussion of the effects and role of non-Southeast Asian archaeologists working in this region in both a colonial and post colonial context.

This book should be of use to students and researchers of not only Southeast Asia archaeology, but its chapters, particularly those on technical subjects (such as Castillo and Fuller’s contribution on archaeobotany), should provide useful case-studies for archaeology at large. River Books is to be complimented for its design and production

values resulting in the book not only being academically rigorous, but also visually appealing.

*50 Years of Archaeology in Southeast Asia: Essays in Honour of Ian Glover* is a significant and important addition to not only the archaeological literature of Southeast Asia, but to the discipline of archaeology at large and is a fitting tribute to the career of Ian Glover.