

Department of History, National University of Singapore

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Author(s): David J. Welch and Judith R. McNeill

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Archaeological Investigations of Pattani History

DAVID J. WELCH and
JUDITH R. McNEILL

INTRODUCTION

Archaeological research has produced evidence that confirms historical accounts of the Pattani River Basin, the location of an important trading port, but that raises questions about previous interpretations of these accounts. Investigations at the Yarang complex, a group of moated sites, indicate that this complex includes an early historic Buddhist ceremonial centre and a later Malay fortification, but cast doubt on the hypothesis that this was the early trade centre called Langkasuka. Survey of the Kerisik complex, the location of the late historic port city of Patani, provides archaeological identification of places mentioned in the *Hikayat Patani* and demonstrates the complexity of this important Islamic trading port and the extent of the city's trade.

A SUMMARY OF PATTANI HISTORY

Although today simply an important fishing port on the east coast of southern Thailand, Pattani was one of the major maritime trading ports in Southeast Asia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Three factors were of primary importance in determining Pattani's historical role. First, the Pattani area produced gold, tin, and forest products particularly valued by the Chinese, especially aromatic resinous woods: aloeswood, Barus camphor, lakawood, and ebony. Secondly, from Pattani two routes provided access to the west peninsular coast, one west through Saba Yoi and down the Kedah River and one up the Pattani River, across the mountains, and down the Muda or the Perak River. Third and most importantly, Pattani, with its bay protected by Pattani Cape, provided one of the best harbours on the east coast of the Malay peninsula, a coast on which safe anchorages are uncommon.¹

This paper is a revised version of the paper presented at the Tenth Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia in October 1986. The original conference paper has been amended to incorporate relevant results of fieldwork conducted in 1987. A Fulbright fellowship administered by the Thailand-U.S. Educational Foundation funded the position of archaeological consultant at the Center for Southern Thailand Studies. The second season of fieldwork was supported by a grant from the Esso-Standard (Thailand) Company, Ltd. The authors gratefully acknowledge the support of Center director Professor Praphon Ruangnarong and the assistance of Center staff archaeologist Mr. Sawang Lertrit, other participating members of the staff, field assistant Ms. Nanthiya Noosorn, and Fine Arts Department archaeologists Mr. Pathom Rasitanond and Mr. Graisin Unjaijinta.

¹Roland Bradell, *A Study of Ancient Times in the Malay Peninsula and the Straits of Malacca and Notes on Ancient Times in Malaya*, JMBRAS Reprint No. 7 (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1980), pp. 103, 416; A. Teeuw and David K. Wyatt, *Hikayat Patani, The Story of Patani* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985), pp. 1–2; Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1961), p. 98.

Beginning in the sixteenth century Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French accounts provide records of trading activities with the Malay port of Patani.² In addition, two local Malay language documents provide data on Patani's history. The *Hikayat Patani*, written in the mid-eighteenth century, recounts the history of the two preceding Patani dynasties.³ The *Sejarah Kerajaan Melayu Patani* written about 1949 by Ibrahim Syukri (a pseudonym), drawing largely on the *Hikayat Patani*, as well as other local and foreign sources, is a local history of Patani from its first conversion to Islam.⁴

Based on these accounts, it is clear that Patani flourished as a port for trading textiles, pepper, gold, and foodstuffs. With Aceh and Banten, it provided an alternative trading port to Malacca.⁵ In the early seventeenth century the Dutch, English, and Japanese established factories in Patani. Its rulers sent tribute to Ayutthaya, but were essentially independent of Thai control. In the eighteenth century, as a result of internal conflict and changing trade patterns, Patani declined in importance. Between 1785 and 1832 Rama I and his successors brought Patani firmly under Thai control, dividing the former kingdom into seven districts.

The earliest European and Thai documents refer to this Malay-speaking Islamic kingdom as Patani, but the Chinese Wu-pei-chih chart, printed in 1628 but probably based on Chen Ho's voyages in the early 1400s, calls the Pattani area Lang-hsi-chia. Other Song and Ming dynasty Chinese accounts name the Pattani region Ling-ya-ssi-chia. These accounts refer to the region as a source of lakewood and aloeswood and as a recipient of Chinese porcelains.⁶ Ling-ya-ssi-chia and Lang-hsi-chia, which would be pronounced Long-sai-ka in the Amoy Hokkien dialect, appear to be Chinese equivalents of the Malay Langkasuka, an early Indianized kingdom that appears in Malay chronicles and legends. Langkasuka is also mentioned in the Javanese chronicle *Nagarakrtagama* (A.D. 1365) and in the Tanjore (A.D. 1030) inscription from south India. Arab accounts dating from A.D. 1511 and 1544 place Langkasuka between Songkhla and Kelantan, and thus in the Pattani region.⁷

Sixth and seventh century Chinese records refer to a kingdom called Lang-chia-shu or Lang-ya-hsiu, which most historians also equate with Langkasuka.⁸ However George

²The spelling of local place names is problematic. The current Thai spellings are usually imperfect attempts to represent in Thai the names as spoken in the local Malay dialect. Romanization of the Thai is one step farther removed from the original. On the other hand, official Malay spelling renders these names based on standard Malay pronunciation, but does not take into account local dialect differences. In this paper we have used the official romanization of the Thai spellings for current place names; thus Pattani for the Malay Patani, Pu Yut for Pujud, and Kru Se for Kerisik. However in referring to the former Malay kingdom of Patani and to sites of this kingdom, we have used the conventional Malay spellings, which are those commonly used in the historical texts and histories.

³Teeuw and Wyatt 1970.

⁴Ibrahim Syukri, *History of the Malay Kingdom of Patani*, translated by Conner Bailey and John N. Miksic, Southeast Asia Series No. 68 (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1985).

⁵Teeuw and Wyatt 1970, p. 7.

⁶Bradell 1980, pp. 361–96, 416; Wheatley 1961, pp. 87, 264–65; Feng Xianming, "On the Exports of Chinese Porcelains Prior to the Yuan Dynasty (with Reference to Discoveries of Chinese Potteries and Porcelains in Foreign Countries)", in *SPAFA Final Report: Consultative Workshop on Ceramics of East and Southeast Asia* (Bangkok: SEAMEO, 1981), Appendix 8.

⁷Wheatley 1961, pp. 252–67.

⁸Wheatley, *ibid.*; Bradell 1980, pp. 361–96; George Coedès, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, translated by S. B. Cowring, ed. Walter Vella (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1968), p. 39; H. G. Quaritch Wales, *The Malay Peninsula in Hindu Times* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1976).

Coedès in an early paper, Lawrence Briggs, and Chirayu Rajni Chand considered these early names different from the later Chinese forms which are more clearly versions of Langkasuka.⁹ They placed Lang-chia-shu farther north on the peninsula. However if Lang-chia-shu does refer to the same Pattani kingdom later known as Langkasuka, then its history dates back at least to the early sixth century, when emissaries were sent to the Chinese court.¹⁰ The city of Lang-chia-shu had walls with double gates, towers, and pavilions; the kingdom produced aloeswood and Barus camphor in abundance.¹¹

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Archaeological investigations in the Pattani region have largely consisted of a search for the ancient city of Langkasuka, and the results of these investigations have been interpreted in terms of the belief that the Pattani River Basin was the location of Langkasuka. The focus of attention has been on the Yarang complex, a group of three moated sites and about 30 mounds covering a 12 km² area 12 to 16 km inland from Pattani Bay (Figure 1). A 25 ha walled and moated site is located around the village of Ban Prawae, a 60 to 100 ha moated site near Ban Wat, and a third moated site between the two.

In 1962 Stewart Wavell visited the remains of the moated site at Ban Prawae and concluded from the archaeological features, art objects, and the local legends of place names that this must indeed be the location of Langkasuka.¹² Anan Watananikorn, the Yarang District Education Officer, had in fact already initiated the first serious investigations in 1953 and has preserved many architectural pieces from features that were being looted.¹³ In 1974 H.G. Quaritch Wales briefly surveyed and conducted a test excavation at Prawae and examined Anan's collections. Based on the presence of a stone *Dharmacakra* in Dvaravati style, miniature stupa in Gupta style, and a Siva *linga*, Wales concluded that the Prawae site dated from the sixth through the early ninth centuries, corresponding well with the time of references to Lang-chia-shu in the Chinese records.¹⁴ Subsequent investigations at Yarang have been conducted by Srisakra Vallibhotama, Chusiri Chamoraman, Janice Stargardt, and on several occasions by the Thailand Fine Arts Department, most importantly in 1985 under the direction of Khemchati Thepchai.

This work has produced little consensus regarding the dating, role or even the physical layout of the sites. Four maps of Prawae, all different, have been produced. Chusiri suggests that a Dvaravati period (sixth to eleventh century) occupation was

⁹George Coedès, "Le Royaume de Çrivijaya", *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 18, 6 (1918): 1–36; Lawrence P. Briggs, "The Khmer Empire and the Malay Peninsula", *Far Eastern Quarterly* 9 (1950): 256–305; Chand Chirayu Rajni, "Background to the Sri Vijaya Story — Part I", *Journal of the Siam Society* 62, 1 (1974): 174–211.

¹⁰Wheatley 1961, p. 118.

¹¹Ma Tuanlin, *Ethnographie des Peuples Etrangers a la Chine*, translated by Marquis d'Hervey de Saint-Denis (Genève: H. Georg, 1883), Part 2, pp. 455–56.

¹²Stewart Wavell, *The Naga King's Daughter* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1964).

¹³Anan Watananikorn, *Lae Lang Muang Tani [Tracing the Past of Pattani]* (Pattani: Center for Southern Thailand Studies, 1985), pp. 2–20.

¹⁴H. G. Quaritch Wales 1976, pp. 62–70; "Langkasuka and Tambralinga: Some Archaeological Notes", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 47, 1 (1974): 15–40.

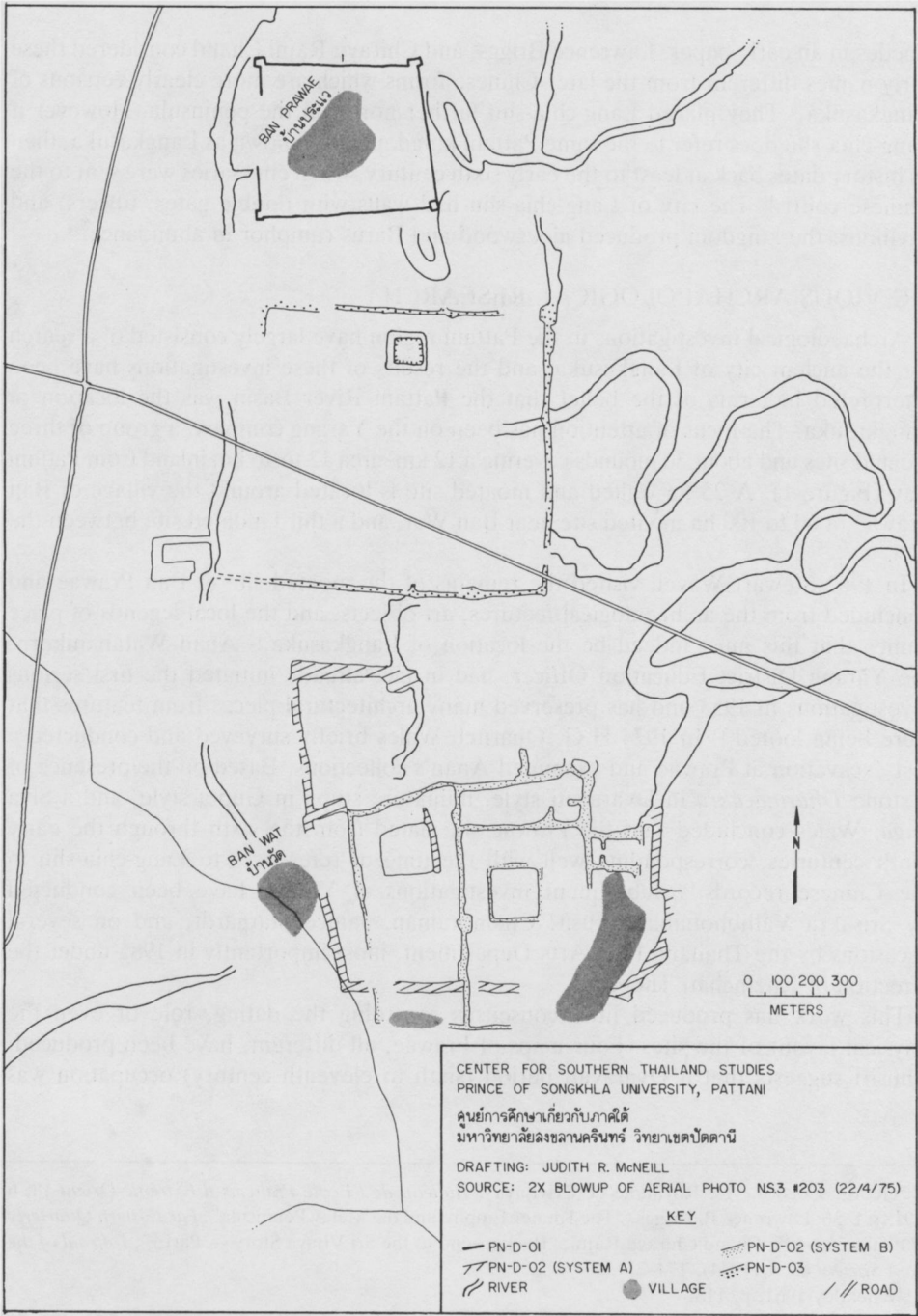


Figure 1
Plan Map of the Yarang Complex

followed by abandonment and then an Ayutthaya period occupation at Prawae.¹⁵ Stargardt proposes that a pre-eighth century Mon-Dvaravati occupation was followed by an eighth to thirteenth century Indonesian-influenced occupation at the complex, similar to the Sathingphra sequence.¹⁶ Khemchati concludes that occupation of a moated site near Ban Wat dates back to the sixth or seventh century, but that Prawae was occupied no earlier than the tenth century.¹⁷ Srisakra argues that the Dvaravati style remains are not in their original context and favours only a tenth century date for the site near Ban Wat and a twelfth to thirteenth century date for the earliest occupation at Prawae.¹⁸

While previous research at Yarang has produced many contradictory interpretations, the important site at Ban Kru Se near the coast, the capital of the historic Islamic kingdom of Patani, had scarcely been investigated or received any mention in the scholarly literature. The Fine Arts Department restored an early mosque and finds of Chinese trade wares have been reported, but no systematic survey had been conducted.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

In early 1985 the Center for Southern Thailand Studies at the Prince of Songkhla University in Pattani initiated a programme of archaeological research in the Pattani Basin. The first year's research, directed by William Ayres, focused on sites near Yala, about 40 km inland, while the second and third year's research, directed by Welch, concentrated on the lower river basin, including the area from Yarang to Pattani Bay.

The goals of the 1986 and 1987 fieldwork were to map accurately the Yarang complex and to obtain chronometric dates for the occupation of the site. The research objectives were to determine the time of the original occupation of the Yarang sites, the duration and degree of continuity of settlement, the factors that may have been important in the selection of this location, and the causes of the abandonment of these sites. Investigation was to be conducted of the causes of the movement of the main centre to the coast in about the fifteenth century. The research was particularly concerned with locating other early agricultural settlements in the Pattani River plain, determining their relationship to the major centre at Yarang, and reconstructing the late prehistoric and historic settlement patterns of the survey area.

¹⁵Chusiri Chamoraman, *Kanwichai Khomul Thang Silpa lae Borankhadi nay Muang Boran thi Amphoe Yarang Changwat Pattani Phua Suksa Pen Lakthan Thang Prawatisat* [Research on the Findings in Art and Archaeology at the Ancient City of Yarang, Pattani in Order to Study Them as Historical Sources] (Nakhon Pathom: Department of History, Silpakorn University, 1985).

¹⁶Janice Stargardt, "The Place of the Satingpra Ceramic Sequence in Asian Maritime Trade, 8–14th Century A.D.", in *SPAFA Final Report: Consultative Workshop on Ceramics of East and Southeast Asia* (Bangkok: SEAMEO, 1981), Appendix 9.

¹⁷Thailand Fine Arts Department, *Raingan Kansamruat Khutkhon Thang Dan Borankhadi Boriwen Muang Boran Yarang Lae Klaikhiang Amphoe Yarang Changwat Pattani* [Report of Archaeological Survey and Excavation at the Ancient City of Yarang and its Vicinity, Yarang District, Pattani] (South Thailand Archaeological Project, Archaeology Division, Fine Arts Department, Thailand, 1985).

¹⁸Srisakra Vallibhotama, "Ancient Settlements in the Four Southernmost Provinces", *Muang Boran Journal* 5, 2 (1979): 42–61; "A Survey of Ancient Settlements in Southern Thailand", in *SPAFA Final Report: Consultative Workshop on Archaeological and Environmental Studies on Srivijaya (I-W2a)* (Bangkok: SEAMEO, 1981), Appendix 3d; "Sathing Phra and Langkasuka", *Muang Boran Journal* 10, 1 (1984): 23–32.

Our investigations of Pattani's history focused on four major research areas:

- (1) A survey to determine the dating and distribution of early agricultural settlements in the Pattani Basin. This included an examination of aerial photographs to locate sites, former coastlines, and abandoned river courses and a reconnaissance survey of villages in a 200 km² area stretching 20 km inland from the coast. The survey identified 26 sites, including 13 not previously recorded (Figure 2).
- (2) Intensive investigation of the Yarang complex. We surveyed and mapped the moated site near Ban Wat (PN-D-02). Auger cores were excavated at the Ban Prawae moated site (PN-D-01) and at PN-D-02 to determine the extent, depth, and dating of cultural deposits at these sites. In the first year 120 auger cores were excavated at Prawae, the suggested location of Langkasuka by Wavell and Wales. In the second year 192 cores were excavated at Wat, where Anan and Khemchati had recovered early materials. Coring was followed by excavation of two test pits at PN-D-01 and four test pits at PN-D-02.
- (3) An intensive pedestrian survey of the Kerisik complex, the probable site of the Islamic trading port of Patani.
- (4) Investigation of more recent village history by questioning elderly informants about aspects of their lives in order to build a model of production and exchange activities in the area prior to the intensive modernization of the past two decades.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

Early Settlement in the Pattani Basin

Survey in the lower Pattani basin produced no evidence of prehistoric settlement and little evidence of pre-fifteenth century settlement. At Ban Si De (PN-D-10) a rectangular brick foundation is now used for a Muslim ceremony, but its form suggests that it was originally a Buddhist *vihara*. If so, it offers the only clear evidence of pre-Islamic settlement between Yarang and the coastline. Because of the small number of village sites identified it is difficult to draw conclusions about past settlement patterns, a result which may reflect the existence of a relatively mobile pattern of residence in which village location was frequently altered. Such a pattern appears to be typical of recent Malay settlement,¹⁹ and is in strong contrast to the greater continuity of settlement noted in other parts of Thailand, especially the northeast.²⁰

At present the Yarang complex continues to stand alone as a definite pre-Islamic site area; its origins and ties to other agricultural settlements remain obscure. The disappointing results of the survey meant that much of our research effort was focused on the known historic centres at Yarang and Kerisik. This research has produced new information about these sites, including archaeological data that provide concrete evidence of information recorded in historical texts.

¹⁹Geoffrey Benjamin, "In the Long Term: Three Themes in Malayan Cultural Ecology", in *Cultural Values and Human Ecology in Southeast Asia*, ed. Karl L. Hutterer, A. Terry Rambo, and George Lovelace (Ann Arbor, Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1985), pp. 219–78.

²⁰David J. Welch, "Settlement Pattern as an Indicator of Subsistence and Political Organization in the Phimai Region, Thailand", in *Southeast Asian Archaeology at the XV Pacific Science Congress*, ed. Donn Bayard (Dunedin, University of Otago Studies in Prehistoric Anthropology, Vol. 16, 1984), pp. 129–51.

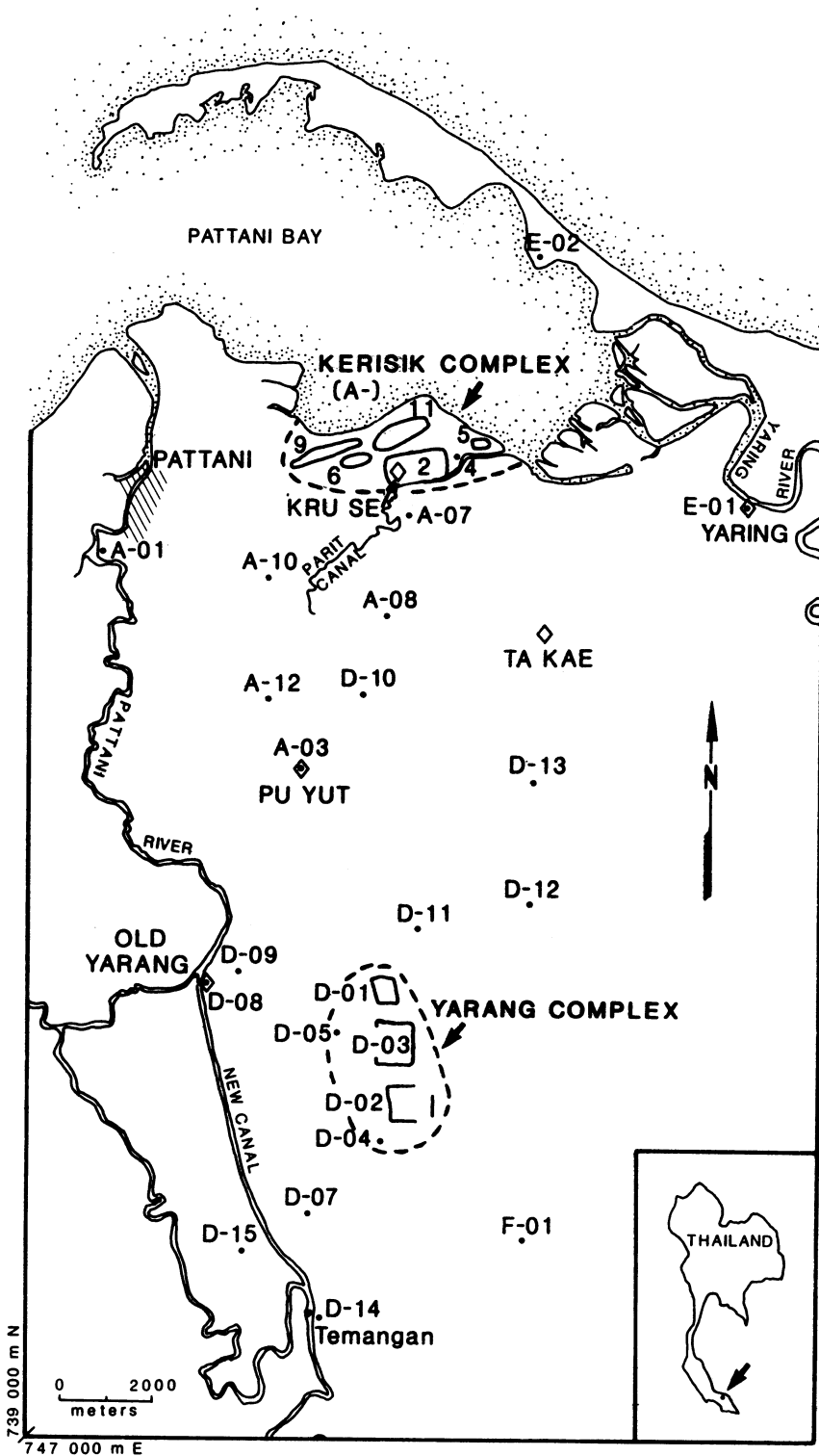


Figure 2
Location of Archaeological Sites and of Early Twentieth Century
Markets in the Lower Pattani Basin

The Yarang Complex: Langkasuka?

Ban Prawae: Lang-chia-shu or Malay Fort?

The coring and excavation conducted at Prawae in 1986 tend to support a later dating for the original occupation than that proposed by Wales, one closer to the twelfth to thirteenth century dating suggested by Srisakra. Much of the datable material consisted of Ming and Qing period Chinese porcelains and Ayutthaya period decorated earthenware sherds, recovered in surface collections, cores, and the upper layers of the test pits. Earthenwares were found in the two middle layers of Test Pit 1 without associated imported wares. The upper of these layers was radiocarbon dated between A.D. 1408 and 1666 (OAEP-736) and the lower between A.D. 1276 and 1518 (OAEP-737 and 738). In the lowest layer with cultural material we recovered sherds from a very pale brown sand tempered earthenware *kendi*, similar but not identical to *kendi* that are common at Sathingphra and which date from about A.D. 1050–1300. A twelfth or thirteenth century date would then seem likely for the earliest cultural material recovered.

Most striking about this site was the sparseness of the finds encountered. In 51 of the 120 cores there is no evidence of human occupation. From excavation of roughly 4 m³ we recovered a total of approximately 400 potsherds, many more than the 38 sherds found by the Thailand Fine Arts Department in their 2 X 2 m pit or the two sherds found by Wales in a pit of unreported size.²¹ This is however scarcely the density one would expect from an important trade city. No occupation layers with heavy concentrations of cultural material were encountered. No pre-Ming period imported trade pottery was recovered. The evidence from the cores with their extensive coverage suggests that the results of these three excavations reflect the actual sparseness of artifactual material at the site and are not simply the result of unlucky sampling.

We conclude that Prawae was first occupied in approximately the twelfth century but was never a major city. The two *chedi* mounds may have been built then, but there is no evidence that the city walls were built at that time. Prawae was certainly not the city of Lang-chia-shu and perhaps not even the later Lang-hsi-chia. The Ming dynasty pottery and the late thirteenth to early sixteenth century radiocarbon dates do demonstrate that the site was occupied during the time period that the Pattani Malay author Syukri placed the pre-Islamic capital Kota Malighai at Pera Wan (Prawae). However until there is evidence that Prawae was a major centre at that time, this identification must remain questionable, as must its identification as Langkasuka in the absence of early trade wares.

The most prominent features at Prawae are the nearly rectangular wall and moat enclosing the site and the high square bastions at each corner. The bastions appear to be cannon emplacements whose function and relatively good condition argue for a recent historic date. Combined with the evidence of Ayutthaya period sherds, this suggests continued use of this site in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. Historic records suggest that the defensive system presently in place may have been built during the 1790–91 Patani rebellion. While the Thai chronicles do not provide a consistent view of this rebellion, Syukri, presumably drawing on local history and legend, relates that the Patani governor had moved the capital to Prawae after the Thais destroyed

²¹Fine Arts Department 1985, pp. 11–13; Wales 1974.

the coastal capital in 1785. In 1790 the governor plotted to re-establish Patani's independence and, when informed of a planned attack by the Thai king Rama I, fortified Prawae. However he was defeated and killed in 1791.²²

Wat: An Earlier Urban Centre?

Until recently, then, Prawae may not have been the central citadel of the Yarang complex, but rather a peripheral area with a few *chedi* and residences on the outskirts of the main moated site at Ban Wat. Examination of Anan's report disclosed that most of the Dvaravati and Gupta style artifacts from Yarang, which had led Wales to his early dating for Prawae, in fact came from *chedi* mounds in the vicinity of moat channels near Ban Wat and the moated site (PN-D-03) between Ban Wat and Prawae.²³ Only one *Siva linga* found in a moat at Prawae might date earlier than the tenth century at that site. On the other hand, a stone *Dharmacakra* and an earring mold came from a mound near the west moat at Ban Wat. Excavation there by the Fine Arts Department produced a much higher density of sherds than recovered from Prawae and evidence of two occupational layers; artifacts from the earlier layer included bricks, earthenware sherds, and a hexagonal stone bead similar to beads from Tang period sites in peninsular Thailand.²⁴

The moated site at Ban Wat is a larger and more complex site, consisting of a system of moats, sixteen mounds, and two raised rectangular areas. Examination of aerial photographs suggests that two distinct moated components, one superimposed on and thus postdating the first, may have been established here (see Figures 1 and 3). Viewed on the aerial photographs, the two raised rectangular areas, both of which were at least partially moated and surrounded by brick walls, appeared to form central plazas, one for each of the component moat systems. The better preserved 60 ha eastern component should be the more recent, while the approximately 100 ha western component was probably earlier and has been destroyed in places, if it did once constitute a rectangular moated site. The *chedi* mounds from which most of the probable sixth through eighth century material came are located along the west moat of this earlier component.

Auger cores here, as at Prawae, frequently turned up no evidence of cultural remains. The material that was recovered usually consisted only of brick fragments and not habitation debris. Coring of the rectangular area that we thought might form the centre of the earlier component produced almost no cultural material. Excavation of three test pits produced only a few potsherds, bricks, and charcoal fragments, and indicated that dense cultural deposits are apparently restricted to the mounds themselves and the areas near them. Only in the fourth test pit, excavated on the east component central platform, was abundant cultural material recovered. Several brick alignments were superimposed on one another; the lowest of these is the foundation of a structure, oriented at about 70 degrees. No material for radiocarbon dating was found.

Our excavations, then, produced no evidence to corroborate the sixth to eighth century dating of the Dvaravati and Gupta style remains from the site. However they did suggest activity during subsequent centuries. Associated with the brick foundation

²²Syukri 1985, pp. 46–47.

²³Anan Watanikorn 1985, pp. 2–12, 18–20.

²⁴Fine Arts Department 1985, pp. 17–24.

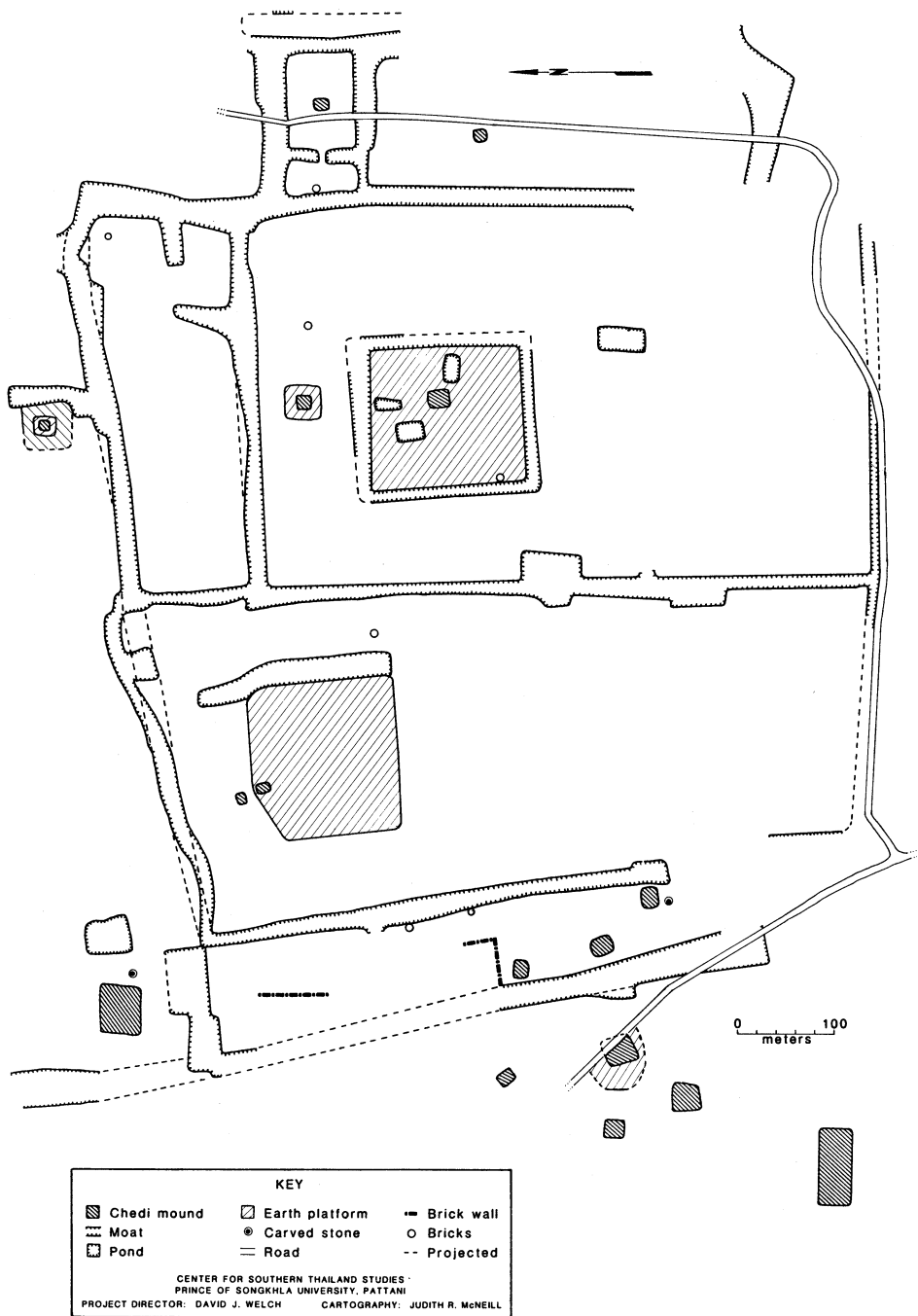


Figure 3
Plan Map of the PN-D-02 Moated Site Near Ban Wat

are earthenware sherds which resemble sherds frequently found at other tenth to thirteenth century peninsular and Indonesian sites. The bricks are primarily grog tempered with rice chaff added, and thus similar to bricks from Sathingphra that Stargardt dates to this time period.²⁵ A few religious artifacts from the site also show stylistic affinities to Mahayana Buddhist artifacts from central Java and Sumatra.

Yarang: An Early Historic Ceremonial Centre

During the earliest known period of use, from the fifth or early sixth through eighth centuries, religious shrines, incorporating elements of both Hinduism and Buddhism, were built along the west moat at the Wat site. The style of religious artifacts shares traits with the Mon Dvaravati materials of central Thailand, and it is likely that the early occupants of the site were Mon speakers.²⁶ The earliest moat system could have been built at this time, but coring and excavation produced no evidence to support this interpretation. The major period of activity at Wat may date slightly later with connections to central Java and Srivijaya in Sumatra. The first use of Prawae may date late in this period, but it appears to have remained a peripheral area until at least the fifteenth century.

The results of the excavations and cores suggest that there was no early historic urban occupation at these sites. There is no indication of dense occupation at the complex and little evidence of trade. There is much structural evidence — moats, walls, bricks, brick foundations, mounds — but few sherds and no food remains. No Tang or Song period ceramic trade wares have come from the sites. Although the Mahayana Buddhism of the site is related to that of Java and Srivijaya, there is little evidence of participation in the Srivijayan trade networks which are presumed to have dominated the western Indonesian archipelago at that time. Stargardt reports finding Khmer and Chinese Yuan pottery at the complex, but we found none in our research. The excavated *kendi* is not identical to any pottery we have seen from Sathingphra and might well be locally produced, although Stargardt reports finding “a number of objects made at Satingpra”, including *kendi* at Yarang.²⁷ Our sample is obviously small, but none of the evidence suggests an early trade centre.

In conclusion, it seems more appropriate to view the Yarang complex in pre-Islamic times as an early ceremonial centre rather than as a trade centre. As such it may have complemented the cave sites near Yala which were major Buddhist pilgrimage sites that have yielded large numbers of votive tablets. Yarang, at its upriver location, may have played a role in the collection and trade of forest products, but it did not develop into a major entrepot. Questions must be raised about the identification of the complex with Lang-chia-shu or other possible early forms of Langkasuka, although this identification is certainly not impossible.

Old Patani: Investigations at Ban Kru Se (Kampong Kerisik)

In approximately the late fifteenth century a centre of power and influence developed

²⁵Janice Stargardt, *Satingpra I: The Environmental and Economic Archaeology of South Thailand*, BAR International Series 158 (Oxford: British Archaeological Records, 1983), pp. 28, 93.

²⁶Geoffrey Benjamin, “Between Isthmus and Islands: Reflections on Malayan Palaeo-Sociology”, Working Paper No. 71 (Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore, 1986).

²⁷Stargardt 1981; 1983, pp. 23–24.

on the coast where the town of Patani, under the rule of a newly converted Islamic dynasty, grew into an urban centre of some importance. Both traditional local Malay histories open with the movement of the capital from an inland city called Kota Malighai, which Syukri places at Prawae, to the coastal village of Patani. Syukri locates this new capital at Kerisik, the Malay name of Ban Kru Se, a village 6 km east of the present city of Pattani.²⁸ Aerial photographs reveal the outline of a roughly rectangular 10 ha moated site directly east of this village, and several physical features of this site agree with descriptions of Patani in the *Hikayat Patani*. It seems quite certain that Patani was located here until 1842 when Raja Tungku Mahmud moved the capital to Cabang Tiga on the south side of modern Pattani.

At Kerisik, the moated area may simply have enclosed the central citadel and the residence of the royal family, while much of the population probably lived and conducted trading activities outside the walls. Intensive pedestrian survey has revealed concentrations of potsherds stretching from the shore of Pattani Bay east of Ban Kru Se 3 km westward and from the edge of the salt farms to the south side of the moat, covering an area of about 90 ha (Figure 2). The density of sherds is far greater than what we have found anywhere else in the Pattani basin. Ayutthaya period earthenwares are common. Stoneware and porcelain sherds, mostly of Chinese origin, appear to date from the middle Ming through late Qing dynasties and provide clear evidence of the importance of international trade at this site. No Tang or Song period sherds were identified in the surface collections. Locally minted gold coins of the *kijang* type with Arabic inscriptions are occasionally found by villagers. Near Pattani Bay a villager found a Chinese tombstone dated to A.D. 1592, the earliest so far discovered in Southeast Asia, confirming the early presence of a Chinese community in Patani.²⁹

The *Hikayat Patani* tells of four royal burials taking place in the eastern part of the town. Two cemeteries are located on sand dunes east of the moated site. One cemetery (Kubo Barahom, PN-A-04) contains a grave which the local population holds to be the burial place of the first Islamic king of Patani. The other cemetery (Kubo Na Chaiyae, PN-A-05) holds three graves, which are said to be those of the three sister queens who ruled Patani from 1584 to 1635. At the king's grave an Arabic text from the *Koran* is engraved on each of two tombstones carved with lotus and Meru motifs. The coexistence of Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic symbolism suggests that this grave dates to the time of early Islamization. Wayne Bougas has shown that these tombstones were made in the Batu Aceh style of north Sumatra and combine elements of an early style with some elements of a later style that began about 1520. Thus the tombstones were probably carved early in the sixteenth century, perhaps in Pasai in north Sumatra, the traditional place of origin for the spread of Islam to Patani.³⁰ According to traditional genealogy, the king who converted to Islam would have ruled around 1500; thus the dating of the stone and the genealogy agree closely.

Both the *Hikayat Patani* and Syukri recount that about 1600 Queen Ijau had a canal dug from Temangan near Ban Priki to Kerisik. Temangan has recently been abandoned,

²⁸Syukri 1985, pp. 13–15.

²⁹Wolfgang Franke, "A 1592 Inscribed Chinese Tombstone Found in Pattani", *Journal of the South Seas Society* 39 (1984): 61–62.

³⁰Wayne A. Bougas, "Some Early Islamic Tombstones in Patani", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 59, 1 (1986): 85–112.

but an earth wall and moat still surround the site (PN-D-14) located on a high terrace near the head of the canal. Although a dam was later built to restrict the flow, the canal is reported by local informants to have remained navigable until early in this century. The canal is now silted up in many places, but it can still be traced. Auger coring at Temangan suggests that there were two periods of occupation and that the earlier period probably dates to the time of Raja Ijau.

In addition to the Kerisik complex, several sites, many of them, such as Prawae and Temangan, fortified with walls and moats, date to the Islamic period. The fortification of many inland towns reflects the frequency of wars from 1500–1800 related in the Malay and Thai histories. Certain sites are associated either in written accounts or oral tradition with Malay nobles who ruled small local areas under the Patani kings and queens. The Datuk Pu Yut fought and was wounded in the 1791 Patani rebellion and his grave is still revered today. Pu Yut (PN-A-03), until recently an important market town, also possesses remains of an old palace, elephant bathing ponds, imported porcelains, and a brass cannon.

Oral Histories: The Recent Past as an Ethnoarchaeological Model

During the village survey, the survey team interviewed elderly residents, persons ranging in age from about 60 to a reported 116 years, to collect ethnographic information about the Pattani basin in the early part of this century. The interviews included questions concerning past settlement sizes, agricultural activities, handicraft industries, trading patterns, and the location of markets. Modern transport, bringing with it increased western and Bangkok influence, has only affected the region recently. As a result these elderly villagers grew up in a culture and social system more similar to that of the preceding two or three centuries than to that today, and perhaps more similar in some ways to that of even earlier centuries. An understanding of the production and exchange systems that characterized the region prior to the introduction of modern transport systems could be expected to be useful in interpreting past settlement data recovered in the archaeological record.

Specialized production was common along the coast, especially near the major towns. Some activities, such as salt production near Kerisik, boat building and mat weaving near Saiburi, and pottery manufacturing in Pattani, continue today, but in other areas traditional production is disappearing. Potters near Saiburi until about 20 years ago made pots fired in large kilns that are now used only for firing bricks. Archaeological mounds in the near vicinity attest to the existence of even earlier kilns.

Marketing patterns have also changed. Today outside the city of Pattani only a few very small permanent markets continue to operate. Several periodic market sites, active once or twice a week, provide more localized services and goods. In the past, however, at least six permanent markets operated within the survey area: at Pattani, Kru Se, Yaring, Pu Yut, Ta Kae, and Yarang (Figure 2).

The patterning of these markets at first suggested that they constituted a regular central place market system, in which markets, separated from one another by distances of 5 to 7.5 km, were placed to leave villagers within little more than a one hour walk from a market. However the marketing pattern as reported by our informants indicates that a different interpretation may be more accurate. The coastal town markets (Pattani, Kru Se, and Yaring) attracted people from as far as 10 to 12 km inland. More surprisingly the two markets located about 6 km inland, Pu Yut and Ta Kae, also attracted villagers

from as far as 12 km away. In almost every inland village, villagers reported formerly going to one or both of these markets. At Ban Ta Kae a trader at the now defunct market related that about ten Chinese merchant families formerly lived in the village and that merchants from Kru Se and Yaring also came to sell at the market. It would appear that these inland markets provided convenient locations where merchants with imported goods, salt, and fish from the coastal towns could meet with inland villagers, while reducing the travelling distance for both groups. Travel was facilitated not only by the rivers but by navigable canals, such as the canal from Ban Priki to Ban Kru Se.

In her study of "Pavilion Village", a market town in this region, Chawiun Prachuabmoh found that women from nearby villages sold goods daily at the village market, but resident traders went out to sell at the markets in Pattani or at the periodic markets. Chawiun suggests that such middle level professional traders are a new occupational group, developing in response to modern economic conditions.³¹ However recent archaeological evidence, especially from northeast Thailand, suggests that both regional and long distance trade has been an important component of Southeast Asian economies since the early establishment of agricultural communities.³² Jan Wisseman Christie has presented epigraphic evidence from early historic central Java of the presence of periodic village markets which were visited by middle-man traders in a five day cycle.³³

Our data suggest a system in Pattani combining periodic and permanent markets. Within the context of both types of markets we would expect that professional traders were conducting trade, in a system similar to that long in existence in Java. Although the number of such traders has clearly grown recently, the movement of traders with periodic markets which today is such an important feature of the Pavilion Village economy may not necessarily be a new phenomenon, but may extend far back into the historic past.

While at the moment we lack confirming archaeological evidence, ecological considerations support this hypothesis. Although village economies clearly possess the means to be relatively self-sufficient, ecological diversity is sufficient to encourage specialization. Several locations along the coast, while offering excellent bases for fishing, have little or no suitable rice soil in their immediate catchments. The coastal towns have also provided incentives for craft specialization in the nearby villages. All informants in the survey area report buying pottery at Pattani; only far inland at

³¹Chawiun Prachuabmoh, "Changing Values in Market Trading: A Thai Muslim Case Study", in Hutterer, Rambo, and Lovelace, pp. 279–306.

³²Jean I. Kennedy, "From Stage to Development in Prehistoric Thailand: An Exploration of the Origins of Growth, Exchange, and Variability in Southeast Asia", in *Economic Exchange and Social Interaction in Southeast Asia: Perspectives from Prehistory, History, and Ethnography*, ed. K. L. Hutterer (Ann Arbor, Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1977), pp. 23–38; Pisit Charoenwongsa and Donn T. Bayard, "Non Chai: New Dates on Metalworking and Trade from Northeast Thailand", *Current Anthropology* 24 (1983): 521–23; Charles F. W. Higham and Amphan Kijngam, *Prehistoric Investigations in Northeast Thailand*, B.A.R. International Series No. 231 (Oxford: British Archaeological Records, 1984); David J. Welch, "Late Prehistoric and Early Historic Exchange Patterns in the Phimai Region, Thailand", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (1989) (this issue).

³³Jan Wisseman, "Markets and Trade in Pre-Madajpahit Java", in Hutterer 1977, pp. 197–212.

Kampong Gelam near Yala did Skeat in 1898 report village pottery making.³⁴ The coastal location also offers opportunities for salt farming, maritime trading, and piracy which are not options for inland farmers. While inland villagers were self-sufficient in rice production, most also grew fruit and vegetables in the minor rainy season, and they needed to market these and in turn to obtain salt water fish, salt, pottery, and foreign products from coastal peoples. Although local craft manufacture, seasonal scheduling of activities, and sometimes actual seasonal movement probably reduced the need in former times, there was still a clear demand for coastal-inland trade, one which was probably met by markets such as those at Pu Yut and Ta Kae and by the periodic markets. In addition, small-scale trade is likely to have taken place simply within the context of the large scale international trade that Pattani was involved in. Forest products were brought from the mountain forests in the upper reaches of the Pattani River to the coastal seaport for centuries, and thus trade has long been an established activity in the area.

This model of ecologically based specialization and inland-coastal exchange should be useful in interpreting past subsistence and settlement patterns in the Pattani Basin (and other peninsular valleys), as more archaeological evidence becomes available. Certainly for the late historic period, the model should be applicable. Many of the late historic regional centres, such as Pu Yut and Yaring, continued to function as market towns until two decades ago. At present the archaeological record is inadequate to infer patterns of settlement and exchange, but with continued survey and excavation such patterns should become evident and useful in the interpretation of Pattani history.

SUMMARY

Although archaeological investigations in the Pattani basin have not provided sufficient information to define early historic patterns of settlement, they have helped to clarify the structure and history of the two main site complexes in the Pattani basin. At the Yarang complex, the mapping of the moated site near Ban Wat (PN-D-02) and testing of the deposits demonstrate the presence of an early historic ceremonial centre. The site may have been established as a religious centre as early as the sixth century and later developed into a centre of Mahayana Buddhism similar to Buddhist sites in central Java and Srivijayan Sumatra. Subsurface testing at Prawae indicates that the site was probably first occupied in approximately the twelfth century, but continued in use until the 1791 Patani rebellion. It may have served primarily as a late historic Patani Malay fort. The Kerisik complex is clearly the site of the important Islamic period seaport of Patani, whose further investigation will produce much valuable evidence about this Malay kingdom.

³⁴W. W. Skeat and F. F. Landilaw, "The Cambridge University Expedition to Parts of the Malay Peninsula", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 26, 4 (1953): 3-174.