

The two volumes show that rather than Chinese influences, those from India were dominant. Place-names often have South Asian origins: Koling, Panai, Sunggam, Linggam and Natal, the last meaning littoral or coast in the original Tamil. Lexical styles in the inscriptions go beyond the littoral and link with Newari of the Kathmandu Valley (Griffiths, vol. 2, p. 243).

The two well-produced volumes offer fascinating glimpses into a relatively minor, but well-networked, society riding the eleventh century boom in the eastern Indian Ocean, actively negotiating through waterways with production-centres and rival ports and engaging culturally and commercially with polities across seas. Three coins: two sandalwood-design coins issued tentatively from Barus and Muara Jambi and a Bukhara dirham dating to 1003-4 (Kalus, vol. 1) have been found. Padang Lawas demonstrates an independent path of growth, suggesting that interior polities were more likely to make specific choices based on their societal patterns and needs, rather than coastal polities who were more open, and therefore more vulnerable, to the winds of change from overseas. These volumes underline the fact that different centres responded differently to the eleventh century boom. Rather than seeing Southeast Asian societies as passive receptors of Indic or Sinic influences, we should instead regard these as evolving according to their own dynamics, and participating according to their own exigencies in the medieval Indian Ocean world.

Pacific Histories: Ocean, Land, People

By David Armitage and Alison Bashford

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Published under the editorial stewardship of the chair of the History Department at Harvard University and the recently appointed Professor of Imperial and Naval history at the University of Cambridge, *Pacific Histories* is a good book with which to take the temperature of the historical discipline in 2015. What does it tell us? Academic historians are collaborating on large scale cross-institutional research projects; the scope of what constitutes historical research is being pushed ever further backward and forward, as well as sideways into other fields; the agenda of mainstream history is increasingly becoming one of connection and integration, particularly of under-explored regional contexts.

The book's genesis is in the form of a two-part question that the editors asked its thirteen contributors to respond to thematically: "What light does a specifically Pacific perspective shed on this theme? And what light does this topic shed on Pacific history more broadly?" (p. 21). The outcome is indeed "a uniquely catholic collection" although one that is uneven in the distribution of insights particular to "the Pacific" however conceived. In this sense the book should not be regarded as an introduction to the subject, although many of its chapters and their respective further readings serve as useful take-off points for their respective themes.

Given the broad agenda, the material used in this collection is, as one might expect, extremely varied. Sources referenced by contributors range from familiar and less familiar European discoverers' journals and logbooks to satellite maps, economic tables and charts, islander portraits, coastal watercolour paintings and Hawaiian prayers. The footnotes, and especially the Further Reading sections at the end, are extremely useful, amounting to an accessible, up to date and much-needed bibliographical survey.

The book's substantial content, divided into four essays about periodization and then nine general thematic essays, could perhaps have been more imaginatively organized, but it does amply fulfil the