A Journey of Ethnicity

A Journey of Ethnicity:

In Search of the Cham of Vietnam

By

Rie Nakamura

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INTRODUCTION

WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK

My interest in Cham communities began with their refugee communities in Seattle, USA. I first became acquainted with these people when the Cham student organization held a festival called Cham Day at the University of Washington, where I was a graduate student. They invited the late Po Dharma, who was a Cham and a prominent scholar on Cham history and culture at the *École Française d'Extrême-Orient* in France. Po Dharma gave a lecture at this event and talked about the Cham people who were living in the central coast area of southern Vietnam. He characterized the Cham society as a matrilineal one consisting of two different religious groups. One group followed Hinduism and the other followed an indigenized form of Islam. He also talked about the upland Cham compared to the lowland Cham. The photos of the lowland Cham looked holy. They wore white robes and white turbans. The photos of the upland Cham looked like the highland minorities in Vietnam. In one, a man was carrying a big sword and a shield. They looked tough and war-like.

Later I became friends with the Cham students who organized the Cham Day event. These students came from An Giang Province in the Mekong Delta. They were quite different from the Cham whom Po Dharma talked about. They were all Sunni Muslims and were not followers of Hinduism nor of an indigenized Islam. The questions I had were: "Are these students also Cham? If so, then why are they Cham? Are the Cham that Po Dharma talked about the Cham from the past? Do Hindu Cham still exist in Vietnam?" I became curious about this group of people.

The Cham people in Vietnam

The Cham people are believed to be the descendants of the dominant group of the ancient kingdoms of Champa. They are considered to be a group of sea-oriented people from the past (Reid 1999; Momoki 2011). Cham people speak a language that belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian language family, a branch of Austronesiatic languages. It is argued to be the

earliest Austronesiatic language. Coedès pointed out that the inscriptions found in Trà Kiệu, the capital of Champa, are three centuries older than those found in Srivijaya of southern Sumatra (Thurgood 1999: 3). Thurgood thinks that the Chamic language in Vietnam is one of "recently arrived, dialectically unified immigrant people" and suggests that pre-Chamic-speaking people arrived at the central coast city of Đà Nẵngin Vietnam (1999: 5, 251).

Champa developed at its current day location on the central coast of Vietnam around the 2nd century and accepted the Hindu culture around the 4th century. Champa enjoyed considerable prosperity from the 9th to the 15th centuries by providing significant relay ports along the maritime trade routes in the South China Sea. The vestiges of the wealth and power of Champa can still be seen along the coast of Central Vietnam (Shige-eda & Tran Ky Phu'o'ng 1997; Momoki 1999).

Approximately 132,000[1] Cham people lived in Vietnam in 1999 and their population is growing. Cham are also found in various parts of Southeast Asia, the largest community being in Cambodia, where the population is estimated at several hundred thousand. After the reunification of Vietnam in 1975, a number of Cham people left Vietnam for Australia, Canada, France, USA, and other parts of the world.

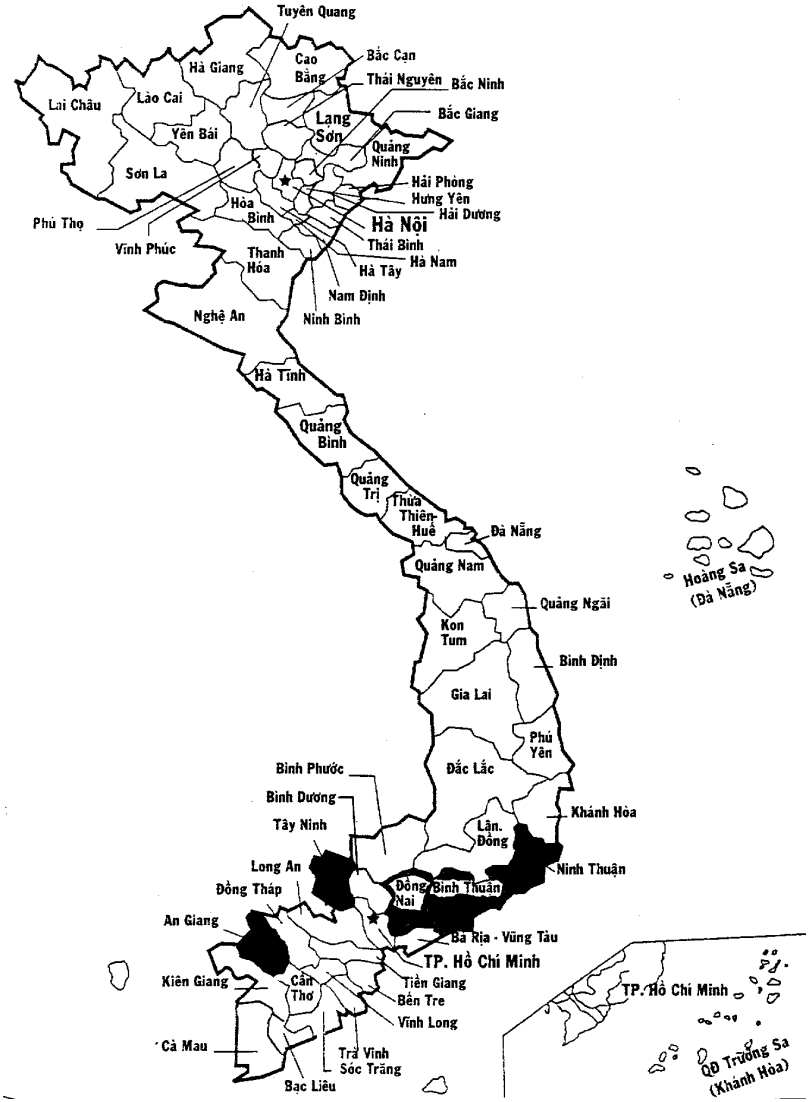
There are two distinct groups of Cham people in Vietnam if we consider their place of residence, their historical background, and their religion. One group lives in the south-central coast region, particularly Ninh Thuận and Bình Thuận Provinces (Map 1). These two provinces used to be one large province called Thuận Hải, which covered about the same area as a part of Champa called Panduranga, and they are where the largest concentrations of Cham people in Vietnam can be found. About 86,000[2] Cham people lived in these two provinces in 1999. The Cham who live in this region practice their traditional religion, which can be divided into two different groups. One group practices the religion of Balamon, which is an indigenized form of Hinduism, and the other group practices Bani, which is an indigenized form of Islam.[3]

---

[1] The National Census of 1999.

[2] The National Census of 1999.

[3] Toshihiko Shin-e argues that the group which call themselves Cham or *ahier* are not really the adherents of the Balamon religion but also believe in Allah. This is the result of a misunderstanding by French scholars on the Cham religion during the French colonial period. Though both Cham (Balamon) and Bani are adherents of Islam, only Bani practice ceremonies for Allah, while Cham (Balamon) practice ceremonies for gods known to the people prior to Allah (Shin-e 2001b: 243, n8, n9). In this book I have adopted the conventional understanding of the differences between Balamon and Bani based on local informants' explanations.



Map 1. Location of Cham communities, Ninh Thuận and Bình Thuận provinces, An Giang Province

The second group lives in the Mekong Delta, mainly around Châu Đốc city in An Giang Province, which is near the border with Cambodia. About 12,000[4] Cham people lived in this region in 1999 and they are almost all Sunni Muslims. The Mekong Delta Cham also live in Ho Chi Minh City and its surrounding provinces such as Đồng Nai and Tây Ninh (Phan Văn Dốp & Nguyễn Thị Nhung 2006: 25).

There is also a small group of people called Cham Hroi who are classified as one of the sub-groups of the Cham ethnic group. They live in an area north of Ninh Thuận called Phú Yên Province. The Cham Hroi appear to be a part of the population of Champa who remained where they were after most of the Cham had moved to the south. They have been left alone without any contact with other Cham communities, and have gone through acculturation with neighboring ethnic groups such as the Bahnar and Ede (Khong Dien 2002: 19, 24).

Two groups of Cham

I went to Vietnam for the first time in 1993. I mainly stayed in Ho Chi Minh City where about 5,000 Muslim people, most of them Cham from An Giang Province, were living then. I visited the Islamic Center for Ho Chi Minh City at a *masjid* (mosque) in the Phú Nhuận district. I was struggling to communicate with an official in both Vietnamese and English when a lady passed by us. As soon as she recognized me as a foreigner, she came up to me and asked in English where I came from. Since she had better English proficiency than him, the official ordered her to answer my questions and left us alone.

This woman, who I will call Aisah in this book, was a quite charming individual. She had a nice warm smile, which made me relax. Aisah was born in a village near Châu Đốc city in An Giang Province, and she had been living in Ho Chi Minh City for over 20 years. She was the daughter of a very well-respected *Hakim*, a Muslim religious leader, who had unfortunately passed away several years before. In his life, he made the *hadji*, a pilgrimage to Mecca, twice. He also won several Qur'an reading competitions in Malaysia. Aisah was also well known for reading the Qur'an and had won the first prize in many reading competitions too. We continued to have a discussion on her classes and her teaching of the Qur'an. However, when we talked about her family background, the smile on her face faded away and her eyes became watery. I was afraid of having said

[4] The National Census of 1999.

something wrong to make her upset. I did not know what to say to carry on our conversation. Suddenly, she started to talk about her marriage.

According to their custom, the Muslim Cham in An Giang Province get engaged when they are still very young. Engagements are made between two families and they prefer marriages between cousins (both cross and parallel cousins). Aisah had a fiancé by such an arrangement at a very young age. However, she did not marry the man who had waited almost 10 years for her to be his wife. Instead, she married a Cham man from the vicinity of Phan Rang city, the capital of the Ninh Thuận Province. Many of her relatives were against her decision to marry this man[5] who was not born a Muslim but became a Muslim later on. They told her the Cham from Phan Rang were different from the Cham in Châu Đốc and that the Cham from two different regions would not make a good couple. Despite all these warnings, she married him, partially because of love and also because of her concerns about Cham society. She said:

> The Cham from Châu Đốc and the Cham from Phan Rang have been separated. They do not even like each other. I wanted all the Cham to be together and to rise up. I wanted to make the two Cham groups shake hands. It is why I married my husband.

However, when I met Aisah, somehow their four-year marriage had started to fall apart. She attributed her marriage failure to the differences between the Cham from Phan Rang and Châu Đốc.

The story of her broken marriage was the starting point of my research and the point I always come back to when I think of these two groups of Cham people living in Vietnam. The Cham communities in the different localities officially belong to the same ethnic group, but they do not want to be identified with each other. Yet, sometimes they show unity as one Cham community. It was just like Aisah's marriage. In her married life, she experienced a constant cycle of separation from her husband and reunion with him. They were not sure if they could be a couple or should remain as two individuals.

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[5] The Muslim Cham people from Mekong Delta often refer to the Cham from the south-central coast area as Cham Phan Rang, while the Cham from the south-central coast area refer to the Muslim Cham in Mekong Delta as Cham Châu Đốc.

The Cham ethnicity in Vietnam

Despite their differences, the Cham agree that they all belong to the one same ethnic group. But at the same time, they do not want to be seen as the same Cham. What it means to be "Cham" is different among the Cham in different localities. Tu Wei-Ming describes the changes in meaning of being "Chinese" during the course of history, and China's relationship to the Chinese diaspora including Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore (1994: 12). Considering Tu's argument, being Cham might have been different in the course of their history and geographical context. It will also perhaps appear differently in the future. Thus, their ethnicity requires an ongoing articulation of who they are.

Contrary to the dynamism of ethnic identity, the official Vietnamese definition of an ethnic group is somewhat static. The Vietnamese government has adopted Stalin's definition of the nation to classify its population into *dân tộc*, equivalent to nationalities, and ethnic groups. In his book *Marxism and the National Question* published in 1913, Stalin defines a nation as "a historically constituted stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture" (Marxists Internet Archive 1913). This definition is not suitable to classify actual ethnic groups since they do not necessarily share a common language, territory, economic life, or culture, as many researchers including Edmund Leach (1964) and Michael Moerman (1965) have argued. Some Vietnamese ethnologists have pointed out the significance of people's self-identity to a certain group (Phan Ngoc Chien 1993: 48), but the ethnic classification has more to do with external labeling in Vietnam. Vietnamese ethnologists depend heavily on language for ethnic classification, and the population of Vietnam is divided up into the three major language groups: Austroasiatic, Sino-Tibetan, and Austronesiatic. The 54 officially recognized *dân tộc* are classified under these linguistic categories (Yoshizawa 1982; Khong Dien 2002). The people of Vietnam must choose only one *dân tộc* to belong to and changing one's ethnic identity is not permitted without the state's approval (Phan Ngoc Chien 1997: 5).[6]

In this book, I examine how the various Cham groups negotiated their ethnic identities in different situations. The fluidity, malleability, and negotiated nature of ethnic identity have been discussed in numerous studies

[6] Ito's (2008) work on ethnic classification in Vietnam discusses this problem and how people negotiate with the state-given static ethnic classification.

and it seems pointless to repeat these same arguments here. However, I believe my study can remind scholars that the Vietnamese official ethnic classification is far from the "ethnic reality." Yet, it is the "living reality" of the ethnic minority people. It further demonstrates how the classification of *dân tộc* is actually generating ethnic identity. As Brakette Williams argues, the clue to understanding ethnic groups and ethnicity can be found in the context of the nation-state since one's ethnic identity becomes salient when the people are placed in the framework of a nation-state (1989).

Introducing the variety of Cham, or the meaning of being Cham, is my attempt to challenge a competitive discussion among researchers in the search for the "pure and true Cham." Searching for "original," "true," or "pure" Cham culture differentiates cultural diversities as derivative or corrupted and makes Cham society and its culture monolithic and static. Questioning such a static understanding of the Cham ethnic group is also another challenge to the conventional image of the Cham people. Cham people are often discussed within the framework of Champa. In recent years, there has been increasing interest in Champa. *École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, led by the late Po Dharma, successfully established a Champa studies program at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. New books on the history and archaeology of Champa have been published, and seminars and conferences on historical studies of Champa have been organized in Asia and Europe. In Vietnam, the many vestiges of ancient Champa, including the UNESCO-recognized historical heritage site of Mỹ So'n, are featured in tourist guidebooks, brochures, and posters. The rise of Champa studies and the increasing promotion of Champa heritage in the Vietnamese tourist industry has made the Cham a somewhat historical people. This book is an endeavor to assert that, despite the image of Champa as ancient and historical, the Cham are contemporary people who live in the same world and share the same concerns as their contemporaries, and they will continue to develop their communities in the future.

March 11, 2011

The information and data I used in this book mainly come from the field research that I conducted between 1995 and 1996 for my Ph.D. dissertation. For quite some time, I could not bring myself to publish my dissertation as a book. It was because I realized that it was not a perfectly formed analysis and the argument hadn't been developed as much as I would have wished, which made me hesitate to publish it. However, I have now decided to publish my thesis despite such shortcomings.

This is due to the events of March 11, 2011, in my home country of Japan. On that day, a giant tsunami swept cities, towns, and people's livelihoods away on the Pacific side of the northeastern region of Japan. The tsunami was triggered by an earthquake of extraordinary scale, with a magnitude of 9.0 at the epicenter.[7] On March 11, I was away from Japan, having a late lunch while watching a Japanese program broadcast by satellite TV. Suddenly, the announcer reported a jolt that was felt at the studio. The screen changed to show a large tsunami invading the Sendai plain where well-attended farming lands were being inundated by waves of black water. The TV announcer was speechless. There was no sound and an eerie silence dominated. I could not do anything but just stare at the TV screen. However, at that time, I had no idea that Japan would face an even more horrifying disaster: the meltdown of the Fukushima (福島) nuclear reactors.

Until the Fukushima disaster, I did not realize that Japan had constructed as many as 54 nuclear reactors since 1966. The Fukushima disaster was thought to be inadvertent since no one could have predicted that such a large-scale earthquake and tsunami would hit the nuclear reactors. The Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), which is responsible for the Fukushima nuclear plant, emphasized the unprecedented scale of the earthquake and tsunami so that the people of Japan would be convinced that it could not do much to prevent the accident. However, later, we began to understand what really happened and learned that the accident was caused by the company's policy that prioritized profitability over safety.

In 1997 Professor Ishibashi of Kobe University warned about the danger of a huge earthquake impacting the nuclear reactors. He said that a large-scale earthquake could cause a combination of various problems such as the loss of the external electricity supply and failure of the diesel generators. Without electricity, the cooling water cannot be supplied for the nuclear fuel, which could possibly lead to a steam and hydrogen explosion of the reactors. He repeated the same warning at a hearing of the Lower Diet in 2005. A local representative asked TEPCO to review and revise its safety measurements of the Fukushima nuclear plant: "in the current situation, Fukushima nuclear plant cannot deal with the scale of tsunami equivalent to the one caused by the Chile earthquake (magnitude 9.5)" (Fukushima Project 2012: 191-192). These alerts and this request were ignored.

TEPCO's inadequate crisis management is contrasted with the Onagawa nuclear plant of the Tohoku Electric Power Company. The Onagawa nuclear plant is also located on the shore of the Pacific coast and was also

[7] Press release of the Japanese Meteorology Agency, March 13, 2011.

hit by the tsunami on March 11. However, it survived without having a major crisis like the Fukushima plant. Before constructing the Onagawa nuclear plant, the Tohoku Electric Power Company did historical research to examine the major earthquakes and tsunamis that had occurred in the region from the 9th century onwards and they also completed geological studies. As a result, the Onagawa nuclear plant was built 14.8 meters above sea level, while the Fukushima nuclear plant was built just 10 meters above sea level. The earthquake triggered land subsidence of 1 meter at the Onagawa nuclear plant and it was hit by a 13-meter high tsunami. The Onagawa nuclear plant was saved by a height of 0.8 meters and this was a significant difference between Onagawa and Fukushima nuclear plants in terms of safety (Fukushima Project 2012: 192-193).

The meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear reactors could have been prevented if the company had better safety policies, systems, and training to deal with emergency situations (Asahi Shinbun Tokubetsu hodobu 2012: 188-259; Fukushima Project 2012: 11-224; Yoshioka 2011: 382-389). The government propagated the safety of nuclear reactors and the necessity of this energy source for the resource-poor country of Japan. But the fact that Fukushima became one of the world's worst nuclear accidents made us realize that the idea that 'nuclear power is a perfectly safe and clean energy source' is a mere myth.

Various studies have pointed out that nuclear energy is not actually a cost-effective energy source as the Japanese government has propagated. There has been a hidden agenda to keep nuclear power in Japan and this agenda is closely related to the issue of national security. After World War II, Japan's nuclear program was started with the support of the USA in the midst of the Cold War. The USA expected Japan to be like a fort, protecting the region from spreading communism, and for that reason it wanted Japan to have nuclear technology (Arima 2008; Yoshioka 2011).

Japan does not have nuclear weapons. As the first nation to be exposed to nuclear weapons, Japan has kept three non-nuclear principles of "not possessing, not producing, and not permitting" the introduction of nuclear weapons, which is in line with Japan's Peace Constitution. There is a report that Japan is the only country without nuclear weapons, yet it has obtained "sensitive nuclear technology" including enriched uranium, chemical reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, and fast-breeder reactors which can be applied to develop nuclear weapons (Fukushima Project 2012: 232). Not only that, but by insisting on reprocessing spent nuclear fuel despite its high cost, Japan has accumulated large amounts of plutonium with which a few thousand nuclear bombs could be built (Fukushima Project 2012: 232-239).

It can be said that Japan is keeping nuclear power for the purpose of national security.

Vietnamese interest in nuclear power goes back to the pre-reunification of North and South Vietnam. The Institute of Nuclear Research in Đà Lạt was established in 1958 with the support of the USA. This is in the Central Highlands and is about 100 km from the city of Phan Rang of Ninh Thuận Province. After 1975, the USSR became a new partner and Vietnam continued to develop its nuclear program. The Russian Federation succeeded the partnership and it has since made an agreement to build the first nuclear reactor in Ninh Thuận Province in 2010.[8]

Then Japan came in as a new partner. During a summit meeting between Japan and Vietnam in October 2010, Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan received an order from Vietnam to build a nuclear plant. However, the Fukushima meltdown put a halt to Japanese exports of nuclear plants to Vietnam. Prime Minister Kan changed his energy policy to a renouncement of nuclear energy as a power source after March 11 and he refused to write a letter to the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng to confirm the Japanese export of its nuclear plant. However, Prime Minister Kan resigned and his successor, Yasuhiko Noda, reconfirmed to Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, who visited Japan in October 2011, that Japan would not terminate its original plan, and would export a nuclear plant to Vietnam (Ito 2011).

The Japanese agreement to export a nuclear power plant to Vietnam has since been reassured after a landslide victory of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in the election of the Lower Diet at the end of 2012, which brought the LDP back to power. The new prime minister, Shinzo Abe who took office for a second time, has emphasized the importance of the economic recovery of Japan. His new economic policies are coined Abenomics. He has chosen ASEAN countries for his diplomatic debut as the prime minister and he has visited Vietnam. Abe and the Vietnamese prime minister agreed to Japanese economic assistance to the amount of 500 million USD, to cooperation in the trade of rare earth minerals, and to develop Vietnamese infrastructure including the construction of a nuclear reactor (Tokyo Shinbun 2013).

The *Asahi* newspaper's editorials have published strong opposition to Japan's export of a nuclear reactor to Vietnam. It criticized that the government has a double standard. While it reduces dependency on nuclear

[8] A personal communication with Shin-e Toshihiko (新江利彦) on February 1, 2012.

energy in Japan, it is exporting the very same nuclear reactors to foreign countries. The editorials have also pointed out the possibly enormous risk that Japan may have to bear due to its deep involvement with the Vietnamese nuclear project. The assessment research of the nuclear reactor site will be conducted by the Japanese government. Japan will loan money at a low interest rate to cover the construction expenses of the reactor and it will provide training for nuclear engineers. Japan will be asked to provide support for the disposal of nuclear waste, and so on. If an accident occurs, who will take responsibility? There is no clear agreement between the two sides on these issues (Asahi Shinbun 2012).

There is deep skepticism among Japanese citizens about their country's nuclear technology and this has developed into a persistent movement against nuclear power. Since March 2012, individual citizens have gathered in front of the parliament and the official residence of the prime minister every Friday afternoon. They are demonstrating for the abolishment of nuclear plants in Japan. It started as a small crowd of just 300 people, but the number of demonstrators has been increasing and in July 2012, approximately 20,000 citizens gathered. The organization called 'Metropolitan Coalition against Nukes' (首都圏反原発連合) is orchestrating the demonstrations and they managed to have a face-to-face meeting with Prime Minister Noda in August 2012 (Shutoken Hangenpatu Rengo).

With the decreasing popularity of nuclear power, the people's demand for utilizing more clean energy, and an anticipated population decline as one of the world's most rapidly aging societies, Japan's demand for electricity will most likely be reduced in future. Facing limits in the domestic market, Japanese nuclear businesses which have invested large amounts of capital will need to look for new markets outside of Japan. The newly developing countries in Asia are its potential business partners. In fact, besides Vietnam, within Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines have plans to establish nuclear energy plants (Fukushima Project 2012: 459). While having people's distrust of nuclear power in Japan, it is a double standard to keep exporting the nuclear plants as a safe, clean technology. Ito, from Kyoto University, argued that Japan should support Vietnam, which produces oil and has abandoned water resources, to provide technology to establish renewable energy, and thermal and hydroelectric power generation (2011).

Despite a growing movement to abolish nuclear power in Japan, only a handful of scholars and researchers in Vietnam openly oppose the Japanese government's move to export nuclear power plants to Vietnam. Nguyễn Xuân Diện, who is a scholar at the Han Nom Institute in Hanoi and a popular

blogger, published an appeal to the Japanese House of Councillors and House of Representatives to cancel the nuclear power plant program in Vietnam. A total of 626 people inside and outside of Vietnam have signed the petition and their names have also been published on his blog ("*Bảovệtổquốc*"). However, a few days after posting the appeal, his blog was shut down and he was summoned by the authorities, forced to pay a penalty, and received psychological and physical threats (BBC 2012).

Japan has a considerable number of researchers and scholars who have made Vietnam their field of study. Many of them, including myself, are not sure how to position themselves between politics and academic work. I have discussed the issue of Japan's export of nuclear power plants to Vietnam with several colleagues. Most of us are opposed to, or have negative opinions about, the export of nuclear power, yet we remain silent. We are afraid that saying something in opposition to the decision made by the Vietnamese Communist regime may jeopardize our research there.[9]

Our silence made me remember the question that I had when I was in graduate school about the relationship between people who study and people who are studied. A field study is only possible after establishing a rapport with local people and gaining trust among them. Researchers must behave in response to this trust and must protect their subjects' privacy, their interests, and their welfare, even at the price of their own studies. With this book to introduce the Cham people of Vietnam and their rich culture, I would like to appeal to protect their livelihood and society. If there is a nuclear power plant located in Ninh Thuận Province, which is a former territory of Champa, it will place in danger one of the most important historical sites of Vietnam and also the Cham ethnic minority people, who have played a significant role in the enrichment of Vietnamese history and culture. Vietnam should not sacrifice its ethnic minority people for national

[9] Masako Ito of Kyoto University is one of the most outspoken scholars openly opposing the Japanese government's decision to export nuclear power plants to Vietnam. Her argument was published in the opinion column "*Watashi no shiten*" (私の視点) (my view) of the *Asahi* newspaper on October 7, 2011, and also as an article in *Asahi Shinbun Weekly* AERA June 4, 2012 (p. 45). Recently she has published a book, *Genpatsuyushustu no Giman* (*原発輸出の欺瞞*) (*The deceit of Japan's export of nuclear program*), together with other Japanese scholars and Vietnamese intellectuals. The book was based on the panel presentation organized at the conference of Southeast Asian Studies at Kagoshima University in 2013. It provides a critical voice opposing Japan's export of its nuclear program to Vietnam. (Ito &Yoshi-i 2015).

interests or so-called public welfare. One overseas Cham shared his concerns with me about the nuclear plant. He believed the construction of a nuclear plant in Ninh Thuận Province is the Kinh people's "final solution" to wipe out all the Cham people from Vietnam. I could not laugh at his opinion as a delusion of persecution since I felt that the nuclear plant would enforce the Cham's identity of "suffering minority people" and deepen the divide between the Cham and the majority Kinh people.

This book consists of six chapters and a conclusion. Chapter One discusses the historical background and characteristics of the historical polity of Champa. This historical polity provides a significant foundation for the establishment of Cham ethnic identity, especially of the Cham who are living in the south-central coast area. Chapter Two examines the development of Vietnamese minority policies. The consistent attitude of the Kinh majority people toward the ethnic minority people throughout history is discussed. Chapter Three examines the formation of the ethnic identity of the Cham living in Ninh Thuận Province. It discusses how their ethnicity has been developed by the connection to Champa. The dualism of *ahier* and *awal* are explored. In Chapter Four, the discussion is moved to the ethnicity of Muslim Cham living in the Mekong Delta. Different from the Champa-oriented ethnic identity, the Muslim Cham in the Mekong Delta developed their ethnic identity based on their religion of Islam. The little-studied Cham-initiated organization called *Hiệp hội Chàm Hồi giáo Việt Nam* (The Association of Muslim Cham in Vietnam) established in South Vietnam is also examined in this chapter. Implications of the establishment and the social impact of *Hiệp hội Chàm* are explored. Chapter Five examines negotiation processes between the ethnic identities of Cham in the south-central coast area and Cham in the Mekong Delta. It also examines the state-given identity of *dân tộc* Cham through studying the Cham's adaptation of Kinh discourse on ethnic minority groups and their new invented traditions, such as a dance by the Muslim Cham. The Cham people's ethnicity in the context of the nation-state is the main concern in this chapter. Chapter Six deals with the new position of ethnic minority people under the renovation policies of *đổi mó'i*. The mainstreaming of the ethnic minority culture as Vietnamese national heritage and tradition alongside the alienation of ethnic minority people from their own culture is discussed. Artworks by Cham artists are examined in this chapter to demonstrate a possibility for the Cham to express their own identity by using their own symbolic vocabularies. In conclusion, the survival of the Cham's identity is forecasted.

CHAPTER 1

CHAMPA

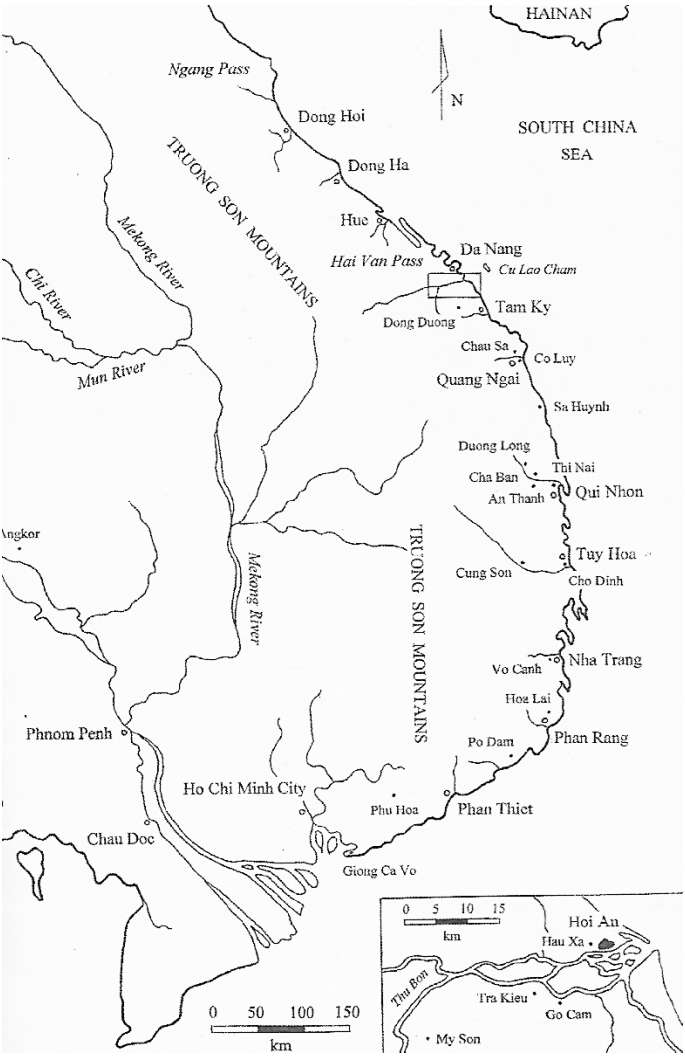
Before discussing the Cham communities in Vietnam, historical Champa needs to be understood since it is a significant foundation for the Cham people to establish their ethnic identity. In this chapter, the first half of the discussion is on historical and political characteristics of Champa, while the latter half of the chapter is an examination of the integration of Champa into Vietnam's national history. Champa no longer exists on maps and its former territories now belong to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Since Champa was absorbed into Đại Việt in the course of the Vietnamese southward expansion (*nam tiến*) , Champa holds a problematic position in the national history of Vietnam.

Historical Champa

Sa Hùynh culture and the emergence of Champa

Around 1000 BCE, a civilization with technologies of rice cultivation and metal tools had developed in the central part of Vietnam. This civilization was named after the village called Sa Hùynh in the northeast region of Bình Định Province, where the first archaeological site of this civilization was discovered. Archaeological findings similar to Sa Hùynh, such as earrings with three lugs named Lingling-o as well as urns, have also been discovered in the Philippines[10] and Taiwan. This indicates that elements of the Sa Hùynh civilization were spread across the South China Sea and were likely established by sea-oriented people (Momoki 1997: 4; Wade 1993: 83).

[10] Geoff Wade argues that cultural affinities of the Sa Hùynh with the Philippines were inherited by Champa, and it was Cham script that the Philippine script was derived from between the 10th and the 14th centuries (1993: 83-87).



Map 2. Location of Sa Hùynh, Trà Kiệu Gò Cầm (archaeological map) (From William Southworth 2004, The Coastal States of Champa, Figure 9.1 in Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood (eds.) *Southeast Asia from Prehistory to History.* London & New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004, pp209-233).

The Sa Hùynh civilization is now seen as a proto-Cham society. Sakurai argues that Champa was established on the basis of the Sa Hùynh culture by adapting Indian culture (1993: 52). The large numbers of glass, carnelian, and agate beads found in the Sa Hùynh culture region indicate that they were manufactured in India or reproduced in Southeast Asia with Indian techniques and the materials were brought over from India (Glover & Kim Dung 2011: 59). However, Momoki mentions it was China rather than India that had the first influence on the emergence of Champa (1997: 5). Yamagata's extensive archaeological works on Trà Kiệ which was known as the capital of Champa and also known as Linyi (林邑) by the Chinese, reveal significant Chinese cultural influences between the 2nd and the 3rd centuries when Champa emerged as an independent polity (Yamagata 2011: 88-98). Glover and Kim Dung's studies on the Gò Cầm archaeological site near Trà Kiệu support significant Han Chinese cultural influence in the early stages of Champa (2011: 54-78) (Map 2).

Yokokura examined the relationship between the Đông So'n culture of northern Vietnam, which is known for its bronze drums, and the Sa Hùynh culture, and argued that the Đông So'n drums found throughout mainland Southeast Asia and the Southeast Asian archipelago were brought over by people from the Sa Hùynh culture. The Đông So'n culture established inland river transportation networks connected with Sa Hùynh maritime culture and also established an infrastructure for the eventual emergence of port-city nations in Southeast Asia. Yokokura argues that the birth of Champa was the result of connections between the Sa Hùynh culture's sea networks, which were linking the eastern shore of the Indochinese Peninsula and the Philippines to Chinese economic zones (1993: 152-167).

Mandala

According to Chinese documents, Champa was established around 192 CE as a result of a rebellion led by a person named Ou Lien (区連)[11] who was one of the sons of a local official under Chinese control at Xiang Li (象林 *Tu'ọ'ng Lâm*) in the county of Rih Nan (日南 *Nhật Nam*) under the Eastern Han (後漢). This location is said to be in the vicinity of modern day

[11] Maspero identifies Ou Lien (区連) with King Sri Mara, whose name appears on the Võ Cạnh inscription found in Khánh Hòa Province of southern Vietnam. The Võ Cạnh inscription is dated approximately to the 3rd century and is known as the oldest Sanskrit inscription in Champa and also in Indochina (Sugimoto 1956: 146; Yao 1995: 3-4).