Language Plurality as Cultural Characteristics of Southeast Asia: A Review of John F. Hartman's Thesis

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Abstract

John F. Hartmann (1986) argued that the spread of the Indic languages in Southeast Asia took place in different overlapping periods, through which the region underwent a process of indinization. Hartmann's thesis is very important to help understand the making of cultural networks in Southeast Asia. However, the scope of his thesis was limited by its sole focus on the Indic languages, on the mainland Southeast Asia, and on the early historic period of the region. Taking Hartmann's thesis as a starting point, the present paper examined the spread of languages in Southeast Asia as a cultural network. By using a comparative bibliography method and by analyzing existing studies on the pre-historic and the historic stages of language development in Southeast Asia, this paper argues that the indinization as suggested by Hartmann comprised only the first phase in the overall making of the language-based cultural network in Southeast Asia. Bibliographical sources show that the language-based cultural network in Southeast Asia involved at least three other periods in addition to indinization, that is chinaization, arabization, and europeanization. In Southeast Asia, the spread of the cultural network depended not so much on a lingua franca – a language of unity – as on the plurality of languages. The successive phases in the spread of different civilizations created a Southeast Asian plural society, in which various linguistic branches molded as one of the most remarkable cultural notions of the region. Hence, the idea to have one regional language of integration, for example in the current context of ASEAN, contradicted against the cultural history of Southeast Asia. It is because Southeast Asia has become integrated through a pluralization, not unification, of languages.

Keywords: Linguistic Plurality; Southeast Asia; Cultural Characteristics; Social History; John F. Hartmann.

Introduction

In 1986, John F. Hartmann, a professor of comparative linguistic history from Northern Illinois University, published an article entitled "The Spread of South Indic Scripts in Southeast Asia" in the Journal *Crossroads: Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 3(1). Hartmann reviews the spread of the Indic languages from India and Sri Lanka to Southeast Asia. According to Hartmann, the spread of Indic languages to

Southeast Asia began in the 5th century AD. The spread was gradual; the periods overlapped. The dissemination stage began with Sanskrit, then Pali, and then Pali-Sanskrit (Hartmann, 1986).

Hartmann's periodization of the spread of languages provides a very important framework for studying cultural pollination in Southeast Asia. The spread of languages created cultural networks regionally (Suwignyo, 2021). Nonetheless, Hartmann's periodization only partially describes the history of language networks in Southeast Asia. Hartmann's periodization is limited to three aspects, namely the roots of Indic languages, the region of mainland Southeast Asia, and the scope of the early historical period (around the 5th to 10th centuries). Hartmann does not mention the spread of other languages. For example, the Sinic language from mainland China, Arabic, and European languages. In fact, the influence of the latter languages was very strong in the second millennium. That influence has continued today (Emmerson, 1984, pp. 1-21; Schendel, 2012, pp. 497-510).

Departing from Hartmann's thesis, this article aimed to examine the formation of Southeast Asian cultural networks through the spread of language. The article raised two questions. First, after Hartmann's Indianization, how did the spread of languages in Southeast Asia occur? Second, what factors did influence the development of those languages? The article analyzes the periodization of the spread of language through economic and political contexts (Glover, 2016, pp. 506-510).

So far, studies have viewed Southeast Asia as an extension of Indian culture (the Greater India) and, later, of Chinese culture (Bloembergen, 2021). Many of the studies tend to view the development of languages in Southeast Asia as a part of the development of languages in South Asia (Coupe & Kratocvíl, 2020). Nonetheless, the influence of South Asian languages is only discussed in the context of specific language developments in Southeast Asia. These studies do not provide an overall picture of the distribution, influence and historical scope of Southeast Asia (Hoogervorst, 2021, p. 623). On the other hand, the studies of the influence of the Sinic languages is focused on a particular area. This perspective tends to ignore local dynamics. According to this perspective, the Sinicization wave erased the influence of earlier languages in Southeast Asia (Alves, 2021, p. 649). Such a perspective ignores the existence of inculturation or the mixing of cultural elements from various sources of civilization. In addition, both the studies on the Indic and the Sinic languages have mostly focused on the mainland Southeast Asia region and have ignored island Southeast Asia (Sagart, 2022).

The influence of Indic and Sinic languages in Southeast Asian languages is still very clear today (Quac, 2021). However, the process of language distribution in Southeast Asia did not take place in a centrifugal manner. The languages did not spread from India and China as the center while Southeast Asia was a passive recipient. Southeast Asia had its own cultural centers for language development. In these centers there was a dialectic. Local communities that lived in the geographical and cultural realm of the region were involved in developing their own language. The community adapted to outside elements. So, Southeast Asia was not just a crossroads

for various civilizations. Southeast Asian society did not take external influences for granted. It played an active role and became a cultural entity that continued to grow (Suwignyo, 2021, p. 92).

The development of languages in Southeast Asia has been rarely studied from the internal perspective of Southeast Asian societies. This is due to the strength of the crossroads paradigm and the absence of the regional historical paradigm. In Indonesia, recent studies on languages do not usually examine the history of the spread of the languages. In fact, the history of the distribution of languages can help us understand the cultural networks that underlined the distribution. It can reveal a wider historical aspect. For example, in the context of the Insana Kingdom in the Timor Plains, limited primary sources using the local Dawan language have hindered contemporary researchers to study these particular Timorese cultures and the extent of their influences during the sixteenth century (Arvianto & Kharisma, 2021). On the other hand, the study of the cultural elements of a language tends to focus on the values that underlie behavior. For example, regarding language politeness (Pradnyani et al., 2019) and manners based on the social language hierarchy (Hadiwijaya et al., 2022). These recent studies do not deal with the distribution of languages as a cultural network of a region.

Existing studies also tend to focus on art and material products (Samidi, 2019). The cultural aspects related to language are only studied in passing, for example, in the school system (Agustiningsih et al., 2021) and the history of book publishing (Putri et al., 2021). Studies on the Indonesian archipelago's trade network have provided an understanding of regional connectivity based on sea transportation, for example, in the waters of Aceh, Arafuru and Timor (Prabawaningtyas, 2017; Romdloni et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the aspect of language distribution is not included in these studies of sea trade routes. This has made someone wonder how traders from different places interacted and communicated each other. Therefore, this article is expected to fill the void in the study of language distribution and cultural networks.

Method
This article used the comparative literature method. It analyzes and compared existing studies on the distribution and development of languages in Southeast Asia. The research steps included selecting relevant references; classification; and reading, analysis and comparison. Analysis was also carried out on the social, political and economic context of the Southeast Asian region. Therefore, references to the history of Southeast Asia were important sources in this article. Among those references were a piece edited by G.W. Prothero French Possessions in India (first published 1920) (Prothero, 1920) and the History of South-East Asia by D. G. E. Hall (Hall, 1968).

In this paper, Hartmann's study was used as the first material to be analyzed. This was particularly the case with the spread of the Indic language and script in mainland Southeast Asia (Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia). Apart from Hartmann's study, an analysis of the distribution of Indic languages was also based on other relevant sources (Tsan et al., 2016, pp. 515-551). Accounts of language development in

Vietnam, as well as in island Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines) were based on different bibliographical sources.

A Theorem by John F. Hartmann

John F. Hartmann stated that the spread of Indic languages took place in 3 periods. First, the Sanskrit period. Second, the Pali period. Third, the Pali-Sanskrit period. The Sanskrit and Pali periods spanned around the 5th century while the Pali-Sanskrit period spanned around the 6th century (Hartmann, 1986).

According to Hartmann, the spread of Indic languages took place through the trade routes and through the routes of the development of Hinduism in the 4th to 10th centuries. The royal transformations in Southeast Asia made this region the center of a vast Hindu culture. This transformation was accompanied by the development of the Sanskrit language with the Sanskrit script. According to Hartmann, by the end of the 6th century all regions of Southeast Asia had adopted Sanskrit. This language, among others, became the mother source of the languages of Burmese, Khmer, Cham, Tai, Lao, Shan, Javanese and Balinese. This information is based on Sanskrit inscriptions from the 5th century found in Java and Cambodia, Pyu inscriptions from the 6th century found in Burma, and Mon inscriptions from the 8th century found in Thailand (Hartmann, 1986, p. 7).

Hartmann also says that Theravada Buddhists from the Singha tribe in Sri Lanka, joined by merchants from South India, migrated to the Hindu kingdoms in Southeast Asia in the 8th to 13th centuries. In the long process of inculturation, the Hindu region of Southeast Asia turned into a Buddhist region, except for Bali. Hartmann says that the Southeast Asian region was Hinduized by the end of the 7th century. However, it became a Buddhist region in the 8th century (Hartmann, 1986, p. 7).

Referring to the Myazedi inscriptions, Hartmann says that Pali, Pyu and Mon were the languages spoken in Burma until 1113 CE. However, towards the end of the 12th century, namely around 1174, the political rulers of Burma decided to use their own Burmese language which was based on the Pali language system, to replace Pyu, Mon and Makhot. In 1283, King Ram Khamhaeng of Thailand introduced a new system of languages. This new language was a combination of Mon and Khmer languages. This new language became known as the Ram Khamhaeng language, and was written in the Ram Khamhaeng script. The language and script of Ram Khamhaeng were spoken in the kingdoms of Lan Chang (Laos), Lanna Thai and Ayuthaya. The Ram Khamhaeng language and script were the forerunners of today's Thai language and script. In 1507, the Lanna Thai kingdom modified the language and script of Ram Khamhaeng and combined it with the Burmese language system. This was due to the strong Burmese influence in Lanna Thai. The amalgamation of Ram Khamhaeng and Burmese gave rise to the Khuen–Lue language and script (Hartmann, 1986, pp. 8–10).

The spread of Theravada Buddhist civilization ushered in a new wave of language and script development in Southeast Asia. This is because Buddhist civilization used Pali in addition to using Sanskrit. From this Theravada Buddhist

civilization arose a mixture of languages called Sanskrit-Pali. Sanskrit-Pali was written in a number of scripts, including the Palawa script and the Kawi script. Later, the two scripts became the parent scripts for important scripts in the Indonesian archipelago (Hartmann, 1986, p. 13).

The development of language and script was closely related to the rise and fall of political power. At the height of the spread of Theravada Buddhism in various royal institutions, mainland Southeast Asia experienced a rapid development of language systems. The Sanskrit-Pali language from the 8th century gave way to the Mon language, written in the Mon script. In the 10th century, the Mon language and script developed and gave birth to several variants of the language. The most widely spoken variant of the Mon language at that time was Makhot and Khoom. Both were written in the Makhot script. By the early 12th century, the Makhot language written in the Makhot script had been used as the official language in Thailand and Cambodia and parts of Burma (Hartmann, 1986, pp. 7–8). This third period is sometimes referred to as a "sub-period" even though the span of time was almost the same as the "Indianization" period (Hartmann, 1986, p. 14).

Indianization as a Cultural Foundation

The spread of Indic languages shows that the early civilizations of Southeast Asia were culturally formed by a process of Indianization. The process of Indianization created the roots of regional identity in Southeast Asia that were interconnected. Unfortunately, Hartmann does not discuss the cultural foundations that were created by trading activities. In fact, trade activity was a migration driving factor so critical for the spread of languages. The cartographer Thomas A. Lessman shows the centers of Indic civilization in Southeast Asia. These centers spread from India to the Philippine archipelago, and from the island of Java and mainland Vietnam (Lessman, 2008).

Most of the people of mainland Southeast Asia today are Buddhist. The influence of Buddhist culture today is very dominant in Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos (Hall, 1968, p. 12). The Buddhistization process of mainland Southeast Asia was thorough. By the end of the first millennium the influence of Hinduism on mainland Southeast Asia had diminished greatly. At that time, it had been shifted by the Buddhist civilization (Murphy & Stark, 2016, pp. 333–340). However, the Arakan/Rakhine region, which was an area with Buddhist civilization until the 15th century, was later controlled by the Islamic Sultanate of Bengal (Hall, 1968, pp. 24, 36).

Bali and Java experienced different transformation. In Bali, Hindu civilization remained very significant and dominant. In Java, the Buddhist tradition adhered to the Hindu tradition. This made Hindu and Buddhist cultures in Java "sticked to each other". Standard Indonesian historiography refers to the Hindus and Buddhist civilizations as one period of history, namely the Hindu-Buddhist period (Abdullah & Lapian, 2012).

The spread of Buddhist civilization in Southeast Asia took place very rapidly in the 11th to 12th centuries. But in the Javanese context, the spread of Hindu civilization continued until the 13th century. At that time the Buddhist civilization in Java began

to be pushed by Islamic culture (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 21). Therefore, in Java, Hindu traditions created a syncretic nature. It continued to acculturate with Buddhist civilization and gave color to the spread of Islam. This syncretic feature is a distinctive local characteristic (Ricklefs, 2008, p. 13).

Sinicization and Cultural Complexity
Historian Victor Lieberman says the process of "Indianization" of Southeast Asia lasted approximately 1000 years. That is, from the 3rd to the 14th century CE. This process was triggered by the migration of people from India and Sri Lanka to the Southeast Asian region. Large-scale migration occurs as a result of war, natural disasters and trading activities (Lieberman, 2003). The process of Indianization was institutionalized in various sectors of public life. This sector includes trade, the spread of Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism, political institutions in the form of Hindu and Buddhist-style kingdoms, material culture in the form of temples, architecture and literary works, and language and script. By the 13th century, Sanskrit, Pali and Sanskrit-Pali with the letters Palawa, Kawi, Mon and Pyu had developed. They gave birth to various languages and scripts in Southeast Asia. So, in the span of about 1000 years, Indianization took place thoroughly in Southeast Asia. Even so, the process varied from place to place (Lieberman, 2003, pp. 27–28).

Based on Lieberman's explanation, some historians believe that Southeast Asia first recognized the roots of Indian culture rather than the roots of other cultures, such as the Chinese. Even in Indonesian historiography, which was heavily influenced by colonial historiography, the spread of Indian culture took place earlier than the spread of Chinese culture.

However, other views suggest otherwise. Southeast Asia first knew the Sinic language and culture than the Indic. According to historian Victor Purcell, migration of people on a large scale from mainland China to the "South region" (Nanyang), namely Southeast Asia, was recorded to have taken place in the 3rd century BCE! This migration took place by land and sea. Overland routes included Tonkin and Annam, Khmer (Cambodia), and Siam (territory of the Pyu and Nom kingdoms) whereas sea routes, Malay peninsula, Sumatra and Java (Purcell, 1965, pp. 8–9). The influence of Chinese culture in Southeast Asia can be seen in trade, art, architecture, Mahayana Buddhism, and agriculture. Languages from mainland China also shaped the cultural characteristics of Southeast Asia. Indeed, Sinicization had added a complexity to Southeast Asian culture.

The influence of Chinese culture was far-reaching. However, according to Purcell, Chinese culture did not give rise to significant centers of political power in Southeast Asia. For example, in the form of a kingdom or empire. In addition, the Chinese language and characters in Southeast Asia were found only within the scope of the Chinese community itself. The Chinese language and script in Southeast Asia did not function as regional languages like Sanskrit and Pali. This happened because of the social background of immigrants. According to Victor Purcell, immigrants from India consisted of traders and Hindu and Buddhist priests. But mainland Chinese

immigrants were traders, manual laborers or coolies, and political refugees. This last group migrated to escape the effects of regime changes and to avoid wars in mainland China, including the attack of the Mongols. In the new places of settlement in Southeast Asia, the immigrants from mainland China mostly focused on economic activities in order to meet their needs (self-sufficiency). They handed over "colonizing initiatives" of their new places to other population groups (Purcell, 1965, pp. 12–13).

So, if viewed chronologically based on existing literature, the spread of Chinese culture in Southeast Asia took place earlier than the spread of Indic culture. For more than 1000 years (starting from the 5th century), the spread of Chinese culture coincided with the spread of Indian culture. Nonetheless, the influence of Chinese culture in Southeast Asia did not touch the linguistic aspects in a disruptive manner compared to Indian languages. This applies throughout the island and mainland Southeast Asia, except for Vietnam. Only in Vietnam did the migration of people from mainland China lead to a transformation of civilization that was institutionalized politically and linguistically. The process of spreading Chinese language and culture in Vietnam is called Sinicization (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 32).

The Sinicization of Vietnam

Vietnam was under Chinese rule for 1000 years, from the 2nd century BCE to the 10th century CE, or 111 BC to 939 CE (Hall, 1968, p. 4). The Vietnamese call the 1000 year period under Chinese rule *thoi Bac thuoc*. It means "the era of subordination/dominance of the Northerners" (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 33). Although China's political dominance over Vietnam lasted "only" until AD 939, the Sinicization process lasted a long time. The conditions in mainland China continued to fluctuate due to regime changes and security threats by the Mongols. As a result, the migration of people from China to Vietnam continued beyond 939 AD. As Purcell said, the migration of Chinese people to Vietnam was "spasmodic but unending". It means, "irregular and unpredictable, but never ending" (Purcell, 1965, p. 181).

The great migration of the Chinese population to Vietnam since the 9th century took place in four waves. The waves were: (1) In 877 AD, pirates led by a Hoang-Chao attacked the provincial capital of Kwangtung. The attack caused the townspeople to move to the nearest area to the "south", namely Vietnam; (2) In the 13th century the supporters of the Sung dynasty were pushed back by the invasion of the Mongols. They moved to Vietnam; (3) In 1680, the Ming dynasty was defeated by the Ch'ing (Manchu) dynasty. About 3,000 Ming dynasty supporters migrated to Vietnam for safety; (4) In 1715 AD a Chinese war expert named Mac Cuu, along with around 1000 of his followers, controlled the borders of Vietnam and Cambodia (Purcell, 1965, pp. 181–182).

Under Chinese rule, Vietnam underwent an intensive Sinicization (Hall, 1968, p. 4). This process took place through the mixing of Chinese culture with Dong Son culture that is, the "original" culture of Vietnam from the 4th century BCE (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 32). Chinese culture became a pillar of life for the Vietnamese people. This was due to the growth in the number of people of Chinese descent in Vietnam. In the

Annam region and on Vietnam's border with Cambodia, the Chinese grouped themselves into communities called *bangs*. *Bangs* are led by a leader called *bangs truong*. Within the scope of *bangs*, Chinese immigrants in Vietnam "developed the main elements of their culture" (Purcell, 1965, pp. 181, 184).

Chinese political dominance over Vietnam ended in the 10th century. At that time the ruler of Annam succeeded in defeating the most influential *bangs truong* at that time (Hall, 1968), p. 4; (Purcell, 1965, p. 181). Nonetheless, the process of Sinicization of Vietnam continued. Chinese culture had become a major element of Vietnamese culture. It mixed with elements of the Dong Son and the Indian cultures, which were increasingly narrow in influence. The Chinese religious elements in Vietnamese culture that are the strongest until now are Mahayana Buddhism, Dao (Daoism) and Confucianism (Confucianism). The surname and proper name systems of the Vietnamese are also influenced by the Chinese surname system (Ricklefs et al., 2010, pp. 34–35).

The Chinese language and characters are very influential in the Vietnamese language system. Classical Chinese language and characters are the source language for studying ancient texts of Vietnamese history. After the collapse of Chinese political dominance in the 13th century, Vietnam developed its own language and script. The Vietnamese population in the border region with China created a script system based on the Chinese language and characters as spoken and written daily by the common people (demotic) (Hartmann, 1986, pp. 10–11). This new Vietnamese language and script is called Chu Nom, or Sino-Vietnamese. The influence of Chinese on the Chu Nom language particularly includes vocabulary and grammar (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 34).

"Arabization" and Its Influences

The spread of the Arabic language and script in Southeast Asia is an important chapter in the process of creating language diversity in this region. The spread began around the 14th century. But the process was not taking place evenly across the region. At present, Arabic cultural treasures are very dominant in the peoples of island Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and the southern Philippines) (Ali, 2014, pp. 218–220). The process of spreading the Arabic language and script produced, among other things, the Pegon Arabic script. As Kees van Dijk says, Arabic with the Arabic Pegon script can be found in all texts within the Malay cultural family, namely Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. Because of this, the Arabic letter Pegon is often considered part of Southeast Asian Malay identity (Dijk, 2005, p. 17).

Existing studies have explored the historical complexities surrounding the spread of the Arabic language and the Pegon script. This sub-section of the present paper analyzes the historical complexities related to the spread of the Arabic language and script, and the religion of Islam, in Southeast Asia. This complexity includes a number of points as follows.

First, the spread of the Arabic language and script was not always the same as the spread of Islam. Nonetheless, the spread of Islam almost always featured Arabic.

According to historian D.J.M. Tate, in the 9th century there was a community of Arab merchants in Canton, China. These Arab traders were "commuters". They came and went away periodically through the Malacca Straits. They did not live permanently in Southeast or East Asia (Tate, 1977, p. 32).

In the 13th century, around 1211 CE, a Muslim community developed in the Lamreh area of Northern Sumatra. These settled Islamic communities consisted of two categories. First, the community of Muslim foreign traders who settled in Lamreh then multiplied. Second, local residents who embraced Islam. One of the Muslim foreign trading communities who settled in Lamreh were Arabs (Ricklefs et al., 2010, pp. 78–79). So, it is very possible that Arabic was spoken by a group of Arab traders in East and Southeast Asia in the 9th century. However, its use by non-Arab communities was only discovered in the 13th century through the spread of Islam.

Second, since the 13th century, Islam had spread in Southeast Asia. But the spread mostly occurred in island Southeast Asia. The spread of Islam only slightly reached mainland Southeast Asia. The spread of Islam followed trade routes and merchant communities. Dispersal traces were always attached to the maritime network between northern Sumatra Island and the Sulu Archipelago (Chandler et al., 2005, p. 43; Tate, 1977, p. 32). Until the 18th century, Islam had not fully gained a place in Southeast Asia (Chandler et al., 2005, p. 46). The very intensive spread of Islam in archipelagic Southeast Asia began in the 19th century, especially in Java. This took place through the conversion of Hindu-Buddhist to Islam (Ricklefs, 2006, p. 6).

In mainland Southeast Asia, the most significant Islamic communities in the 19th century were in Ayutthaya Thailand and Arakan/Rakhine Burma or Myanmar. At that time Ayutthaya was one of the trade centers in mainland Southeast Asia. It had river channels leading to sea trade passages from India and the Arabian Gulf (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 123; Tikkanen, 2015). In the state of Arakan or Rakhine, namely the Burmese region bordering present-day Bengal, India or Bangladesh, the Islamic community was divided into four categories. Namely, the Muslim community of Chittagonia Bengal; the Muslim community of Arakan; the Muslim community from Ramree Island called Kaman; and the Muslim community of Myedu (Chan, 2005, p. 397; Mckenna, 2017). On the basis of the spread of Islam, it can be estimated that in the 19th century Arabic was known widely to local residents in island and mainland Southeast Asia.

Third, even though in the 19th century the Islamic religion had developed on the islands of Java, Ayuttaya and Arakan/Rakhine, Arabic was not the language of communication for the inhabitants of that region. Arabic was learned only in the context of Islamic religious learning. This was because most of the Muslim communities in Southeast Asia already had their own language in daily communication. In addition, not all propagators of Islam in Southeast Asia were Arabs. There were Indians, Chinese, and Javanese, Sumatran, Selangor and Sulu people. These people experienced conversion to Islam and later became propagators of Islam (Ricklefs et al., 2010, pp. 78–84; 123–124).

Fourth, the Arab community in Southeast Asia had never been a political entity. As stated by Ricklefs, Lockhart, Lau, Reyes and Aung-Thwin: "Arabs had little

political influence in South-East Asia". History records many Islamic kingdoms and sultanates in the Indonesian archipelago, Malaysia and the southern Philippines. However, the holders of power in these political institutions were local figures, not the Arab community. According to Ricklefs, Lockhart, Lau, Reyes and Aung-Thwin, in Southeast Asia "there were Arab traders, Arab travelers and Arab propagators of Islam, but never an Arab army" (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 125). This explains why the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia did not encourage the spread of Arabic culture, especially language, outside the scope of teaching and learning of Islam.

Fifth, the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia did not take place through armed force, but through a mixture of cultures. Historian M.C. Ricklefs calls this mixing a "mystic synthesis" (Ricklefs, 2007, pp. 1–3; Ricklefs, 2006). The process of Islamization is marked by the use of language. According to Ricklefs, the authentic evidence for this is the inscriptions on the tombstones. On the tombstones of Muslim cemeteries in the Terengganu Sultanate (1302–1387) and the Brunei Sultanate, the title "king" is written in Arabic ("Sultan") and Sanskrit ("Maharaja") as well. In Muslim cemeteries in Trawulan and Tralaya, East Java, tombstones show the Hindu Saka year numerals written in Sanskrit-Pali script, rather than Arabic script (Ricklefs et al., 2010, p. 79). This syncretic process caused the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia not to be synonymous with the spread of Arabic culture and language.

Sixth , Malay is the only language with Sanskrit roots in Southeast Asia whose script is Arabicized. "Arabized" means to change in the way of writing. That is, from Sanskrit-Pali letters to "localized" Arabic letters, the "Pegon Arabic".

The Arabicization process of the Malay language cannot be separated from political and economic events. The growth of Malacca on the Malay Peninsula was very influential in Southeast Asia (Tate, 1977, p. 33). Historian Barbara Watson Andaya says that Malacca was the most powerful maritime trade center in Southeast Asia from the late 13th to early 16th centuries. Malacca's trading network included Java, Sulu, and mainland Southeast Asia, as well as Sumatra. Malacca rulers and traders used Malay as the language of intermediary (lingua franca) in transactions with merchants from Java, Sulu, Thailand and Sumatra. According to Andaya, in 1430 the ruler of Malacca decided to embrace Islam. They changed the government system of Malacca to become the Islamic Sultanate. This political process brought about a whole cultural change. One of them was in the linguistic aspect. The Malay language underwent a fundamental transformation by writing using localized Arabic letters (Andaya, 2020).

In short, the spread of Arabic script in Southeast Asia cannot be separated from the development of Malacca in the 15th century. At that time, Malacca had become three centers of power. Namely, the center of trade, the center of political power, and the center of the spread of Islam. The economic and political triumph of the Malacca Sultanate in the 15th century made the Malay language with the Arabic letters (Pegon) and Islam spread widely in this region. However, the spread of Pegon Arabic script in the context of the Malacca network did not automatically encourage the spread of Arabic. The language that developed in the Malacca network was Malay, not Arabic. The emergence of the Pegon Arabic script in the Malay language system once again

shows cultural syncretism. Namely the mixing of Arabic and Malay elements in the language. The position of the Malay language with the Arabic letter Pegon in Southeast Asia still needs to be elaborated to understand the acculturative character that created the diversity of languages in this region.

Europeanization and the Development of Language as a Differentiator among Nations

Historians have studied intensively the presence of Europeans in Southeast Asia. They also study European institutions in Southeast Asia, for example economic, military and political institutions. Almost all reference books on Southeast Asia view the contact with Europeans as a turning point in Southeast Asia towards what is called "modernization" or "Modern Southeast Asia" (Bastin, 1967; Chandler et al., 2005; Tate, 1977). The view is of course controversial. But one thing is clear that is, the presence of Europeans brought a lot of influences in Southeast Asia, including in terms of language.

According to historian Ruth McVey, the spread of colonial power in Southeast Asia was asynchronous. The degree of spread varied. The response of local rulers to European rule was a determining factor in the scope and depth of European influence in Southeast Asia (McVey, 1978, pp. 6, 8). Therefore, a study of European influence must take into account the spatial and temporal contexts that specifically framed an interaction (Winichakul & Tagliacozzo, 2014, pp. 36–37).

In terms of language, according to Kees Groeneboer, European power in Southeast Asia encouraged the use of European languages as the region's official language. The depth of European language influence and the persistence of its use in Southeast Asia was determined by many factors, including nationalism (Groeneboer, 1999a, pp. 201–222). Nationalism demands the existence of a national language as "national identity" (Anderson, 1983). From this perspective, the development of a national language actually limits the function of language as a marker of cultural integration. It encouraged the function of language as a differentiator between nations. An example of this is the debate about Indonesian as the national language (Alwy & Sugono, 2011).

This sub-section describes how Europe "shaped" Southeast Asia. "Europe" here includes the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, English, French and German. European influences in Southeast Asia can be divided into three periods. Namely, the period of expansion, the period of trade monopoly (emporium), and the period of political institutionalization (empire) (Tarling, 1999, pp. 1–74; Kartodirdjo, 1999). The period of expansion brought Portuguese and Spanish power in the 15th to 16th centuries (Reid, 2020, pp. 18–21). The emporium period features England, Holland and France in the 17th to 18th centuries (Reid, 2020, pp. 75–155). The empire period presented Britain, the Netherlands, France, the United States and Germany in the 19th to 20th centuries (Raben, 2014, pp. 26–30).

First, the Portuguese and Spanish formed a very extensive trading network in Southeast Asia. From the Philippines to India and Sri Lanka. From China, Japan and Formosa to Banten, Maluku and Timor (Bastin, 1967, pp. 1–3). Spain left the

Philippines in the late 19th century due to its defeat by the United States (Bastin, 1967, pp. 22–24; 36–42). The Portuguese continued to play an important cultural role in western India until the outbreak of World War II (Bastin, 1967, pp. 19–21). Spanish and Portuguese influence in Southeast Asia can still be seen today. For example in family names and system, vocabulary, lyrics and song styles, architecture and others (Groeneboer, 1999a).

Second, through the VOC (Vereeniging van Oost-Indische Compagnie, East India Trading Company), the Dutch controlled Asian trade routes in the 16th century. Dutch trade route was very wide. From the Maluku Islands to Sri Lanka and Malacca (Kartodirdjo, 1999, pp. 70–78). Apart from Batavia, Ambon, Malacca and Sri Lanka, Dutch trading centers in the 17th century were also in Persia, Bengal, Mauritius, Siam, Guangzhou, Formosa and South India (N. N., 2020).

Even though the Dutch nation existed for a long time, especially in the Indonesian archipelago, the Dutch language did not take root. According to Groeneboer, Dutch rule in Indonesia did not deal with the Dutch language policy in an intensive way. The Dutch were too busy making money. They did not care about the spread of the Dutch language. Because of this, the use and spread of Dutch in Indonesia stopped soon after the collapse of the Dutch East Indies collapsed at the start of World War II. The Dutch language in Indonesia slowly became extinct (Groeneboer, 1999b, pp. 32–48).

Third, England through the East India Company (EIC, East India Trading Company) developed the most influential European power in Asia. The center of British power in Asia was in India. Like the Netherlands, British expansion took place through political, economic and military institutions. The change from the British empire to the British empire in Asia was marked by the British conquest of South Asia and East Asia, from Nepal to Hong Kong (N. N., 2019). The British Empire in Asia made English culture and language spread in Asia (Elkins, 2009, p. 380).

Fourth, Prothero's notes (first published in 1920) give an overview of France's footprint in South and Southeast Asia. In 1668, French trade representatives managed to establish their first offices in Surat and in Machilipatnam, India (Prothero, 1920, pp. 1–3). In 1673 and 1674 the French established settlements in Chandernagore and Pondicherry. These two settlements later developed as France's main trading center in India (Ganesan, 2012). The total French population in India until 1915, or 250 years after their first arrival in India, was 266,828 people. This number was much smaller than the UK population of around 2 million (Prothero, 1920, pp. 7–9).

In the 17th century, the French attempted to establish colonies in Lower Burma, which were part of the Mon and Khmer empires (Tarling, 1999, p. 37). A number of French ships reached Tonkin, Annam, Khmer and Mon/Lower Burma. But the "French nation" here means Catholic missionaries, not representatives of political or economic institutions (Ladenburg, 2007, p. 2; N. N., 9999). Through the 1763 Paris Agreement, France had to surrender most of its territory in India to England, especially the most important trading center, Pondicherry (Pike, 2012). The French remained in control of Karikal (Prothero, 1920, pp. 8–9; Pike, 2012). In the 19th century, France gradually

controlled Chochinchina, Cambodia, Laos, Annam and Tonkin. This regional unity is called Indo-China (Bastin, 1967, p. 99; N. N., 9999). In island Southeast Asia, the only French colonial representation was the government of Lieutenant Governor Herman Willem-Daendels in the Dutch East Indies (Agmasari, 2019). By looking at the French colonial politics, the French influence in language development in Southeast Asia can only be identified in its most stable colonial territory, namely Indo-China.

Fifth, according to Nicholas Tarling, in the 19th century there was a German trade mission in the struggle for territory and economic concessions in the Sultanate of Sulu. German interests in Sulu made Spain in the Philippines' Mindanao and England's Northern Borneo compromise and sign an Anglo-Spanish treaty in 1877. As a result of political changes in Europe, in 1880 Germany had to leave Sulu. In 1884–1885 German ships shifted its trading mission to Port Moresby in New Guinea. From there the Germans moved on to Queensland (Tarling, 1999, pp. 23–24). Germany presented a European political-economic entity in Southeast Asia. But Germany's presence in Southeast Asia rarely gets the attention it deserves. This is because the period of its existence was relatively short. German cultural influence in Southeast Asia can be identified especially in Protestant and Catholic missions, for example in Sumatra and Flores (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008; Pelzer, 1961; Schulze, 2013).

Conclusions

Southeast Asia has experienced many waves of the spread and development of languages from various civilizations. John F. Hartmann's studies provide an important foundation for understanding the spread and growth of Indic languages as the root languages of Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, Hartmann's postulates do not provide a comprehensive picture of the history of the spread of languages other than the Indic language family. The findings of this article indicate that after the period of Indic languages, Southeast Asia experienced three other waves of language spread that is, languages from China, Arabic, and European languages.

Every wave of linguistics spread left cultural characteristics in different nation groups in Southeast Asia. However, the process of spreading languages in Southeast Asia did not take place unilaterally. The process of Indianization, Sinicization, Arabization and Europeanization of languages always required the active interaction between two parties, i.e. the spreader and the recipient. The interaction was a process of cultural acculturation. It gave birth to new variants of languages. Most of these variants are the languages in Southeast Asia today. Hence, Southeast Asia is characterized by a plurality of languages. The history of cultural interaction shows that language plurality is a cultural feature of Southeast Asia.

This understanding has implications. Attempts to establish one official language in Southeast Asia, for example within the framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), are ahistorical. The idea for having one regional language contradicts the history of the formation of an acculturative Southeast Asian society. The long traces of the spread and development of languages in Southeast Asia confirm

that plurality of languages is a cultural reality that has fluidly integrated Southeast Asia for centuries.

Acknowledgements

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