

**Postgraduate Student Forum  
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**ADVANCES IN ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Iklil Izzati ZAKARIA, Mokhtar Saidin, Jeffrey Abdullah (Universiti Sains Malaysia)**

*Ancient Platform at Sungai Batu, Bujang Valley, Kedah*

The research project in the Sungai Batu Complex has led to the discovery of dozens of mounds that may contain monumental archaeological findings. SB2B and SB2D are two of those sites unearthed nearby ancient river which connected to the Sungai Batu riverine network. The findings in those two sites include brick platforms with possible floor structures, potsherds, beads, stone tools and slags. Based on the radiocarbon dating on charcoal sample, the site can be dated from the 5<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. These sites might have been a remnant of an ancient platform used to load and unload trade commodities that may include iron ores. These sites can be used as an evidence of the existence of an upriver-downriver economical interaction. The discovery of these two river platforms may affirm the complexity of the Site of Sungai Batu not only as a centre for religious and production activities, but also the exchange of commodity, namely the iron based trade. This paper discusses the result of preliminary research done on those two sites, in terms of forms and its functions, and relation to the history of Sungai Batu.

**Naizatul Akma Mokhtar, Mokhtar Saidin & Jeffrey Abdullah (Universiti Sains Malaysia)**

*The Ancient Iron Smelting Site in Sg. Batu, Bujang Valley, Kedah*

This paper discusses the preliminary data of iron smelting site (SB2A) found in protohistorical site of Bujang Valley, Kedah. This site was dated to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century. The findings include iron artefacts, remains of furnaces, thousands of iron ores, *tuyeres* and slags. As the first iron smelting site ever discovered in Bujang Valley, this discovery had given a big impact that may be able to change the old paradigm about the existence of a possible civilization in Malaysia. The discovery shows that from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, there had been a society that had already acquired the technology of iron smelting in Bujang Valley. The actual form of the structure, in terms of the shape of the furnace, is yet to be identified due to the insufficiency of the intact structure discovered during the excavation. The current research indicates that a large-scale iron-smelting industry existed in Bujang Valley from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century. This paper will also attempt to discuss the result of the preliminary analysis on the iron artefact, through the employment of some methods such as polishing section, X-ray fluorescence (XRF) and Scanning electron microscope (SEM).

**YAU Ping Yuen Charlotte (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)**

*Potsherds Narrate: Studying the Social Structure of Bronze Age Hong Kong through Pottery Analysis*

The Bronze Age of Hong Kong has long been regarded as an egalitarian society compared to the Bronze Age civilization in Mainland China, but in-depth studies are far from sufficient. Though unique decoration motifs found with bronze artifacts and special ornaments in Hong Kong archaeological sites seem to suggest that some sort of status difference existed in the Bronze Age (ca. 3,600 to 2,500 B.P.), fragmentary and few burial goods do not provide sufficient proof of a stratified society.

To understand more about the social structure and economy at that time, this study looks at a more abundant source – pottery. The presence of an exclusively Bronze Age motif – the double-F, may hold key information to these issues. Based on a comparative and quantitative study of potsherds decorated by the double-F motif found in three Bronze Age sites: Tai Wan, Sha Po New Village, and Sha Ha, this paper discusses aspects of pottery production and distribution, examines potter's application methods of the motif and manufacturing technology, investigates whether standardization and economic specialization existed, and whether the double-F pottery could have been social elite goods. By integrating the result of this pottery study and other archaeological data of the three sites, including subsistence strategies and mortuary analysis, this paper seeks to provide new evidence for our understanding of the social structure in Bronze Age Hong Kong.

**WANG Guanyu (Peking University)**

*The Interactions between Chinese Export Ceramics and Their Foreign 'Markets': The Stories in Late Ming Dynasty*

This research is magnified from a very important part of the author's Master's thesis on *The Chinese Ceramics and Its Westward Maritime Trade in Late Ming Dynasty*. By using the information of Chinese ceramics collected widely from historical documents, archaeological discoveries and museum collections mainly in the Southeast Asian, American and European areas, this research will focus on statistic analysis of them to see more details about the interactions between the local cultures (, customs and the local people) and the Chinese ceramics they are exposed to.

Due to the local choices, the scales of the Chinese ceramics sold to the 3 districts mentioned above are different, so do their qualities and many other aspects such as shapes and patterns. Even the same ceramics may have different functions been adapted by the local people in later use. Simultaneously, the ceramics strongly influence the local cultures and customs by permeating into the natives' dietary habits, religious rites and burial practices. Typical and lively examples will be given in the research to understand this specific cultural phenomenon occurred in the maritime trade period.