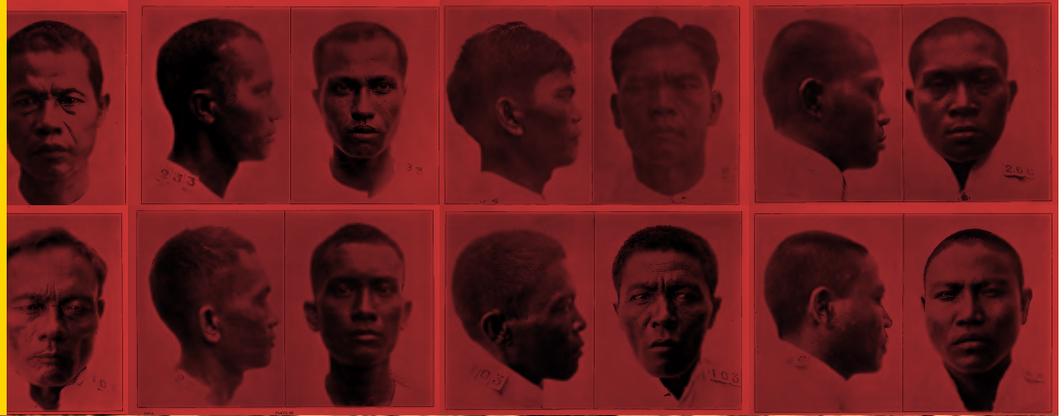


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## SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES AND THE NATIONALIST TRADITION:

### Evaluating the historiographical contribution of Zeus A. Salazar in building pan-Malayan identity

**MARK JOSEPH P. SANTOS**

One of the early propositions on the nature of Southeast Asia comes from George Coedes' 1968 *The Indianized states of Southeast Asia*, which assumes that Southeast Asia and its identity construction resulted from the region's passive acceptance of culture from India and China. Such is the case that the cultural landscape of the region becomes a mere accumulation of external influences. Robert Redfield's notion of "great and little traditions" that Southeast Asian historians used in examining and understanding Southeast Asian identity and history influenced these ideas. Zeus Salazar's 1988 *The Malayan connection*, challenges this framing of Southeast Asian history.

This study aims to evaluate Salazar's historiographical contributions to Southeast Asian studies, especially in terms of his efforts to problematize and establish the pan-Malayan identity of insular Southeast Asia. This will be undertaken through a critical review of his works such as *Kabihasnang Asyano: Isang pangkasaysayang introduksyon* [Asian civilization: A historical introduction] (1990); *The Malayan connection* (1998); *Ang Pilipinong banua/banwa sa mundong Melano-Polynesiano* [The Philippines in the Melano-

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*Polynesian world*] (2006); and, *Asya: Kasaysayan at kabihasnan* [*Asia: History and civilization*] (2010), as well as the works of some scholars in Southeast Asian Studies who have been influenced by Salazar and his works. The research will also show that the nationalist historiography that Salazar advocates emphasizes and highlights the Southeast Asian region's Austronesian roots as the basis of the region's cultural identity.

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