

A Note on the Extension of Milking Practices into Southeast Asia during the First Millennium A.D.

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Since the publication at the end of the last century of EDUARD HAHN's magistral work on the role of domesticated animals in human economies¹ it has been customary to distinguish a zone of East Asia within which, despite the presence of milkable animals, little or no use was traditionally made of milk products. This paper will examine the validity of this thesis in so far as it applies to the southern reaches of that zone, the region, that is, that has rather recently come to be known as Southeast Asia *sensu stricto*. Concerning the continental territories of this realm HAHN himself wrote, "Ganz Indochina hat trotz enger Berührung mit dem indischen Kulturkreis den Milchgenuß nicht angenommen"², and it will be on this region that we shall focus our attention. It goes without saying that we shall be here discussing only the traditional world of Southeast Asia, and hence excluding recent pioneer, small-scale developments in commercial dairying in Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaya, Sarawak, Sabah, Java, and elsewhere.

Most authors who have followed HAHN's interpretation have located the transition zone between the traditional milking and non-milking regions of this part of Asia as running approximately from the western borders of Ssü-ch'uan to the head of the Bay of Bengal in East Pakistan³. As a first step, it might be advisable to move this transition zone somewhat farther to the southeast in order to take account of the practices of certain early cultures. Under the Pagan dynasty (A. D. 1044-1287), for example, the milking of cows seems to have been practised throughout the plains of central Burma⁴. In

¹ EDUARD HAHN, *Die Haustiere und ihre Beziehungen zur Wirtschaft des Menschen. Eine geographische Studie*. (Leipzig, 1896), particularly pp. 77-82.

² *loc. cit.*, p. 78.

³ Few authors have defined this zone with any degree of precision. Perhaps CARL O. SAUER has been the most specific in his delimitation: *Agricultural Origins and Dispersals*. Bowman Memorial Lectures of the American Geographical Society, Series 2 (New York, 1952), pl. IV.

⁴ For an excellent summary account of the economic basis of society in central