

Lorraine M. Gesick

IN THE LAND OF  
LADY WHITE BLOOD  
SOUTHERN THAILAND AND THE  
MEANING OF HISTORY

SEAP

Lorraine M. Gesick  
**IN THE LAND OF LADY WHITE BLOOD**

**SOUTHERN THAILAND AND THE  
MEANING OF HISTORY**

*This page intentionally left blank*

Lorraine M. Gesick

IN THE LAND OF  
LADY WHITE BLOOD  
SOUTHERN THAILAND AND THE  
MEANING OF HISTORY

STUDIES ON SOUTHEAST ASIA



Southeast Asia Program  
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York  
1995

**Editor in Chief**  
**Benedict Anderson**

**Advisory Board**  
**George Kahin**  
**Stanley O'Connor**  
**Takashi Shiraishi**  
**Keith Taylor**  
**Oliver Wolters**

**Editing and Production**  
**Audrey Kahin**  
**Roberta Ludgate**  
**Dolina Millar**  
**Kyung Ro**

**Studies on Southeast Asia No. 18**

**© 1995 Cornell Southeast Asia Program**  
**ISBN 0-87727-717-6**

*In Memory of My Mother*

*This page intentionally left blank*

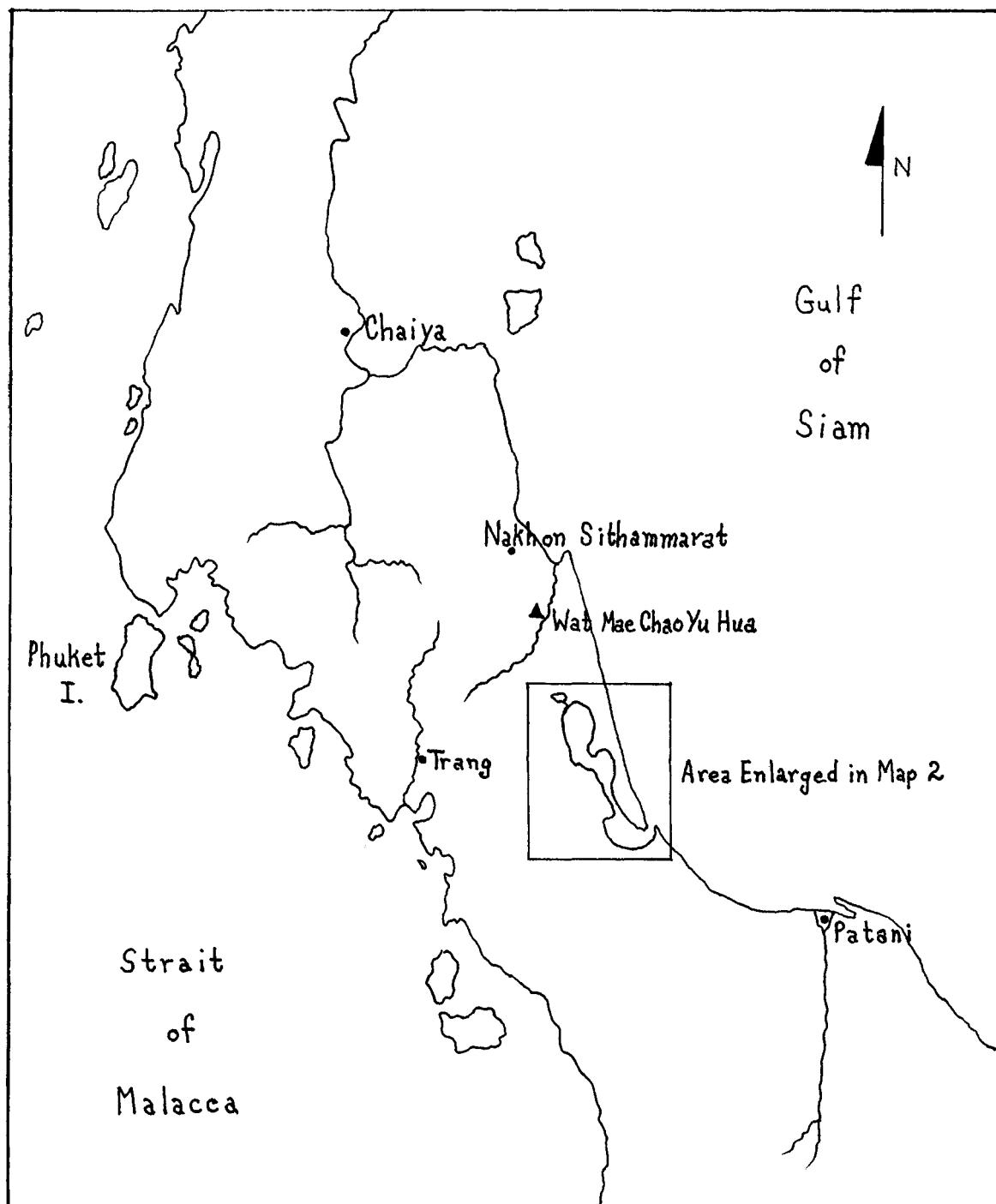
---

# CONTENTS

Acknowledgments .....	vii
1. Introduction .....	1
2. Phatthalung and the Problem of History .....	5
3. Royal Texts and Local Meanings .....	20
4. The Historiography of Southern Thailand .....	37
5. Landscape and History .....	53
6. National History and Local History .....	72
Appendix: The Story of Lady White Blood .....	84
Bibliography .....	87
Index .....	93

## MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Map 1. Southern Thailand .....	vi
Map 2. Phatthalung-Sathing Phra Region .....	viii
Plate 1. Wat Khian, Bang Kaeo, Reliquary Stupa .....	4
Plate 2. <i>Tamra</i> dated B.E. 2242 (1698) .....	19
Plate 3. Phra Kho Hill, Wat Phra Kho .....	36
Plate 4. Wat Phra Kho, Reliquary Stupa .....	36
Plate 5. Ladies of Bang Kaeo, descendants of <i>phlao</i> custodians .....	52
Plate 6. Wat Sathing Phra, Reliquary Stupa .....	71
Plate 7. Lady White Blood Manuscript, inner front leaves 1 and 2 .....	82
Plate 8. Lady White Blood Manuscript, leaves 3 and 4 .....	83



Map 1. Southern Thailand

---

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

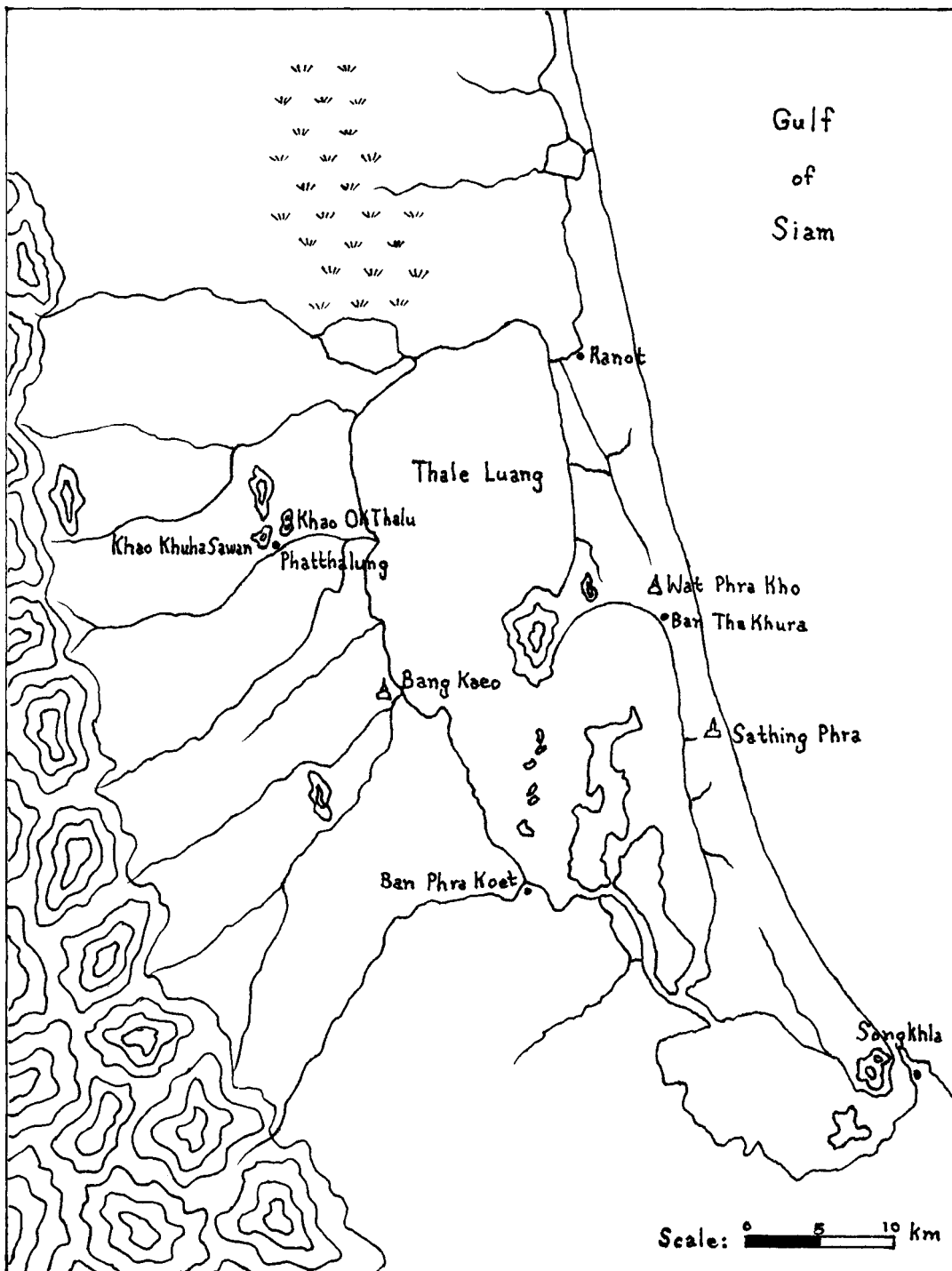
**A**lthough this book is short, it was long in the writing, and my debts of gratitude are correspondingly many. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge as many of those debts here as I can.

A Ford Foundation Southeast Asia Postdoctoral Fellowship enabled me to visit the Thailand National Library many years ago, when I first read the manuscripts that are the focal point of this study. Cornell University's Southeast Asia Program assisted me twice in the writing of this book, once in 1984–85 by providing me with office space, library privileges, and stimulating intellectual exchange as I began writing the first tentative drafts, and again in the summer of 1990 by awarding me a Luce Junior Faculty Fellowship that allowed me to revise the book substantially, bringing it closer to its present form.

The bulk of the research was done in Thailand in 1987 under a Fulbright Senior Research Fellowship. During this research, Chaiwut Piyakul and Phitaya Butsararat of the Phatthalung Cultural Center, Sutthiwong Phongphaibun of the Institute for Southern Thai Studies in Songkhla, and Preecha Noonsuk of the Center for Southern Thai Studies at Nakhon were all generous with their time and knowledge.

Early exploratory drafts were read by Benedict Anderson, James Boon, Oliver Wolters, and Peter Vandergeest, whose criticisms all helped me to eliminate extraneous matter and sharpen my focus. Conversations with Oliver Wolters during my sojourns at Cornell were especially valuable in helping me shape my thinking about this book. Grant Olsen and David Wyatt offered useful advice about revisions to Chapters Three and Four. Drafts of the entire book in substantially its present form were read by David Chandler, Anthony Diller, Craig Reynolds, Thongchai Winichakul, and an anonymous publisher's reader, all of whose criticisms and suggestions I have tried to take heed of in this final version. I owe David Chandler special thanks for reading the whole manuscript twice, each time giving his careful attention to eliminating at least some of my more annoying stylistic mannerisms. The National Thai Studies Centre at the Australian National University afforded me the opportunity in 1992 to interact with knowledgeable colleagues as I began final revisions for publication.

Through his encouragement and advice Anthony Diller made sure I kept working to completion. Finally, I must acknowledge that without the help of Jaron Kanchanaphen of Kradangnga village, who acted as my research assistant, guide, and occasional interpreter when the southern Thai dialect became too thick for me, this book would not have been possible. He and his wife Bon opened their house to me, and their neighbors and kin numbered prominently among my informants.



Map 2. Phatthalung-Sathing Phra Region