

referenced. The edition is particularly adept in thematizing and making sense of the religious and spiritual aspects of *Dewa Ruci*, or what Arps refers to as the play's "religiosity."

This erudite and multi-layered book, researched patiently over decades by a leading scholar who is also an able puppeteer and gamelan player, is a major contribution to the study of Southeast Asian art and performance.

VICTOR T. KING (ed.)
UNESCO in Southeast Asia
World Heritage Sites in Comparative Perspective
Copenhagen, NIAS Press, 2015.
384pp, ISBN 978 87 7694 174 1, £19.99

Reviewed by Yunci Cai
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'UNESCO in Southeast Asia: World Heritage Sites in Comparative Perspectives' is a much-welcomed edited volume, which offers a broad overview of the management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS) in Southeast Asia. It presents a comparative approach to understanding the implications of UNESCO's designation of WHS in Southeast Asia by exploring not only the transformations of the physical sites and their local communities, but also the wider local, national, and global eco-systems in which the sites are embedded. Based on in-depth analysis of a selection of WHS in seven Southeast Asian countries, the book offers a comparative approach to understand the variegated aspects of heritage representation, contestation, and management, bringing into questions issues of authenticity, nationalism, and identity, as well as heritage's role in economic, social and community development, in Southeast Asia's context.

The book is organised along three categories of heritage sites across 16 chapters, including an introductory chapter and a postscript chapter. The first category, consisting of six chapters, discusses the urban heritage sites in Laos PDR, Vietnam, Philippines, and Malaysia. The second category, consisting of four chapters, discusses the management of monumental heritage sites in Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia. The third category, consisting of five chapters, examines several natural heritage sites in Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Philippines.

The book makes an important contribution to cultural management and heritage studies in Southeast Asia, as it sheds light on heritage and cultural issues in a relatively under-researched region of the world. Specifically, it is the first attempt to bring together the study of the management of heritage sites in Southeast Asia. It does an impressive feat of elucidating the common themes relating to cultural management and heritage politics in Southeast Asia, a region of great diversity in terms of its ethnic, religious, and linguistic composition, its political and social constitution as well as its economic and developmental trajectories.

At the theoretical level, the book explores the cultural politics at play among the different stakeholders at the local, provincial, national, and international levels, as they seek to mobilise the fluid and dynamic construct of heritage to serve multiple agendas. The different case studies

examine the intersections of these complex interplays of different stakeholders, exploring how heritage is being actively manipulated and represented by the different stakeholders, whose actions may align or conflict with the meanings and intentions of other actors, and in the process, reshaped and reconstituted the physical and ideological expressions of heritage intended by UNESCO. It also sheds light on the implications of these multiple expressions on wider political, economic, cultural, and social values, as well as the economic and social livelihoods of their stakeholders. These case studies demonstrate that heritage is often a double-edged sword that brings about both advantages and disadvantages to its stakeholders, with the outcomes contingent on the power dynamics and power plays among its stakeholders.

At the practical level, the book identifies the factors leading to the success or failure of the different heritage sites to realise the potential economic and developmental benefits, accruing from their recognition as WHS bearing outstanding universal significance to humanity. The success factors included, but not limited to, having a strong political leadership with a stake in the development of the heritage sites, the involvement of local communities and non-governmental organisations in the conservation and tourism development efforts, an effective legal and administrative framework for the conservation and management of the heritage sites, a sound land-use and tourism management plan, and a long-term vision with a sustainable outlook. Significantly, these case studies also allude to the importance of seeking a balanced and mediated approach among conflicting interests, values, and objectives of different stakeholders.

At the methodological level, the strengths of this book lie in its strong empirical approach, and its diversity of research methodologies employed. A variety of research methodologies such as participant observation, quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, visual analysis, and historical surveys has been adopted across the different case studies, which each research method shedding light onto a specific aspect of the heritage phenomenon. This offers insights into heritage evaluation, demonstrating the utility of different research methods in different contexts.

An important observation is how several case studies have alluded to the Eurocentrism of UNESCO's WHS discourses, which have been negotiated in different ways by different stakeholders including state actors and the local communities. On the one hand, this has inevitably influenced the direction of cultural policy in Southeast Asian countries which seek recognition for their heritage sites. On the other hand, these Eurocentric discourses have been embodied and reinterpreted by the different state actors, based on their own national narratives for their own agendas, which may align or conflict with the original intentions of the WHS discourses.

The analysis could benefit from a more critical examination of the UNESCO's WHS discourses, with a view to suggest the incorporation of more local elements from the experiences of Southeast Asia into these discourses, therefore making them less Eurocentric and more sensitive to the different needs of cultural heritage management in Southeast Asia. It could also benefit from a critical analysis of power dynamics and diplomatic considerations among state actors in the international selection of heritage sites for designation as UNESCO WHS, demonstrating how wider geo-political considerations and diplomatic negotiations among countries can affect process of heritage recognition. Finally, the book could have perhaps examined the politics

behind the heritage sites which have been rejected for recognition as UNESCO WHS, addressing why these sites have been rejected, and the associated political plays and implications.

Despite these shortcomings, overall, this is a highly recommended read for academics, professionals and cultural specialists managing heritage sites and drafting cultural heritage policies in Southeast Asia and elsewhere.

FAROUK YAHYA

Magic and divination in Malay illustrated manuscripts.

Leiden: Brill, 2016

xxvii + 349 pp., ISBN 978-90-04-30164-1; Euros 136

Reviewed by Annabel Teh Gallop

The British Library

This is an important book. It makes a significant and original contribution to a little-known aspect of Malay manuscripture – illustrated Malay manuscripts on magic and divination – previously either ignored, or sampled very selectively, or approached tangentially through ethnographic studies. The reasons for this neglect are quite simple: the illustrations are inextricably linked with the texts, and the texts are exceedingly difficult to decipher and understand. This is due to the esoteric nature of the contents, and the fact that the manuscripts themselves tend to be personal compilations of information gleaned from various sources rather than coherent texts. Thus, many of the topics and images from Malay magic and divination manuscripts presented in this book have never been discussed in print before.

Due to the paucity of previous studies, almost all the insights and discoveries in this book arise from a study of mostly previously unpublished manuscripts. Of the 96 illustrated Malay manuscripts on magic and divination analysed in this book, five are held in two collections in Riau, 11 are from two libraries in the UK, and the great majority of 80 manuscripts are held in five Malaysian collections, including 60 from the National Library of Malaysia. The focus of this book is thus primarily on manuscripts from the Malay peninsula, ‘partly because this (alongside coastal parts of Borneo and east Sumatra) is a core Malay ethnic/linguistic area (i.e. where Malay is spoken as a first language), and also because the number of manuscripts traced afforded a reasonable-sized corpus from a specific locality, on the basis of which certain observations could be made and conclusions drawn’ (p. 4). Within this corpus, there is a preponderance of manuscripts from the east coast states of Patani and Kelantan. At the same time, Farouk acknowledges an inevitable blurring of boundaries, with some examples included from Aceh, while Minangkabau and Bugis influence is strongly apparent along the west coast of the peninsula. Chronologically, the earliest manuscript is dateable to *ca.* 1775 and probably originates from Selangor, while the most recent is from Perlis and dated 1933. A few unillustrated manuscripts on magic and divination are occasionally referred to in the text, as are numerous other supporting sources.

The book is presented in two parts. The shorter Part 1 comprises two introductory chapters, the first on ‘Malay magic and divination manuscripts’. Farouk first introduces his corpus of