

seal production and use. These essays provide broad historical background on the specific area treated in that section, as well as careful readings of inscriptions and illuminating interpretations of the images and objects presented by particular seal impressions or matrices. We see a great example of this in Gallop's reading of an 1859/60 seal of Sultan Abdul Jalil Jalaluddin of Siak in which she highlights the ways in which the ambiguous use of the Arabic term *al-mansūr* was deployed in the context of Siak's subjugation to Dutch rule (p. 216). This particular seal not only provides a window to how Malay seals might be approached as historical source material, but also reflects an aspect of an important broader point that Gallop argues at several points in the book about the significant influence of Dutch colonial practice on the ways in which seals came to be used in Indonesia (p. 52). With such perceptive interventions into the cultural history of the region, Gallop's outstanding work in compiling this book gives us a dynamic framework for contextualizing the specific material presented in this catalog in relation to a complex constellation of cultural interactions involving Europe as well as diverse parts of the Muslim world. Taken as a whole, then, this catalog and the interpretive chapters that frame it provide a valuable new resource for the history of Muslim Southeast Asia that manages to simultaneously supply an immense wealth of new primary source data while also inspiring readers with fascinating details and thought-provoking insights on almost every page.

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***Traces of Trauma: Cambodian Visual Culture and National Identity
 in the Aftermath of Genocide***

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Scholarship on post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia (1979–present) has paid significant attention to collective memory, trauma, and reconciliation among the Cambodian public following the atrocities committed under the Khmer Rouge regime (1975–79). This aspect of academic discussion is exciting and crucial not merely because of the many long-term impacts on people's mental health, especially the feelings of anxiety, anger, and revenge resulting from the traumatic events of those years. It is exciting also because the re-emergence of Cambodia's collective identity and culture following Khmer Rouge destruction has been associated—in one way or another—with the massacres and hardships that people suffered under the regime and beyond. Khmer Rouge rule has been widely condemned by the Cambodian public, including artists and filmmakers, for its many

crimes against humanity. At the same time, what happened under the regime has become a source for the collective identity and cultural reconstruction of post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia. Over the past 40 years, incidents related to the Khmer Rouge have been popularly featured in films, paintings, performances, books, magazines, political speeches, NGO campaigns, museum and art exhibitions, television programs, songs, sculptures, memorials, and even rituals.

Traces of Trauma touches on the aspect of visual culture, which is a refreshing approach in the field of Southeast Asian scholarship. The narrative is exciting to read due to its clear structure and effective approach to capturing the post-Khmer Rouge traumatic experience and collective memory and identity. Boreth Ly (p. xii) reminds us that the book aims to answer three major questions: What role do the arts play in capturing the traumatic experiences (of US bombing, civil war, and Khmer Rouge survivors)? Can they help to transcend and thus heal the personal and collective trauma? What are the potentials and limitations of the arts in their ability to answer these difficult questions?

Ly's description and analysis are rich with empirical information and theoretical concepts that allow him to comprehensively answer these questions. His approach of selecting and examining the works of contemporary Cambodian and diasporic Cambodian artists, filmmakers, and poets to shed light on traumatic individual and collective experiences is well thought out. In the discussion of Rithy Panh's autobiographical film *The Missing Picture*, for example, Ly compares the film to Panh's remembrance of and mourning for the loss of his family under the Khmer Rouge regime. The film combines news and documentary footage with clay figurines to visualize a series of traumatic past events surrounding Panh's family; and based on Ly's analysis, it presents a good example of how trauma can be conceptually defined within the Cambodian context:

Unlike the Freudian-derived theory of trauma that defines trauma as a psychic wound, the Cambodian definition points to an experience of a broken body comparable to a broken pot that, in turn, produces the affect and effect of broken courage (loss of strength to persevere). (p. 17)

The Missing Picture is Panh's search for what he calls "the missing picture" to fill in the lacunae (p. 28). Even when he found clay figurines to bridge these gaps, Panh's experience of losing his entire family over 30 years ago continued to haunt him and cause him to suffer from insomnia connected to the childhood nightmares (p. 28).

Ly's extensive knowledge of visual culture and art history, particularly film, installations, painting, and court dances, produces exciting discussions that allow the reader to appreciate the great value of these artistic and cultural products. At the same time, his critiques on selected art pieces, including those produced by survivors of S-21 Prison, clearly highlight the potential of the arts in capturing memories of the traumatic experiences caused by the regime. These visual cultural products convey both the context of their creation and the metaphorical meaning intended by their creators. As Ly correctly puts it, they "represent and mediate our understanding of

memory, trauma, conflict, morality, ethics, recuperation, healing, and aporia in the aftermath of the genocide" (p. 124).

Traces of Trauma raises many other important points, particularly in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, that advance our understanding about various circumstances of Cambodian society during and after the Khmer Rouge years. It also introduces a scholarly discussion on post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia's collective memory and identity from a visual cultural perspective. But how much did artistic works really mean for collective memory and identity in the aftermath of Khmer Rouge destruction? Ly tells us very little about how many Cambodians actually came to see, share, and learn from Amy Lee Sanford (née Ly Sundari)'s installation and performance *Full Circle* in Phnom Penh in 2010. Chanthou Oeur's stone sculpture titled *Snarm* (Scare), produced in 2006 and placed in a sculpture park in New Hampshire, is probably known to a very small number of Cambodians. Even Panh's Oscar-nominated *The Missing Picture*, released in early 2014, was not among the top preferred films of the year among Cambodian youths in cities such as Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

These artistic creations arose from the producers' innovative skills and remembrance of their own story as well as collective stories. Clearly, they visually and metaphorically present how these individual Cambodian and diasporic Cambodian artists, filmmakers, and poets have dealt with the trauma of their difficult times during the 1970s and the aftermath. But their works are also intended for public consumption. Thus, the question of how much artistic works mean for post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia, including the diaspora, is very important. These products have had a role to play within the broader visual and popular culture of Cambodia since 1979. Given the existence of numerous other visual cultural products concerning the Khmer Rouge, especially those produced and widely promoted by the Cambodian government in the form of performances, documentaries, photo exhibitions, museums and memorials, television programs, and rituals, most of the artistic products examined by Ly did not have a wide appeal among Cambodian audiences. How much, then, do they really represent collective memory and identity and the way in which larger Cambodian communities dealt with their traumatic experience in the aftermath of Khmer Rouge atrocities?

Ly's discussions on popular cultural concepts concerning the *krama* (scarf), palm tree, and court dance are thoughtful and make enjoyable reading. The author accurately discusses the tale of *Preah Thong Neang Neak*, the founding myth of the Khmer kingdom, which has been associated with both court and mass culture, especially at weddings. The tale has long been recorded in Khmer palace chronicles, including the *Nong* text of 1818 (Mak 1980), throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Besides the palace manuscripts, as Ly correctly mentions, it has been part of the court dance repertoire since the colonial years (p. 109). But the author's association of the tale with a tenth-century story originating in an Angkorian inscription of two figures named Kambu and Mera is ahistorical simply because there is no evidence to prove the connection. Instead, according to Ang Choulean's studies, *Preah Thong Neang Neak* appears to be associated more

closely with a twelfth-century story displayed on the bas-reliefs and other features of the Bayon temple (Ang 2007, 364–381).

Apart from these issues, *Traces of Trauma* is clearly a groundbreaking work that takes a refreshing look at Cambodia's dark past of the 1970s and the long-term impacts of the violence on survivors. Through its interdisciplinary approach of examining a range of visual cultural materials, together with the author's broad knowledge of contemporary Cambodian history, art, culture, and politics, Ly's *Traces of Trauma* has many original contributions to offer to both Cambodian and Southeast Asian scholarship as well as the fields of art history, cultural studies, memory studies, cinematic and performance studies, and many more.

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The Crown and the Capitalists:

The Ethnic Chinese and the Founding of the Thai Nation

WASANA WONGSURAWAT

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Histories of modern Thailand have long reserved a prominent place for the role of the country's ethnic Chinese. Wasana Wongsurawat's new book, *The Crown and the Capitalists: The Ethnic Chinese and the Founding of the Thai Nation*, focuses on a crucial element of this history: the relationship of the ethnic Chinese with Thailand's monarchy. Wasana traces the history of this remarkable relationship against a backdrop of tumultuous changes in Thailand, Southeast Asia, and China, starting with the Opium Wars, through the European colonization of Southeast Asia, the rise of Chinese nationalism, the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, the overthrow of Siam's absolute monarchy in 1932, Japanese imperialism in China and Thailand during the Pacific War, and the Cold War. Through a discussion spanning a period of approximately a century, Wasana shows that while the relationship between the ethnic Chinese, the Thai monarchy, and China experienced enormous stresses and strains on all sides throughout this long period, it has endured intact. This makes Thailand's relationship with China, built in significant part on the relationship between the ethnic