

first glimpse into a plethora of thematically and nationally varied narratives about twentieth-century modern architecture.

Pauline K.M. van Roosmalen

PKMvR heritage research consultancy, Zoutkeetsgracht 312, 1013 LC Amsterdam, Netherlands;
email: info@pkmvr.nl.

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Hearing Southeast Asia: Sounds of Hierarchy and Power in Context. Edited by Nathan Porath. Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2019. xxv+384 pp.

This significant collection of essays officially introduces contemporary sound studies—issues, theories, approaches and epistemologies—to the evergreen analytical topic of power and hierarchy in Southeast Asia. In so doing, it brings anthropological, ethnomusicological, linguistic, historical and political research on the region into direct dialogue with the burgeoning field of sound studies.

This book's focus on sound in Southeast Asia is not unique. Other recent publications have focused on the sound worlds of Southeast Asia (see Abels 2011; Barendregt 2012 and 2014; Cobussen 2016; Greene 2004). Over decades, myriad others have focused on the nature of power and hierarchy in Southeast Asia (see Anderson 1990; Atkinson and Errington 1990; Chua et al. 2017; Day 2002; George and Venkiteswaran 2019; Ong and Peletz 1995). What makes this collection important and unique is its penetrating examination of the many ways in which power in Southeast Asia is rendered present—heard, exerted, accepted and contested—through a panoply of sonic phenomena.

In his theoretically rich introduction and first chapter, editor Nathan Porath uses descriptions of his lived experiences in Southeast Asian places to explain to readers not only the ways in which sound shapes and organizes our perceptions of place and time, but also how the particularities of Southeast Asian hierarchies are ensounded.

Porath borrows the concept of strata from Deleuze and Guattari and fuses it with Louis Dumont's understanding of hierarchy as site-specific, ideological evaluation in an effort to expand perspectives on hierarchies beyond the more usual focus of the political and financial realms. Such a move, Porath suggests, is necessary to understand the fluid, boundary-crossing, context-dependent character of hierarchy as it is embodied, enacted and ensounded in Southeast Asia. In keeping with the phenomenological approach common in sound studies, Porath explores the inter-sensoriality of sound perception and the acoustics of power in order to demonstrate that there is a lot more going on in the perception of sound than the simple hearing of auditory stimuli. After demonstrating that silence can be as important as sound in terms of the sonic articulation of hierarchy, Porath finishes with three case studies—one each on the intersections between the sounds of development and commercialism in the colonial and postcolonial contexts, the entanglements of sound and royal hierarchies, and the ways ensoundments of ritual invoke religious and/or spiritual hierarchies. Porath's deep regional knowledge and his ability to demonstrate compelling connections between disciplines is palpable throughout the book.

The rest of the book is organized culturally and geographically, moving from several chapters on different Malay-speaking peoples located in and around the interconnected waters of archipelagic Southeast Asia to one chapter each on research in Kalimantan and Bali, then several essays on sound and power in Myanmar, one on the Philippines, and finishing with one chapter featuring linguistic phenomena in Thailand. The book presents research based in both mainland and archipelagic Southeast Asia, with greater attention to the Malay-speaking world and Myanmar.

Geoffrey Benjamin's essay is comparative, drawing ethnographic material from several groups in the Malay-speaking world (*alam Melayu*). Coining the term "Malay cline" to facilitate comparison across culturally dissimilar, Malay-speaking groups, Benjamin observes a direct relationship between the prevalence of melismatic music and attention to and concern for hierarchy; the more melismatic

and elaborate the music of any particular Malay-speaking group, the more attention that group pays to the cultivation and curation of hierarchy. Benjamin's analysis could be enhanced by incorporating differences in Islamic practice and residuals of Hinduism and colonial histories into his analysis. One feels resonance with the comparative work of Robert Armstrong (1971) in Benjamin's ideas.

Cynthia Chou and Margaret Kartomi present research on the Orang Suku Laut, the sea nomads of the region. Privileging community perspectives, the authors demonstrate how the community ensounds their relationships with the sea through their dance, music and ritual performances. They note that evidence of dramatic changes in living conditions in the last decades can be heard in the music of the communities. Amid the plethora of translated verses, songs and compelling analysis, more local voices could be 'heard' in the text.

In his chapter on the Orang Asli, Porath examines the ways in which shamans corral the power of invisible spirits as therapy for patients in the *dikei* ritual. He describes how shamans, using the power of sounded words, locate the hierarchies and structures of the earthly Malay kingdoms as present within the spirit world. In this ritualized inversion, the actors embody royal personages, and the power of hierarchy—as heard and embodied through sound—is domesticated and catalyses the healing process.

Roy Ellen presents a study of the ritual activity in Nuaulu on Seram. He observes that while the primary life-cycle events are marked by patterns that represent hierarchical relations typical of Austronesia, shamanic events are informal, spontaneous and much quieter, even though much is said and heard. Ellen's case studies come from the 1970s, though he has visited the region more recently. This fact distances the ideas in the essay somewhat, leaving the reader wondering how much the situation has changed.

Timo Duile describes the environmental degradation of the lands of the indigenous people of West Kalimantan. The resulting biodiversity loss has negatively affected the local Dayak people, silencing the efficacy of certain healing rituals previously dependent

on bird sounds. Forest sounds have, however, been repurposed by indigenous activists in their struggles. By demonstrating equality between humans and forest creatures, Dayaks generate human-rights issues as defence against land-appropriating palm oil companies owned by either insiders or outsiders. Duile demonstrates that neither Dayak nor palm oil plantation worker is a monolithic category.

David Henley tackles what he calls the 'sound wars' between Indonesian mosques and the surrounding communities. This long-standing battle has raged for many years and is, surprisingly, not led by non-Muslims but rather by other civic-minded Muslims lobbying for independence of state and religion. With the rise in stricter Islamic practices and calls for sharia law in Indonesia, those who are not Muslim remain silent, unwilling to risk being castigated as intolerant, while tolerant Indonesian Islamic piety is, itself, muffled.

Andy McGraw examines the semiotics of power associated with the *gong agung* or big gong, in his ethnography of the instrument. Imbricated in the representation of power in the court worlds of Java for centuries, the symbolism of the gong was appropriated by colonial powers, and then by the Indonesian government during Soeharto's New Order (1966–98), remaining iconic of the long-standing, Java-centrism of Indonesian governments. The Balinese composer-musicians with whom McGraw engages, debate, goad, resist and contest the Javanese/Indonesian cultural and musical power in their compositions and discourse. McGraw connects their creative world with economic, political and institutional power structures in a subtle analysis that articulates the multiplicities of perspectives on *gong agung*.

Gavin Douglas demonstrates the ways in which sound is connected to local Burmese understandings of power and authority as found in the concept of *hpoun*. Demonstrating the ways similar traditional/religious sounds are used by different political individuals or groups to claim or delegitimize power, Douglas ends the chapter theorizing the ways silence and sound can stabilize or disrupt a society, noting that in a properly functioning democracy the sounds of many flourish and none are silenced.

Céline Coderey explores the efficacy of sound in Buddhist healing practices in Rakhine, Myanmar. While demonstrating the importance of soundings in Buddhist healing and balancing rituals, it is surprising that Coderey makes no mention of the ongoing (at publication) conflict and genocide of Muslim Rohingya by Buddhist Myanmarese in Rakhine. Having her thoughtful analysis on how recitation and silence do and do not impact on Buddhists/non-Buddhists would provide insight into alternative meanings of Buddhist ritual sounds, lending further significance to her study.

Julius Bautista has written a masterful essay that effortlessly links sound studies and postcolonial studies with deep, embodied analysis of ritual and devotion. His analysis of the Philippine's Easter week tradition of *Pabasa* recitation recounting the Passion of Christ moves between deep ethnography and critical theory, history and psychology. He shows that *Pabasa* is simultaneously the ensoundment of the pain of Christ experienced in local bodies and local resistance to the Catholic hierarchy/Western power. Practising what he calls "sounded anthropology" (p. 361), Bautista shows that with an 'ethnographic ear' we can 'hear' much more than sound.

An essay by Martin Platt examining the many ways in which hierarchy is embedded in basic Thai speech closes the volume. He suggests it is the origin of sounds that determine their place in the hierarchy, while the significance of a sound is dependent on its own sonic characteristics. The aesthetic practice of making/receiving hierarchical sounds is just as important to the meaning of words as the hierarchies that are invoked. This interesting article sits alone at the end of the book. With their similar focus on the ways meaning is conveyed through the sounding of words, Platt's essay could have productively followed that of Ellen.

The first of its kind, this volume introduces sound studies to Southeast Asian studies with a strong focus on the ensoundment of hierarchy and power in the region. The book also brings the much-needed addition of a sustained, non-Western focus to sound studies. It is a worthy purchase for librarians developing collections on music, ritual studies, environmental studies, history, politics,

economics and Southeast Asia in general. This volume will be a pleasure to read, not only for people already steeped in the traditions of sound studies (primarily because of the plethora of new ways of understanding sound), but also for Southeast Asia experts for whom the book provides new understandings through ‘hearing’ the region.

Sarah Weiss

Institut für Ethnomusikologie, KunstUniversitätGraz (KUG), Graz, Austria; email: sarah.weiss@kug.ac.at.

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Angkor Wat – A Transcultural History of Heritage, vol. 1, *Angkor in France: From Plaster Casts to Exhibition Pavilions*, vol. 2, *Angkor in Cambodia: From Jungle Find to Global Icon*. Michael Falser. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019. 1,400 pp.

At the cusp of the Gutenberg Galaxy era* of printed communication, and of a period of paradigm shifts, we must approach Michael Falser's venture into monumental history (by studying the great architectural monument of Angkor Wat) with deep respect. Falser's sizeable two-volume monograph is itself a 'monumental' study of great import. The titles of the volumes—1: *Angkor in France (From Plaster Casts to Exhibition Pavilions)* and 2: *Angkor in Cambodia (From Jungle Find to Global Icon)*—suggest that the author deliberately chose an ambiguous message as a 'hook' to instantly attract the attention of those interested in Angkor.

Is there really a need for another scientific publication on Angkor? What can Falser tell us that we do not already know on the subject? Besides being wonderfully designed, the books are well written and based on first-class research materials. Falser introduces us to an enormous collection of assorted sources on heritage protection in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He presents his research in a unique overview of the motivations of European heritage protection and restoration, and how the French heritage ideals became relevant in Southeast Asia, especially in distinguished heritage sites such as Angkor in Cambodia.

* Marshall McLuhan created this term in 1962 (see McLuhan 1962).