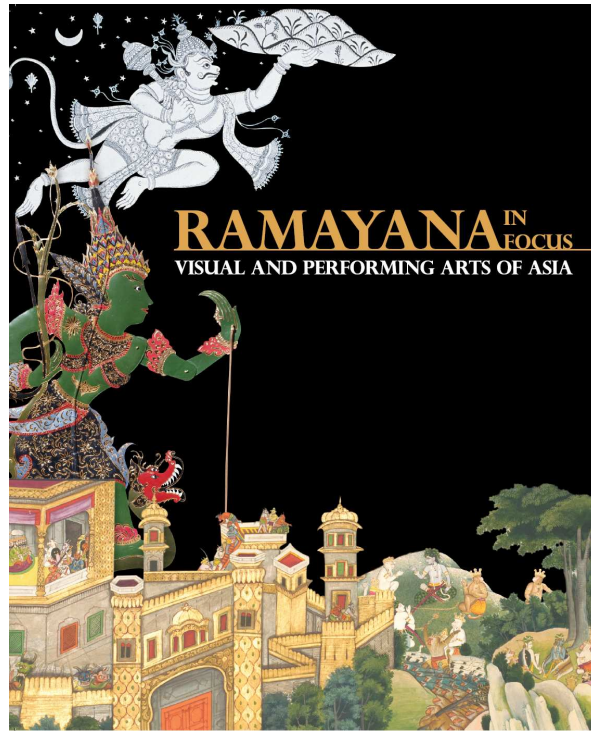


ANNEX II – BOOK SYNOPSIS & CONTENTS



**A publication by the Asian Civilisations Museum
with 20 essays from reputed international scholars and full colour illustrations**

The *Ramayana* is one of the most famous literary works of ancient India. For more than two thousand years, *Ramayana*—the tale of Prince Rama’s life and exploits—has spread as far as Iran in the West and Japan in the East, and has inspired retellings by saints, poets, scholars and performers for generations. In Southeast Asia and East Asia, the story was creatively adapted to reflect local cultures, beliefs and practices. With the growing interest in the Epic and the global spread of the Indian Diaspora, the ancient Epic remains relevant and meaningful even in the modern times.

This richly illustrated volume, *Ramayana in Focus* captures the fascinating adaption of the story in different Asian cultures. The twenty essays from reputed international scholars on *Ramayana* cover a wide range of topics on literary, visual, performing and contemporary arts: *Ramayana* in Sanskrit Hindu culture, in Chinese and Japanese literature and arts; the royal murals of Phnom Penh and Bangkok; the delicate carvings on Javanese and Khmer temples; embroidered shawls from Bengal; traditional Indian paintings from Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh; the performing traditions of *Wayang Kulit Siam* in Malaysia, Sundanese *Wayang Golek* and Balinese *Wayang Wong* and *Cak* dance; interpretation of the *Ramayana* in Java and Indian dances in the early to mid 20th century; *Ramayana* in contemporary

Indian advertisements, films and television serials and contemporary Indonesian films and politics. The book also has a special focus on key female characters such as Princess Sita, queens of King Dasharatha and demonesses Tataka and Shurpanakha.

This book provides insight into the Ramayana traditions in Asia at a glance. It will appeal to those interested in Ramayana studies, Asian literature, art and cultural history and contemporary culture in Asia. Accompanied by endnotes, list of books for further reading, and index, these essays are accessible and beautifully designed. It is hoped that this offering of the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore to promote better understanding of Asian cultures and traditions will further enhance research and publications in these areas.

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