

ethnology | photography | mbs  
trade release: AUGUST 2019

## **DIVINE ENCOUNTERS**

**Sacred Rituals and Ceremonies in Asia**

Photographs and Text by HANS KEMP

**£59 hardcover**

**isbn 978-988-14939-2-7**

330 x 250 mm;

400 pages; all colour;

276 high definition photos; finest repro & binding

Text c. 10,000 words

Visionary World English edition printed & bound April 2019; market release August 2019; inspection copies available May 2019.



**Also published as a collector's**

**LIMITED EDITION (350 copies)**

**isbn 978-988-14939-3-4**

**Further details available on request.**

**17 Years in the making, Hans Kemp presents a stunning revelation of the spirit world that lies close to the surface of so many of Asia's diverse cultures..**



**Kodansha Europe**

for Quality books on Asia & Africa  
info@kodansha.eu | www.kodansha.eu



**TURNAROUND**  
PUBLISHER SERVICES



“ In the last few decades Asia has undergone a remarkable economic transformation. Set in motion in the late 1980's in China by Deng Xiaoping's Open Door Policy, the emergence of the so-called Asian Tigers has transformed once sleepy backwaters across the region into thriving mega-cities.

While there is no denying the positive influence on certain standards of living this embracing of capitalism with Asian characteristics has had, not everything is looking up. The relentless pursuit of economic growth has had a devastating impact on the environment: Pollution, deforestation, mining and overfishing have reached unprecedented levels that directly question the sustainability of the economic paradigm. People are uprooted to make room for gigantic power projects. Others voluntarily pack up and migrate to cities in search of the mighty dollar and material goods their parents couldn't imagine owning. Shanghai, Saigon and Singapore are starting to feel and look more and more alike. A traveller waking up in Tokyo after flying in from Thailand can be forgiven for thinking she's still in Bangkok.

At first sight, Asia's rich and enigmatic culture seems to have fallen victim to the headlong pursuit of material wealth and the onslaught of the fast-food lifestyle. But look more closely and cracks in the glossy veneer of progress are appearing. Fissures reveal the remarkable survival of age-old traditions and customs, in spite of, or perhaps more accurately, precisely as a result of the rising tide of globalisation and the resulting cultural alienation. The notion that people across Asia somehow desire a Rolex or a Benz any less than their brothers and sisters in the West is not supported by reality. But to increase the likelihood of acquiring such status icons, it is perfectly acceptable to get a crocodile tattooed on one's back or consult a fortune teller.

For many people throughout Asia, life's crucial decisions such as marriage, moving to a new city or the purchase of property, are too important to be left to the rational mind alone. There are other, more ethereal, forces at work. Spirits and deities are ubiquitous, their beneficent or malevolent nature can express itself at any time. As a hedge against future uncertainties these spirits need to be placated, worshipped and feted. And should misfortune strike, a healer or shaman navigates the spirit realms in search of a cure.

**Divine Encounters** is a photographic odyssey exploring an Asia hiding in plain sight, resilient and vibrant. For just behind the neon signs, the marble and stainless-steel facades, the luxury cars and glitzy shopping malls, lies a different world. A world revealing itself through elaborate spirit rituals, blood-curdling ceremonies and exuberant festivals taking place all over the continent. No book touching upon a subject so rich can ever claim to be exhaustive. What I present here is only a cross section, covering such stalwart centres of spirit interactions as the forests of Papua New Guinea and the grasslands of Mongolia, but also including densely populated Hong Kong, industrialised Japan and the tropical beach paradise of Phuket in Thailand.

Spirits cannot be confined, but our perception of them often is. So the next time you find yourself in Asia staring at yet another flagship store display window filled with designer handbags or working on your tan while lounging next to the pool with a cocktail in hand, let your curiosity get the better of you and venture further. Somewhere nearby someone is entering into a trance, getting tattooed with ancient protective symbols, flagellating himself, jumping over a fire, reading chicken innards or sending hell money to a deceased ancestor. This is Asia, after all.

May the spirits be with you! ”

*Sans Kewr*

Bangkok, March 17, 2019





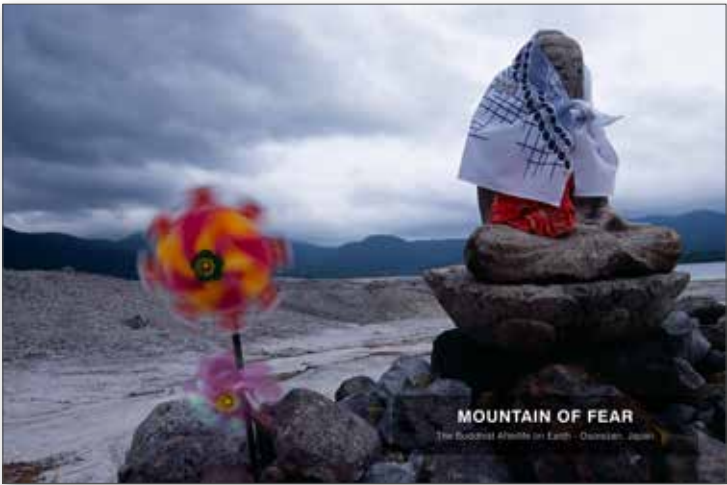


**According** to the legend, this is the place where the first human beings were born. It is a place of great importance and is visited by many people every year. The festival is held in the month of May and is a time of great celebration and joy.

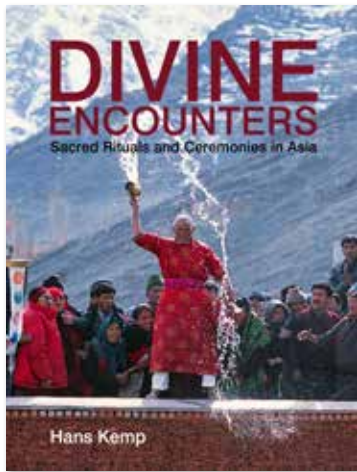
There is a lot of music and dancing at the festival. The people of the region are very proud of their traditions and they like to show them off to the world. The festival is a time when the people of the region come together and celebrate their shared heritage.

The festival is a time when the people of the region come together and celebrate their shared heritage. It is a time when they share their stories and their traditions with each other. The festival is a time when they are all united and they are all happy.

The festival is a time when the people of the region come together and celebrate their shared heritage. It is a time when they share their stories and their traditions with each other. The festival is a time when they are all united and they are all happy.







## **DIVINE ENCOUNTERS** Sacred Rituals and Ceremonies in Asia

Photographs and Text by HANS KEMP

**£59 hardcover; isbn 978-988-14939-2-7**

330 x 250 mm; 400 pages; all colour;  
276 high definition photos; finest repro & binding. Text c. 10,000 words  
Visionary World English edition printed & bound April 2019  
Market release August 2019; inspection copies available May 2019.



*"Our normal waking consciousness... is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the flimsiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus and at a touch they are all there in all their completeness... No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded."*

– William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience

The extraordinary Hans Kemp has spent the last 27 years of his life travelling the farthest reaches of Asia photographing the unique cultures around him. 17 of those years have been spent assimilating the experiences, the knowledge and the images he needed to realise his wish to unveil the myriad aspects of Asian spirituality in book form for others to appreciate.

DIVINE ENCOUNTERS offers an exclusive and insightful visual affirmation of the living world of the spirits among the diverse cultures of Asia, so often to be discovered "hidden in plain sight", as Hans says.



**ALL RIGHTS AVAILABLE.**  
Inspection copies ready  
from May 2019.

Contact Kodansha Europe  
for details.

Kodansha Europe Ltd.  
info@kodansha.eu

