

In addition to the broad historical and sociological picture, Wan Hashim gives us insights into the daily life of some of the nation's best crafts producers. For example:

Before embarking on woodcarving, Wan Su had become famous locally as a carver of characters of the *wayang kulit* (shadow play), traditional sail-rigged boats, and platforms for various ceremonies. Only after the Second World War, Wan Su's talent as a carver was identified and recognised by a patron, Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard who was then the Director-General of the National Museum in Kuala Lumpur. It was Mubin Sheppard who provided the destination and changed Wan Su's entire life and career (p.84).

Although it is the successful producers which illuminate the handicraft profile of the East coast and form the basis of Wan Hashim's study, one might want more information on the less successful crafts people of Kelantan and Terengganu; those who have not had access to government bodies for training and for assistance in the marketing of their products.

The book is liberally illustrated with over a hundred plates. These are in colour, but the reproduction in a number of cases is unfortunately not of a sufficiently high standard. This is a pity, as Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka have shown in other publications on woodcarving, batik and songket that they are quite capable of good colour reproduction.

Along with other recently published Malaysian books on the sociology of the crafts, such as Maznah Mohamad's excellent book on weaving (Maznah Mohamad, *The Malay Handloom Weavers: A Study of the Rise and Decline of Traditional Manufacture*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996), Wan Hashim's book is an important contribution to the field and is highly recommended for courses in sociology, material culture, fine arts and for those with a general interest in Malaysian crafts.

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