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Cambridge Elements

Elements in Politics and Society in Southeast Asia

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SINGAPORE

Identity, Brand, Power

Kenneth Paul Tan
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Identity, Brand, Power

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Abstract: Contemporary Singapore is simultaneously a small postcolonial multicultural nation-state and a cosmopolitan global city. To manage fundamental contradictions, the state takes the lead in authoring the national narrative. This is partly an internal process of nation building, but it is also achieved through more commercially motivated and outward-facing efforts at nation and city branding. Both sets of processes contribute to Singapore's capacity to influence foreign affairs, if only for national self-preservation. For a small state with resource limitations, this is mainly through the exercise of smart power, or the ability to strategically combine soft and hard power resources.

Keywords: Singapore politics, society, and culture, Gramscian hegemony, Legitimacy: democracy, performance, moral authority, Multiculturalism: race, language, religion, Creative city, global city

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