

developments took place following the implementation of the Ethical Policy, an attempt to improve the welfare of the residents of the Indies, which began in 1904. With the formal creation of medical schools, physicians were posted throughout the colony where they witnessed extreme poverty and poor health, while not being accepted as elite members of society, making them question the goals of the colonial policies of progress, modernisation and science. These contradictions spurred their involvement in formulating a new outlook that went beyond their specific ethnic groups. When Dutch conservatives began to push back against their early political awakening, many of these medical doctors responded through support of societies and organisations that developed into political parties alongside the implementation of public health programmes, many of which were under the Rockefeller Foundation. After the Japanese Occupation exacerbated poverty and health issues, many of these medical practitioners then supported the revolution against the return to Dutch colonialism, and those who did not were often forgotten or written out of the nationalistic narrative. Once independence was achieved, some physicians transitioned to business or politics while those who remained committed to medicine became part of an increasingly bureaucratised and under-funded system that emphasised the development of public health care facilities that spread throughout the country, most importantly into rural, underserved areas.

This work is an impressive account of the past century of Indonesian history through the lens of medicine and its practitioners. Hans Pols intertwines the tales of various physicians into the national narrative, and is particularly adept at describing the influences and developments in the period up to 1949, making this an excellent survey of the intricacies of decolonisation and a complicated nationalist movement. Unfortunately, the 60 years after the Indonesian Revolution — covering the Sukarno, New Order and *Reformasi* eras — are pushed into one, final chapter. While this does not allow for the complex stories and developments that occurred post-independence to be considered on a similar scale and, perhaps, could have been left for a second volume, it does not detract from the potential influence of *Nurturing Indonesia* to our studies of the nation, medicine and modernity. This is the work of a master of the topic, and reflects his ability to apply the history of medicine to larger social and political developments in a nation, making it an important contribution in new approaches to the past in the region.

TIMOTHY P. BARNARD

National University of Singapore

Indonesia

Indonesia: State and society in transition

By JEMMA PURDEY, ANTJE MISSBACH and DAVE MCRAE

Boulder, Co: Lynne Rienner, 2020. Pp. 161. Glossary, Bibliography, Index.
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In public commentary as well as academic research, Indonesia is often portrayed as an overlooked, or an ‘underrated’ country. One of the largest countries in the

world, the most populous Muslim-majority society, and a country with a solid record of economic development and democracy over the last two decades, Indonesia is often excluded from discussions of emerging powers or most dynamic economies. Perhaps a better way to put it, as the authors of this new book suggest, is to think of Indonesia as a nation that is 'less understood than it should be' (p. 5), a place of exceptional diversity and dynamism that is surprisingly off the radar given its size and strategic role in Southeast Asia. The three authors, leveraging their expertise in Indonesian politics and society, endeavour to help correct this bias with a comprehensive survey of Indonesia's contemporary politics and society, with an analysis that blends history with more recent patterns of political and social change in various domains.

The first part of the book is historical. After a brief introduction, chapter 2 is a tour de force that guides the reader from the precolonial Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms to Islamisation, the rise of European influence in the archipelago, the heyday of colonialism, the emergence of a nationalist movement, the Japanese Occupation, and the National Revolution. The third chapter continues the narrative through the Sukarno years, from the Liberal Democracy era to the slide into authoritarianism, the Tragedy of 1965–66 and the subsequent establishment of the New Order regime. Chapter 4 focuses on the tumultuous years following the breakdown of the Suharto regime, when Indonesia overcame exceptional economic and social instability with the sweeping political reforms whose legacy is still being felt today. Finally, chapter 5, while not historical in a strict sense, continues in the same vein, providing useful background on the making of political and institutional arrangements that shape contemporary Indonesian politics. The authors offer a well-written and exhaustive review of current research on the subject, including a discussion of issues such as electoral politics, clientelism and political Islam.

The chapters in the second part of the book focus on selected issues in Indonesian politics and society. Chapter 6 introduces the topic of inequality, a crucial issue in contemporary Indonesian studies, and especially on the provision of social services (healthcare, education) and labour markets as a source of socioeconomic disparities. Chapter 7 discusses a series of contentious issues under the common umbrella of human rights, specifically attempts to hold perpetrators accountable for abuses during the New Order (the 1965–66 massacres, as well as military campaigns in Papua, Timor-Leste and Aceh) and more contemporary issues related, for instance, to gender and sexual and religious identity. The eighth chapter on 'Media and popular culture' could have offered an introduction to the exceptionally vast, dynamic and exciting world of cultural production in Indonesia. However, although Indonesian television and film are indeed discussed, the chapter is largely an analysis of media regulation and freedom. Finally, the concluding chapter investigates the role of Indonesia in international affairs. While interactions between Indonesia and the rest of the world include a broad range of economic, cultural, political and social exchanges, the chapter focuses exclusively on formal politics and diplomacy in particular, as it delves on bilateral relations between Indonesia, its neighbours, and international powers, especially the United States and China.

Overall, the authors succeed in their aim to provide a useful tool to educate international readers about Indonesia. The result of the authors' desire to disseminate their knowledge about this (relatively) elusive nation is an authoritative,

knowledgeable and highly readable introduction to the country, which I think will be especially beneficial to a general readership or to students approaching the study of Indonesia for the first time.

DIEGO FOSSATI

City University of Hong Kong

Indonesia

Unmarked graves: Death and survival in the anti-communist violence in East Java, Indonesia

By VANNESSA HEARMAN

Singapore: NUS Press, 2018. Pp. 272. Maps, Plates, Notes, Bibliography, Index.

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Fears of communism in Indonesia persist — by design — and their insidiousness spares no one. Parliamentarians, military figures, and Islamic groups have cited the alleged resurgence of communism to stoke fears about everything from relations with China to the political legitimacy of President Joko Widodo. ‘Jokowi’ himself has been culpable of waving the ‘latent threat of communism’ banner when it suits him. Messages of communist attempts to destroy the nation from within are spread on social media and by way of messaging apps. As of this writing, rumours circulate that the COVID-19 crisis will provide the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) with the perfect cover to launch a comeback.

From whence does such a virulent narrative arise? With *Unmarked graves: Death and survival in the anti-communist violence in East Java, Indonesia*, Vanessa Hearman reminds us that the answer is as simple as it is tragic and logic-defying. Seeking a pretext to eliminate a political threat, the Indonesian Right — with the backing of international powers — positioned PKI members, associates, even people unlucky enough to once have attended a communist rally, meeting, or event as the treacherous instigators of an abortive attempt to overthrow Sukarno in 1965.

And the result? Over one million dead at the hands of the army and civilian paramilitary groups in a matter of months including in East Java, ‘where as many as 200,000, were murdered, then buried in mass graves or dumped into the rivers and the sea’ (p. 4). Under Suharto’s subsequent ‘New Order’ regime, the stigmatisation of the Left had further terrible outcomes: hundreds of thousands of political prisoners; a legal party demonised and outlawed; the deceased, the living, and their families made into pariahs; generations of Indonesians without an accurate sense of their government’s role in perpetrating one of the worst episodes of mass violence of the past century.

Hearman adds admirably to our understanding of a chilling case of Cold War-era state-sponsored violence — some call it a genocide, Hearman prefers pocide — by bringing long-deserved attention to historical actors in Indonesia’s second-most populous province. She accomplishes this by way of first-hand interviews, including more than thirty original oral histories, with perpetrators and survivors. Newspaper