

of analysing and judging the Indonesian development projects by evaluating their social and economic impact. Nonetheless, she uses the results of political economy scholarship, which with great care has reconstructed the social and economic worlds of the peasants and workers targeted for development, when it helps her argument. Moon seems to share in the scholarly consensus that while the entry of colonial capital, the expansion of the world market for agricultural commodities, and the growth of the colonial state all disrupted native agriculture, some colonial development policies did mitigate the serious disadvantages native farmers faced, even if it did not really create progress. Nonetheless, she avoids taking a position on whether development debates, practices, technologies and institutions she describes extended colonial power.

Historians of colonial Indonesia will find much of value in Moon's book. She shows that the development question intersected with the rise of nationalist politics, the expansion of the colonial state, the spread of colonial infrastructure to the Outer Islands, the growth of export crop plantations and the changing political economy of Javanese peasants. On the whole, I found the book to be more about the history of technological ideas and ideals, and hence part of a history of colonial expertise and officialdom. Still, she makes a strong case that Indonesian historians will benefit from paying closer attention to technology and technological discourses.

ANDREW GOSS

*University of New Orleans*

*Muslims and matriarchs: Cultural resilience in Indonesia through jihad and colonialism*

By JEFFREY HADLER

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The Minangkabau region of Sumatra is well known for a number of reasons, particularly its role in early Indonesian nationalist leadership and its matrilineal culture. The Minangkabau people, who formed just 3.36 per cent of the Netherlands East Indies' population in the 1930s, produced many dynamic and ideologically diverse first-generation Indonesian political leaders, such as H. Agus Salim, Muhammad Hatta, Muhammad Yamin, Muhammad Natsir, Hamka, Sutan Sjahrir and Tan Malaka. Nowadays Minangkabau is noted as the world's largest matrilineal Muslim society, which, while continually interacting with many global patriarchal-based ideologies, has managed to maintain many of its traditions. The most distinctive cultural characteristic of all Minangkabau customs – adhering to a matrilineal system with a partilineal Islamic legal framework – has attracted the attention of scholars for over a hundred years. Ever since George Wilken drew attention to Minangkabau custom in the 1880s, this 'culture of paradox' – to borrow a phrase from the author of *Muslims and matriarchs*, Jeffrey Hadler (p. 1) – has become an exemplary case-study for ideas of kinship and has continued to inspire other scholars to study it.

Covering the period from the late eighteenth century to the 1930s, *Muslims and matriarchs* examines how a matriarchate managed to survive in West Sumatra when elsewhere in Asia such systems were undermined by colonial and national state policies, and why the patriarchal-based Islamic ideology of Puritanism failed to make inroads into the matrilineal kinship of Minangkabau society during almost four decades of a bloody civil war (better known as the Padri War) in the region during the first half of the nineteenth century. Hadler orders his study thematically across seven chapters, along with an introduction and conclusion.

The first chapter after the introduction, 'Contention unending', presents a short history of the Padri War (1803–37), in which the author analyses the role of the controversial leader Tuanku Imam Bonjol and his efforts to replace the matriarchate by urging strict adherence to the Quran and Hadith. In an extraordinary moment in the Tuanku's memoir, he apologises for his violence, recants his ideology and attempts to find a compromise between Minangkabau custom and Islamic law. His struggle frames this book, just as it defined the Minangkabau throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Padri War ended with the Dutch as victors, and the region was incorporated into the Netherlands East Indies colonial state. The Dutch reshaped the Minangkabau at the level of village and family, changed the traditional political structure and influenced its people's thought and their lives, in both the public and domestic domains. The following chapters delineate how such interventions affected the lifestyle and mind of Minangkabau society, ideologically and physically.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 discuss the debates about the physical shape of the house, the concept of family and the education of children in Minangkabau society. In Chapter 2, 'Shapes of the house', Hadler analyses the changing physical construction of the longhouse (*rumah gadang*), the most striking aspect of the matriarchate and the symbol of Minangkabau tradition. Chapter 3, 'Interiors and shapes of the family', sheds light on the debates among Minangkabau intellectuals – most notably Muslim reformists and Western-style progressive figures – about the concept of the family and the ideal form that a household should take, accompanied by a discussion of the apparently obsessive need the Dutch felt to regulate life in the longhouse in order to increase the taxable size and productivity of Minangkabau families. In Chapter 4, 'Educating children', Hadler looks at the cultural and ideological impacts of the establishment of European schools for Minangkabau children, which challenged the Islamic-based traditional schools (*surau*).

The Dutch occupation in west Sumatra from the 1840s had a significant impact on Minangkabau society. Along with the ideology of the Padri Movement, the Dutch colonial state made an effort to impose patriarchal authority on aspects of Minangkabau society. Consequently, the nineteenth century saw the transformation of the Minangkabau from a traditional agrarian society in which women controlled the institutions of the house and rice fields, and consequently had great power, to a colonial society in which a patriarchal state gave opportunities to men. Minangkabau women sought to define traditions that were now often used against them, binding them to their particular longhouse, limiting their access to new opportunities and restricting their nobility.

In Chapter 5, 'Intimate contention', the author analyses ideas of morality and the role of women in the early twentieth century. He depicts the change in the image of courtship and marriage in Minangkabau society. Then, in the last two chapters he

discusses the politicisation of culture in West Sumatra during the 1910s and 1920s, the period when the word of *kemadjoean* (progressiveness) and *pergerakan* (movement) were very popular. The landscape of political movement in the first two decades of the twentieth century was a period when Minangkabau women were deeply involved in the world of *pergerakan*, which led them to participate actively in journalism and politics and break with tradition by taking part in the male out-migration (*merantau*), leaving behind matrilocally constituted longhouses. The book brings this era to an end with a cataclysmic 1926 earthquake, which was followed by a failed communist uprising in the following year, which traditionalists interpreted as a judgement on a corrupt and collapsing modernity.

In providing a broad view of Minangkabau history and culture, Hadler gives the reader a clear insight into how the Minangkabau matriarchate survived the onslaughts of alien ideologies that were intent on dismantling it throughout the nineteenth and the first half of twentieth century. He builds his analysis around narratives that floated beneath those of colonialism and nationalism by focusing on themes which are cultural: the changing conceptualisation of a house and family; ideas of modernity which are alternatively Minangkabau, Islamic and European; and competing systems of authority and education. The author has shown how, by the twentieth century, the political role of women and the definition of family had become the central concerns of west Sumatran intellectuals, inspired by an intensive three-way contest between reformist Islam, the traditions of the matriarchate, and what would become European progressivism. Hadler postulates that the conflict and interaction between the three parties destabilised the most essential elements of Minangkabau society, and the disproportionate contribution of Minangkabau people to Indonesian national politics seems to have been a direct result of this destabilisation.

*Muslims and matriarchs* is a well-researched, expertly and elegantly written work. Hadler's integration of a vast array of source material – both European and indigenous, including Minangkabau *schoolschriften* texts preserved in Leiden University Library, the Netherlands, which seem to have been unused by other scholars – into an eminently readable and enjoyable work for the specialist produces an excellent piece of scholarship. This is a book that provides detailed insights into the Minangkabau cultural dynamic in nineteenth- and the early twentieth-century colonial Indonesia.

SURYADI

*Leiden University*

*Communal violence and democratization in Indonesia: Small town wars*

By GERRY VAN KLINKEN

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Violent conflict in Indonesia has been the subject of growing scholarly concern since 1998, when the initiation of Indonesia's democratisation process created space for long-suppressed regional and localised grievances to forcefully resurface. Though