to win political support for certain policies, divert attention from certain domestic problems, contain any dissension, and to improve the government’s standing (p. 167).

The main strength of the book is the utilisation of linkage politics theory, which accentuates the correlation between domestic politics and international relations. Agung’s work effectively shows the multifarious linkages of economic, social, political, religious and cultural facets with the external environment in foreign policy-making. Moreover, *Indonesia and the Muslim world* is rich in material and data, displaying a fair share of both primary and secondary sources. It includes interviews with diplomats and foreign policy analysts, as well as an analysis of speeches. Nevertheless, this work could be strengthened in several ways. In discussing the policy friction between the military, ABRI, with the Department of Foreign Affairs regarding the Bosnian issue, the author made an unsubstantiated claim pointing to the Islamist and nationalist-secular divide as the root cause. While this point is valid, some evidence is required to strengthen the argument further. Moreover, Agung constantly points to the *bebas-aktif* (independent and active) principle as the core of Indonesia’s foreign policy, when as indirectly demonstrated by Agung himself, the ‘balance of power’ or bandwagoning strategy is at play. Despite being a member of NAM, Indonesia crafts its policy carefully in such a way as not to sour its relations with the superpowers. Like all small states, Indonesia constantly finetunes its foreign policy towards changing a international relations landscape — from the bipolar world of the cold war era to the uni-polar one dominated by the US.

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*Popular culture in Indonesia: Fluid identities in post-authoritarian politics*

Edited by **ARIEL HERYANTO**


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It may not be coincidental for this book to have come out at the turning point of the first decade since the embarkation of Indonesian post-authoritarian regime. This book has been released, catching the right moment, to critically evaluate the development of popular culture within the social transition from Suharto’s authoritarian regime to the post-authoritarian present. The editor and a significant contributor to the book, Ariel Heryanto, brings in-depth analyses into the discussion of popular culture, by pointing out the absence of research that goes beyond the respective aesthetic values of the research objects. Hence, he aims to elucidate the post-authoritarian sense of fluid identities appearing within diverse social relations mediated through popular culture. In the introduction, he dives headlong into scrupulous socio-political accounts, combined with extensive fieldwork.
First, he outlines the significance of Islam and so-called Javanism throughout post-independence Indonesian history, which have influenced and permeated the nation’s cultural discourses. In particular, he addresses the growth of Islam since the later period of Suharto’s authoritarian regime. Islam has gained a new dominant and legitimate position in national identity politics in post-authoritarian Indonesia, while other major elements, such as the state, the military, Javanism and male dominance all confronted the rising tide of social reforms (p. 20). In effect, the tension has intensified between these values in representing the nation, which has been reflected by the friction in the discourse of popular cultures.

To demonstrate, Heryanto uses the so-called Inul Phenomenon, which caused a national controversy in 2003, when a female dandut singer (a vernacular genre of popular music generally for the lower classes) Inul Daratista caused a heated debate over whether her hip gyrations, performed when singing, constituted Islamic blasphemy or were simply artistic expression. Based on his ethnography of Inul’s early performances in East Java, Heryanto posits that this debate over the pop icon is inextricably linked to the above-mentioned national ideological clashes. He indicates that the Inul controversy embodies emergent value conflicts between Islam and Javanism, which also interweaves with gender and class norms. By so doing, Heryanto successfully displays a montage of complex social relations surrounding the reception of a popular culture.

Indeed, subsequent discussions expand this central theme of the post-authoritarian sense of social relations, by investigating cinema (chapters 2, 3 and 4), TV programmes (chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8) and music (chapter 9). The respective studies explore different facets of cultural identities, such as nationhood (chapters 4 and 8), Asianness (chapters 3 and 5), globalisation (chapter 6), gender (chapters 2 and 7) and class (chapter 9).

In respect of gender, Clark (chapter 2) discusses contemporary masculinity as portrayed in commercial films. This focus on masculinity is crucial, considering the overwhelming dominance of femininity studies in Indonesia. Therefore, he portrays the ‘Masculinist Cast’ of the nation through the current cinematic chemistry between maleness and violence, which has been triggered by the dissolving of state censorship on films after authoritarianism. Meanwhile, Coutas (chapter 6) investigates the localised version of American Idol, the global TV phenomenon; Indonesian Idol is categorised as a signifier of ‘Glocal’ Celebrity production and consumption, borne out of the mixture of globalising and localising forces in the TV industry. Coutas illuminates the overwhelming dominance of a global corporation in licensing the world-famous programme, as well as the local parties’ attempts to produce and consume it. Her exhaustive analyses persuasively indicate an increasingly ambivalent viewer-screen relationship, which goes beyond East/West, the producer/consumer or the audience/celebrity division (p. 128). Further, Richter (chapter 9) presents fascinating reflections on his observations of several music events in Yogyarakta, in which the participants enter into ‘Other Worlds’ — a state of trance or ‘musical physicalisation’ comprising various bodily movements to induce an alternative state of being (p. 168). By taking samples of traditional trance dance and contemporary rock music events, Richter indicates their interesting commonality in allowing the participants to experience temporary freedom from Javanist, Islamist or class
restraints in their daily life. His ethnography is crisp and artful in translating his own bodily observations into a sophisticated academic script. These are examples of the complex web of contemporary social relations in which people negotiate their precarious identifications.

Some questions persist in this set of discourses — the density of discussion varies somewhat between articles, and the perspectives from non-Javanese regions are underexplored in terms of cultural reception. This Java-centredness needs further examination in future research, to critically evaluate the impact of popular culture on the nation’s social (in)coherence. Thus, any future agenda should include an analysis of popular culture from minority viewpoints in terms of ethnicity, religion, class and gender. Nevertheless, this book has productively raised the horizon of post-authoritarian Indonesian popular culture. Heryanto’s solid arguments, along with the other authors’ colourful studies are the warp and weft in the tapestry of emergent social relations in present-day Indonesia. This book should be worthwhile for any reader wishing to locate the meaning of popular culture in the wider socio-political framework of Indonesia and beyond.

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The archives of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the local institutions in Batavia (Jakarta)
Edited and compiled by G. L. BALK, F. VAN DIJK, D. J. KORTLANG
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After five years of archival reconstruction in Jakarta, Louisa Balk, Frans van Dijk and Diederick Kortlang have compiled a new inventory of the VOC (Dutch East India Company) and colonial archives to be found in the Indonesian capital. This much-needed research aid is now available both in print as well as online. Several early fragmentary inventories from 1770 onwards were rendered obsolete by Jacobus van der Chijs who published a full inventory and catalogue in 1882. While the work of Van der Chijs did not meet the standards of archival indexing set in 1898, it has contributed significantly to the preservation of the VOC archives in Jakarta and Den Haag until today. With the 2007 catalogue by Balk, Van Dijk and Kortlang, the VOC archive has gained a useful and well-described catalogue that meets modern international standards and – at a first glance – provides easy access to the sources currently preserved in Jakarta. In addition, Femme S. Gaastra’s history of the VOC as well as Henk Niemeijer’s introduction on the structure of administration offer valuable tips to assist researchers. This background information is supplemented by a history of the archive as well as useful search hints in a chapter penned by Balk, Van Dijk and Kortlang. Each introductory chapter together with the preface are featured in