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*Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in 20th Century Indonesia.* By Chiara Formichi. Leiden: KITLV, 2012. 244 pp.

The title and the author's own remarks in the opening chapters suggest that this book will deal with fundamental and determining issues regarding the role of political Islam in Indonesia over the past century. Chiara Formichi claims that her study

is a historical investigation of the interaction between Islamic groups and government institutions in Indonesia from the late 1910s to today. This effort is aimed at affirming the religious foundations of Kartosuwiryo's Darul Islam and shedding light on the failure of political Islam in the 1950s ... and again in the 2000s. (p. 8)

Her book is indeed a very good study of the influential Islamist leader Kartosuwiryo, but it falls short as an account of the broader struggle of political Islam in Indonesia.

S.M. Kartosuwiryo was a charismatic leading figure in the early twentieth-century Islamic movement Sarekat Islam and later, from the mid-1940s, in the Masyumi political party. His uncompromising views on non-cooperation with Dutch colonial authorities made him a controversial and polarizing figure in both organizations. In the late 1940s he was pivotal in the formation of the Darul Islam movement in West Java, which objected to the non-Islamic nature of the Indonesian republic's 1945 Constitution and to its central government's willingness to negotiate with the returning Dutch. In 1949, Darul Islam declared the establishment of an Islamic State in Indonesia, with Kartosuwiryo as imam and commander-in-chief. The resulting rebellion spread to four other provinces and became the most bloody and intractable of the many regional conflicts that beset the country during the 1950s and early 1960s. Kartosuwiryo was captured and executed for treason by the Indonesian state in 1962.

The greatest strength of Formichi's study is her careful investigation of Kartosuwiryo's life and thought. There have been numerous studies of Kartosuwiryo and published versions of his writings, but none has displayed Formichi's depth of research. She examines a large number of primary documents to explore the main elements of Kartosuwiryo's thinking and how it changed over time. She is particularly interested in the role of religion and in the ways in which Kartosuwiryo drew on influences from abroad, especially those of pan-Islamism and the emerging Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. She challenges other scholars, such as van Dijk and Jackson, who have downplayed the Darul Islam leader's Islamic motivations and expertise.

Formichi's analysis of Kartosuwiryo's writings is insightful. She investigates the nuances in her subject's beliefs and intellectualism, and seeks to explain the many apparent contradictions in his thought. He was, on one hand, mystically inclined, drawing criticism from Sareket Islam colleagues for his immersion in Sufism. On the other hand, he was a hard-nosed, ideologically fervent, Islamic politician. The two best sections of the text are those dealing with Kartosuwiryo's activism in the 1930s and the formative years of Darul Islam in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

This book is a sympathetic treatment of Kartosuwiryo. Formichi is at pains to explain her subject's views and to rationalize the many twists and turns in his thinking. But sometimes she seems too intent on casting his desultory approach in an intellectually credible light rather than to consider the possibility that his use of Islamic precepts was opportunistic or instrumental. The discussion of Kartosuwiryo's shifting definitions of jihad (pp. 105–6) is but one example of this issue.

Formichi's argument about the centrality of Islam to any explanation of Kartosuwiryo's actions has much value, but she is inclined to assert her points rather than to argue them systematically. For instance, although she is critical of van Dijk's emphasis on non-religious factors in accounting for Kartosuwiryo's behaviour, she does not

discuss her points of contention one by one in order to establish the superiority of her position. Her overlooking Holk Dengel's detailed study on Kartosuwiryo and Darul Islam is also surprising.

Perhaps the most serious shortcoming of the book is its failure to demonstrate convincingly that Kartosuwiryo and Darul Islam had a major impact on the development, and particularly the decline, of political Islam in Indonesia. In fact, Formichi devotes far too little space to arguing her case for this conclusion. It is questionable that Darul Islam was the major reason for the weaker-than-expected performance of Islamic parties in the 1955 election. Formichi makes no attempt to disaggregate and to consider separately the multitude of factors that other scholars have identified, such as political fragmentation, poor cabinet performance, overestimation of voter support for Islamic agendas and others. Darul Islam was clearly a factor that contributed to the outcome of the polls, but Formichi is not persuasive in arguing that it was critical.

Similarly, her all too brief discussion of the post-Soeharto era falls well short of supporting her contention that the legacy of Kartosuwiryo and Darul Islam remain important in Indonesia today. She is right to point to the presence of the Majelis Muslimin Indonesia and also to the continuing Darul Islam legacy among jihadist groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah, but these are not organizations with major influence on Indonesian political Islam as such.

Formichi's study contributes a good deal of new knowledge about Kartosuwiryo and Darul Islam, and she has done much to further the debate about the importance of religion in efforts to explain this movement. But she has overreached in presenting her book as an account of the larger story of post-independence political Islam in Indonesia.

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