

religious movements with “global modernity” finds resonance with, among others, Chinese Indonesian urban middle classes. Because of their global networks and reach, these new religious mega-movements also offer a “wider” sense of belonging to those whose identities are contested within the nation-state.

This compilation of Chang-Yau Hoon’s work is a must-have for anyone interested in Christianity and Chinese Indonesians (or either one of these) in Indonesia. Apart from being well written and argued, its grounding in empirical data and historical contextualization makes the book a core reference. What would have been valuable is a closing chapter with reflections by the author on what he, as an expert in this field, considers the new and urgent research questions. What should aspiring Indonesianists explore and critically examine at the crossroads of Christianity and Chineseness today? It feels like a missed opportunity that the book does not offer such future research ideas to ensure that this important research focus does not disappear from our research agendas.

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The Made-Up State: Technology, Trans Femininity, and Citizenship in Indonesia. By Benjamin Hegarty. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022. xvii+179 pp.

A few years ago, during one of my field visits to the *pesantren waria* in Yogyakarta—a boarding school for transgender Muslim women—I witnessed an episode that shaped my understanding of *waria* identities. At that time, immersed in my PhD research, I explored the everyday realities of LGBTIQ+ Indonesian Muslims. As I noted in my field notes during this visit, one of the *waria* told me that she had been bullied by another *pesantren* member for not being “*waria* enough” (Garcia Rodriguez 2019, pp. 376–77). Seeking to understand the

criteria of this exclusion, I asked the person responsible what being a *waria* meant to her. In response, she stood in the centre of the porch and dramatically asserted, “This is a *waria*”, emphasizing her gesture with a flick of her hair, a striking of her breast and a playful adjustment of her dress. The quiet, sceptical signal from one of my Indonesian friends who was also present—circling her index finger by her head—described that moment as emblematic of both the internal hierarchies and the performative politics inherent to *wariahood*.

This ethnographic encounter resonates with Benjamin Hegarty’s *The Made-Up State: Technology, Trans Femininity, and Citizenship in Indonesia*, a book that interrogates the entanglement of state intervention with the production of trans femininity in postcolonial Indonesia. Hegarty’s monograph is exceptionally well researched, drawing on historical and ethnographic evidence to argue that the modern Indonesian state, particularly during the New Order era, actively shaped how *waria* could claim citizenship and legitimacy. Everyday life technologies, various geographies and materials—from beauty salons, public spaces and photography capturing moments in time—offer fascinating examples of how Indonesian *waria* have been encouraged to embody a precise, state-sanctioned model of femininity. Hegarty’s work is excellent when it comes to assessing sociotechnical frameworks, offering fresh and provocative insights, but the heavy focus on state intervention sometimes eclipses the rich complexity of individual experiences within *waria* communities. However, by challenging traditional narratives of citizenship and modernity, the book represents a vital contribution to academic debates.

To illustrate Hegarty’s admirable work, let me mention a specific example. In chapter 4, under the title “Beauty Experts”, he introduces the 1968 “Miss Imitation Girls” beauty pageant in Jakarta. Under Governor Ali Sadikin’s reformist agenda, this event not only functioned as a contest of aesthetic appeal but also acted as a deliberate effort to render *waria* “presentable” and integrate them into the mechanisms of urban governance (p. 96). Figures such as Sonny Sudarma emerged as archetypes of this type of femininity,

symbolizing the state's aspiration to shape trans femininity. In Hegarty's account, events like the pageant illustrate a dual dynamic: on one hand, they offered a form of recognition and public legitimacy; on the other hand, they reinforced a binary that marginalized any divergence from the normative model.

Hegarty's work also provides stimulating reflections around the concept of the *jiwa perempuan*—the inner feminine soul—as a criterion for authentic *wariahood*. This notion, central to both his analysis and my own ethnographic observations (Garcia Rodriguez 2023), posits that genuine femininity is not only linked to one's external gender expression but also relates to “an interior sense of being a woman” (p. 2) that must align with societal expectations. This framework is fraught with contradiction: while it bestows a sense of self-legitimacy, it also engenders exclusion and internal conflict, as evidenced by the tensions in my ethnographic encounter above.

Hegarty's discussion invites critical questions. When the state—and, by extension, influential cultural gatekeepers—insists on a standardized ideal of femininity, what becomes of those whose lived realities deviate from this template? The answers are not straightforward. While state interventions can simultaneously lead to a certain degree of recognition, they concurrently inflict limitations that obscure the diverse experiences of gender identity. This tension is something many in the field (e.g., Dede Oetomo, Hendri Yulius, Ferdi Thajib, Tom Boellstorff, Saskia Wieringa, Evelyn Blackwood, Sharyn Davies and many more) have grappled with. In recent times, Islamic discourses, which guide both individual moral actions and communal responsibilities, have offered additional frameworks that sometimes conflict with, but at other times complement, the state's imperatives. For instance, Islamic values have shaped perceptions of gender and body politics, suggesting that spiritual and moral dimensions might provide a counter-narrative to the regulatory, technological and social models Hegarty explores. How might the increasing presence of Islamic discourses inform a more inclusive understanding of trans femininity that goes beyond the binary imposed by modern state policies?

Hegarty's focus on technological mediation raises critical questions about the nature of citizenship in Indonesia. While a range of technologies can empower *waria* to claim public space, they also serve as tools of control that align individuals with a narrowly defined norm. The book, therefore, moves away from simply providing an account of state intervention. Instead, it swings open a door providing us with a threshold we must cross to rethink how modernity, technology and tradition shape gender in Indonesia. As I read Hegarty's work, his thought-provoking inquiries prompted me to reflect on whether a form of recognition could exist that honours both the internal subjectivity of *waria* and the broader cultural, technological and religious technologies they inhabit.

Considering again my encounter at the *pesantren waria* vis-à-vis Hegarty's analysis, the journey to *menjadi* (or become) *waria* continues to be an ongoing negotiation involving, among other key factors, state-imposed legal and social technologies, religious values, and personal subjectivities. Hegarty's *Made-Up State*, with its sharp historical and ethnographic insights, is a vital contribution to our understanding of trans femininity in Indonesia. I will certainly include this book in my modules to encourage students to critically examine the ways in which state technologies shape public expressions of gender within a complex postcolonial landscape.

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