

The exception to this is Roberts' discussion of voter preferences (pp. 184–87). Attempting to determine motivations affecting voter decisions in Cambodia is a familiar game, yet it is a frustrating one. The arguments are impossible to resolve one way or another because of the blanket ban on exit polling and the promotion of the secrecy of the ballot during Cambodian elections. Attribution of motivations to voters is utterly uncheckable. Yet, Roberts' recirculation of the orthodoxy that characterizes Cambodian society as utterly powerless, except in the context of the polling booth, allows him to focus on this as the only example of social input into the political transition.

These problems represent a limitation, in this book as in many commentaries on Cambodia, in the application of political theory to the data. If "culture" is to be deployed as a key variable, it must surely be problematized as a concept capable of dynamism, as well as conservatism, and cultural stasis must thus be explained. Similarly, the treatment of an "elite" as operating free from any form of constraint from the "masses" defines out of contention any sophisticated understanding of how state-society relations operate in non-democratic societies.

The failure to offer an adequate account of culture or state-society relations, permits the recirculation, rather than the questioning, of standard orthodoxies. Roberts claims that he is rejecting the Standard Total View. Yet, this is more insidious than he appears to believe, since it does not merely dictate support for one party or another, or subordinate Khmer culture to the Liberal Project, but imposes a discourse in which the actions and understandings of ordinary Cambodians rarely even appear, let alone count, as important variables. While the book offers a highly readable, detailed and carefully researched account of an important strand of thinking in Cambodian studies, it suffers from this omission and consequently fails to push the debates in significant new directions.

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***Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia.* By Robert W. Hefner.** Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000. 286pp.

It is soon apparent when reading this book that, for Robert Hefner, civil Islam is more than a scholarly interest; it is a passionate commitment, a cause which carries great moral weight. Hence, this book is

not only an account of Muslim efforts to bring civility and democracy to Indonesia over the past half-century but also a panegyric to the principles and leading figures of civil Islam. Hefner's personal identification with the cause of civil Islam is evident throughout the text. He praises those Muslims who have championed a religiously tolerant and politically secular Islam while criticizing "regimist" Muslim leaders who supported Soeharto's New Order. It is Hefner's subjectivity which gives *Civil Islam* its most powerful and intellectually accomplished sections, but it is also the cause of some serious lapses in scholarly judgement.

The first half of the book is devoted largely to defining and discussing key concepts such as civil society, democratization, and secularization as well as describing the doctrinal, cultural, and political faultlines in Indonesian Islam. Hefner handles these deftly and authoritatively. His writing is elegant and engaging and mercifully free of the jargon that so often blights the texts of his fellow anthropologists. He offers lucid and nuanced definitions of key terms and concepts and even provides fresh perspectives on well-worked categories such as *santri* (devout Muslim) and *abangan* (nominal Muslim) and traditionalist and modernist Islam. His historical narrative is highly readable and he has a rare ability to give the reader, in succinct but evocative prose, a sense of the personal and intellectual qualities of pivotal figures in Indonesian Islam.

The most impressive sections of the book are those dealing with the *pembaruan* (revival) movement during the 1970s and 1980s. Hefner brings alive the thought world of liberal intellectuals such as Nurcholish Madjid, Dawam Rahardjo, and Abdurrahman Wahid, and describes their efforts to make Indonesian Islam more socially progressive, tolerant, and open. With clarity and subtlety, he explains the philosophical and theological bases of their thinking. His account of Nurcholish's innovative Qur'anic exegesis and provocative critique of the "failings" of Indonesian political Islam are particularly well written. There are also good descriptions of the campus-based *dakwah* (proselytization) groups, such as Imaduddin's Salman movement in Bandung and the rise of the Habibie-led Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals' Association (ICMI). Of the numerous English language accounts of the rise of reform-minded middle-class Islam during the Soeharto era, Hefner's is the most eloquent.

If his exposition of civil Islam is the highpoint in this work, Hefner's treatment of so-called "uncivil" Islam is the least satisfactory aspect. The author shows signs early in the book of having a strong philosophical and moral objection to the more Islamist expressions of the faith. He describes the concept of an Islamic state as a "mirage" that

“ignores the lessons of Muslim history itself” (p. 20). He appears not to believe that Islamic history is open to multiple interpretations and is reluctant to allow that Muslims of good conscience and deep learning could validly conclude (as indeed, many have done) that there was scriptural and historical support for the Islamic state concept. For Hefner, Islam is essentially pluralist and tolerant; the many conservative and militant variants of the faith that have emerged throughout its history were (and are) apparently misguided. He later asserts that an Islamic state “subordinates Muslim ideals to the dark intrigues of party bosses and religious thugs” (p. 20). Exactly what this refers to is never explained. Hefner’s equating of “civil Islam” with “true” Islam and his *a priori* rejection of the conservative position without arguing his case gives the text a partisan tone. It is difficult to avoid the impression that he regards Islamic liberalism as self-evidently more legitimate and virtuous than its conservative counterpart.

The most serious shortcomings in the book are to be found in those sections relating to the final decade of the New Order. Hefner casts this not only as a time of intense political contest between the forces of reform and those of the status quo, but also as the culmination of a deeper moral struggle within Indonesian Islam between the liberal, civilizing elements and the conservative, Islamist groups. He is scathing about Soeharto and those Muslims who joined cause with the regime, describing the former as consumed with the desire to cling to power and the latter as sacrificing the higher principles of Islam and political reform for patronage and regime concessions to their Islamist demands. He writes at length about the ruthless measures which this “uncivil” alliance was prepared to take to defeat liberal reformers. His most serious charge is that the alliance sought to foment religious and ethnic tensions for political gain, thereby undermining Indonesia’s tradition of pluralism and tolerance. Ultimately, liberal Muslims triumphed, and Hefner praises them for showing themselves “capable of greatness” (p. 212).

Unfortunately, Hefner’s account of these events appears coloured by his partisanship with the civil Islam cause. He overlooks some of the “uncivil” lapses of leading liberal Muslims and exaggerates the activities and impact of “regimist” Islamic groups. For example, although he describes at some length the *Monitor* affair, during which a mob of Muslim youths trashed the office of a magazine accused of blasphemy, he fails to mention the widely reported remarks of Nurcholish Madjid expressing “understanding” of the youths’ actions. He also makes no reference to Abdurrahman Wahid’s criticism of student demonstrations against Soeharto in May 1998, or his repeated calls for Soeharto to be given more time to implement reforms. Such

omissions do little to convey the complexity of liberal Muslim responses to sensitive political issues.

Pro-regime groups receive far less generous treatment. Hefner alleges that the small regime-sponsored think-tank, the Centre for Policy Development Studies (CPDS), led the attack on reformist Islam and accuses it, among other things, of directing the campaign to unseat Abdurrahman Wahid from the chairmanship of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in 1994 (pp. 171–73). Much of his account is overstated. The CPDS had few links with and negligible influence upon the NU; at the time, NU leaders regarded it as a peripheral organization. The pivotal bodies working against Abdurrahman were the Department of Internal Affairs and military intelligence. It is fanciful to believe that Soeharto or his lieutenants would have sidelined these institutions with their long-standing role in manipulating political affairs in favour of a recently formed think-tank comprised largely of academics and activists.

Other allegations against “regimist” groups are equally unconvincing. Hefner asserts that the *Monitor* affair was “sponsored” by Soeharto and “coordinated” by the Din Syamsuddin-led Golkar Research and Development Unit (pp. 161–62), yet provides no evidence in support of this claim. He also contends that the so-called “Sorcerer Killings” in Banyuwangi in 1998 were part of a “clear attempt” by Soehartoists “to pit NU Muslims against Javanist *abangan*” (p. 210), but again fails to adduce strong corroborative evidence or consider the possibility that such violence was the result of intra-communal tensions rather than external manipulation. (Recent research by non-governmental organizations and several foreign scholars have discounted the external issues and have attributed the killings to local social and political factors.)

Hefner’s accounts of these events suggest a predisposition to accept as fact the speculation and conspiracy theories which swirl around Indonesian political and intellectual circles, especially if they relate to illiberal actions. It may be that some of these theories are accurate, but there is little in this book that assists us in judging what is true or false. There is no judicious sifting of evidence and careful argumentation, giving the pros and cons of a particular viewpoint. Instead, Hefner repeatedly writes about murky plot theories with a certitude that belies the scarcity of proof. Moreover, he stitches various specific conspiracy claims together into a grander, more malevolent design by regimist forces to maintain the status quo. The campaign to unseat Abdurrahman Wahid in 1994, the charges against the mystic Permadi in 1995 of insulting the Prophet Muhammad, the church burnings and anti-Chinese violence in Situbondo and Tasikmalaya, the attack on the Indonesian Democratic Party headquarters in 1996, the Banyuwangi

killings and so on, are all, according to Hefner, interlinked. The effect is to lend credence to a version of events that remains unsubstantiated. Of course, obtaining incontrovertible evidence is difficult if not impossible in such cases but this makes it all the more important that scholars proceed in a considered, even-handed way. Hefner, however, appears inclined to believe the worst of Islamist leaders and the best of liberal Muslim figures.

The author's emotional involvement with civil Islam is also apparent from his passing comments about the behaviour of Muslim groups and leaders. He expresses "shock" that Soeharto recruited hardline Muslims to his regimist cause (p. 163). Adi Sasono's call for a holy war against Christians who slaughter Muslims is described as a "scandalous betrayal of Indonesian nationalism" (p. 210). In chapter 7, he refers repeatedly to the hardline KISDI (Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World) and the regime's "hateful" rhetoric. By the end of the text, the use of such charged terminology becomes wearying and it is hard to avoid the conclusion that greater restraint and objectivity would have been more effective than this heart-on-the-sleeve approach.

The book has numerous niggling historical inaccuracies and errors. The name of Indonesia's first President was Soekarno, but Hefner repeatedly attaches his rarely used pilgrimage forename "Ahmad"; he does not extend the same courtesy to Soeharto (Mohammad) or to other Muslim leaders. One might also cavil over the assertion that Soekarno's Nasakom (Nationalism, Religion and Communism) amalgam was merely a device to ensure his political survival (p. 46). As John Legge has shown in his biography of Soekarno, Indonesia's first President had, since the late 1920s, aspired to marry these diverse elements of national life into a unified package. *Ilmu laduni* is incorrectly defined as "in-born knowledge" (p. 35); it is, in fact, "divinely inspired knowledge" which can be bestowed at any time. *Sorogan* is referred to as "*srogan*" (p. 35). NU is, for reasons unexplained, referred to as a "neo-traditionalist" organization, rather than the commonly used "traditionalist" (p. 99). PPP is translated as "Partai Persatuan dan Pembangunan"; there is no conjunction (*dan* or and) in the title (p. 100). Tutut was not "East Java chair of Golkar" (p. 195) but rather was the national deputy chair with responsibility for the campaign in East Java. Contrary to Hefner's assertion, there was no position of ICMI secretary-general prior to 1995 (p. 155).

Civil Islam is a work best used selectively. Hefner's account of the cultural and intellectual development of the liberal Islamic revival in Indonesia is masterly and deserves to be seen as a major contribution to the literature. By contrast, his descriptions and analysis of hardline

Islam are seriously flawed, a product of his own dislike of “uncivil” Islam and lack of rigour in establishing the facts behind allegations of regimist sectarianism, manipulation, and violence.

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***The Asian Energy Factor: Myths and Dilemmas of Energy, Security, and the Pacific Future.* By Robert A. Manning.** New York: Palgrave, 2000. 246pp.

The end of the Cold War brought to the fore a multitude of non-traditional issues that staked their claim to be included in the field of “security studies”. In contrast to the realist orientation, with its emphasis on power relationships among sovereign states, the so-called “new security challenges” extend the scope of security to incorporate non-state actors as well as “any number of issues ranging from civil or ethnic conflict”, through “resource scarcity, and uncontrolled migration”, to “transnational terrorism”, to quote Manamoto Tadashi in Paul B. Stares, ed., *The New Security Agenda: A Global Survey*. Among these, “energy security” has figured prominently in Asia under the shadow of the Gulf War and the South China Sea dispute between China and some Southeast Asian states.

Robert Manning has come up with a well researched analysis of the myths and realities associated with the important issue of energy as a significant factor in Asia’s political economy in the foreseeable future (2000–10). At the same time, he has admirably tried to dispel “the myth of energy scarcity” (chapter 2) on the global scale, that emanates from what he aptly calls “the apocalypse industry” (chapter 1) which thrives on misplaced extrapolations of past trends and a crisis mentality among its doomsayers.

After attempting to demolish the pessimists in the first two chapters, he takes on the extreme optimists (chapter 3) by tackling the myth of the Caspian Basin’s “resource bonanza” that purportedly would turn the region into the “New Persian Gulf” (p. 41). After pointing out the dubious nature of statistics on oil “reserves” that grossly overestimate the economically “recoverable” reserves, the chapter contends that huge technical, transport, and financial constraints