

Kevin W. Fogg, *Indonesia's Islamic Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020, 260 pp., ISBN 978-1-108-48787-0).

Kevin W. Fogg's *Indonesia's Islamic Revolution* is *not* about the perceived religious resurgence of Islam in the Muslim world during the final decades of the twentieth century, an idea expanding onto a global scale and becoming even more pronounced since the start of the new millennium. The Islamic revolution in the title of Fogg's book refers to an understudied aspect of the independence struggle in what is now the largest democracy of Southeast Asia and, indeed, of the Islamic world.

There is an impressive body of scholarship on Islam in Indonesia, but the role of the religion does not feature with sufficient prominence in the historiography of the country's decolonization process in the second half of the 1940s. American and Indonesian sources tended to focus on the emergent nationalism of the founding fathers and the role of the military, while Dutch scholarship looked for a long time at the war for independence through the euphemistic prism of the 'politioenele acties'. Fogg mentions American Southeast Asianists Benedict Anderson, Audrey Kahin and John R.W. Smail, as well as Dutch historians J. J. P. de Jong, Wim van den Doel, and the more controversial recent book by Rémy Limpach.

According to Fogg, taking into account 'the religious context that colored the experience for millions of Muslims across Indonesia' (1), and recognizing that 'the change of state that took place through military struggle had an Islamic flavor for a sizable slice of participants' (2), will enhance the picture and increase our knowledge of the founding event of the largest Muslim nation state in the world. A better understanding of these developments is given further significance by Indonesia's strategic geographical position on the maritime routes connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and between the two rising global powers of the Eurasian landmass, India and China. In addition, Indonesia has political and economic ambitions of its own. About ten years ago, then President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono positioned Indonesia as a bridge country between Asia, the West, and the Muslim world. Moreover, already a member of the G20, Indonesia wants to expand another group of countries by becoming a second '1' in what are known as the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China).

*Indonesia's Islamic Revolution* is also written with the ambition of contributing to the comparative study of the history of revolutions, by putting the Indonesian independence struggle in the wider context of the decolonization and postcolonial history of the Muslim world. Here Fogg

situates himself among what Jack Goldstone calls a ‘fourth generation’ of scholarship, stressing that revolutionary ideologies consist of both discourse and action (5). This type of historiography can be said to parallel the philosophical school of neo-pragmatism, which also studies ideas by paying attention to both ‘saying and doing’.

Furthermore, Fogg stresses that both revolution and Islam can mean different things to different people, leading him to introduce a key distinction between the experiences and perceptions of actors on the grassroots level and those of the intellectual and political elites. While sharing an Islamically colored outlook, the actions of the often illiterate masses tended to be more locally rooted, radical, and open to the supernatural than the rationalized, text-based understanding of Islamic ideas by higher-educated Muslims. For that purpose, between 2006 and 2017, Fogg has conducted close to a hundred interviews with Indonesian informants, born between 1920 and 1960 (231-236). Putting these aspects in a wider Islamic context, Fogg invokes the thought-provoking *What is Islam?* (2015) by the Pakistani-American scholar Shahab Ahmed. While the book has now attained seminal status, its connecting idea of a ‘Balkans-to-Bengal Complex’ actually excludes the whole Southeast Asia region from a civilizational conceptualization of Islam and the Muslim world, encompassing a geographical space from the Eastern Mediterranean to South Asia.

Fogg’s examination of the role played by Islam during the independence war that turned the Netherlands East Indies into Indonesia, and how that religion featured in the territory’s political transformation from a Dutch colony into a postcolonial republic, is organized in two parts. Both have the merit of offering 360-degree views of the color palette of Islamic wartime experiences and the impact of Islamic politics on Muslim life in the embryonic republic, respectively.

After an opening chapter sketching the place of Islam before the period under study (1945-1949), the first part begins with a survey of the various calls for mobilization addressed to the Muslims of the Netherlands East Indies. Central to this is the ‘flood of fatwas’ coining the independence struggle in terms of *jihād* (56). In the next chapter, Fogg examines how Muslims organized their participation in the independence struggle, using existing and developing new specifically Islamic channels for their wartime efforts.

While institutions like the Muslim mass organizations, the Islamic political parties and their associate militias aligned themselves predominantly with text-based ideas of modern Islam, the beliefs and practices of the rank and file also included reliance on Islamic magic, consisting in prayers and incantations, amulets and spells, martial arts and trances. This makes Chapter 4 one of the most interesting in the first part, indeed of the whole book, not least because it throws the grassroots-elite distinction into the sharpest contrast.

In the final two chapters of Part I, centering on violence, Fogg extrapolates a varied and multi-faceted social revolution from the war effort. He goes on to sketch how a participant organization, such as the Islamist resistance army Darul Islam, is not so much an exceptional phenomenon as a radical manifestation of the Muslim fighting experience. The eventual fate of Darul Islam is also illustrative of the more general failure of turning these Islamization efforts into lasting gains for Indonesia's politically ambitious Muslims.

This also forms the jumping-off point for Part II, where the narrative is guided by the ruptures characterizing late colonial and early postcolonial Indonesian Islamic politics, which Fogg finds lacking in earlier studies. The second part begins with a chapter about the inability of Muslim political leaders to attain their most important revolutionary goal: the ill-fated Jakarta Charter, which envisaged an explicit Islamic referent in the preamble to the first Indonesian constitution.

The next chapter discusses the resolve of Muslim politicians to compensate the failure of the Jakarta Charter by becoming better organized in their competition with the secular nationalists around President Sukarno. Fogg thereby focuses on the transformation of a platform established by the Japanese occupiers to represent the Indies' Muslims into the umbrella Islamic political party Masyumi (*Partai Majelis Sjuro Muslim Indonesia*, Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims). It became a vehicle that heralded a changing-of-the-guard in Islamic leadership from clerics to laymen. Opting for a chronological order rather than maintaining narrative continuity, Fogg postpones exploring the emergence of the intriguing phenomenon of 'Islamic socialists' from within Masyumi cadres until Chapter 10, while Chapter 9 discusses the most important concession to the Islamic bloc made by the government of the newly founded republic. In exchange for dropping the Jakarta Charter, Muslim religious leaders were given control of The Ministry of Religions, the key state institution embodying Indonesia's Islamic identity. Aside from offering a political platform to senior clerics, the ministry's burgeoning bureaucracy also created job opportunities for pious Muslims.

The following two chapters discuss the key ruptures identified by Fogg as the hallmark of Indonesian Islamic party politics. The cracks appearing in Muslim unity were exemplified by the foundation of regional parties (Chapter 11), and a fracturing within Masyumi due to political infighting, which then led to the establishment of the competing *Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia* (Chapter 12). The book's final chapter foregrounds an aspect that has hardly received any attention in the scholarship on post-independence Indonesian Islam: the role of Indonesian activists, students, and overseas traders in establishing diplomatic relations with the rest of the Muslim world, and thus in shaping early Indonesian foreign policy – a role not recognized in official accounts. Fogg's story is limited to Arab countries and the Arab League, but it

would have been interesting to have learned something about early relations with Pakistan, that other newly independent Muslim country.

With *Indonesia's Islamic Revolution*, Fogg has provided a succinct yet comprehensive overview of the role of Islam in the early history of postcolonial Indonesia. His book offers a useful introduction to academics not specializing in Indonesia, while the appeal to Indonesianists lies in the author's extensive reliance on sources of oral history.

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