



Sarawak. They include an enjoyable account by the American anthropologist George Appell, based on a lifelong acquaintance with the same village. A similar case study from the Indonesian side would have been appropriate. The book's final word is one of warning, given by the senior historian George Saunders. We should not believe that local dwellers always lived in harmony with their environment. Reality was, and is, a lot more complex. That is a fitting conclusion to an inspiring volume that is likely to elicit more research of a similar kind.

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Ariel Heryanto (2006) *State Terrorism and Political Identity in Indonesia: Fatally Belonging*, Routledge, pp. xii + 242. Cloth: US\$115.00.

Several years ago an Indonesian journalist friend confided a terrible secret: his father had been imprisoned as a suspected communist after 1965. The family was shattered, the children forced to work to support themselves and their mother. Worse than the economic hardship, however, were the shame and the fear. Nearly 40 years after the event—and several years after the fall of Soeharto—my friend had told no one. None of his colleagues knew; he was afraid that if his secret got out, there would be reprisals not only against him personally, but also against the newspaper where he worked.

One might argue that by keeping his 'guilt by association' a secret, my friend became an agent of his own mental terror. Ariel Heryanto's new book goes a long way towards explaining how something like this could happen. *State Terrorism and Political Identity in Indonesia: Fatally Belonging* raises questions about the conventional wisdom that periodic anti-communist witch-hunts were 'largely a political tool used by a powerful military elite and authoritarian government', and explores the ways in which ordinary Indonesians themselves—victims as well as perpetrators—became complicit in the recurring efforts to flush out communists. Combining sophisticated use of social theory with the extended analysis of a case study and a variety of materials from popular culture, Ariel presents a thesis that should be of great interest to anyone who seeks to understand contemporary Indonesian political culture.

Exploring first what he calls the 'master narrative' of the New Order that began with the 1965 aborted coup by the communist-backed 30th of September Movement and ended with the successful military counter-attack and restoration of order by Major General Soeharto, Ariel then turns to the aftermath—'the point at which the master-narrative ends, and all official history textbooks are totally silent'—when, in a horrifically violent anti-communist campaign, approximately one million Indonesians were killed by their 'close neighbors, colleagues, or kin'.

It is the legacy of the killings that becomes the focus of the book. Defining 'state terrorism' as 'state-sponsored campaigns that induce intense and widespread fear over a large population', Ariel explores not only how state agents or their proxies conduct campaigns of violence and intimidation against particular individuals, but also how 'the general population reproduces and elaborates the image of violence and intense fear among themselves'. And in a statement that should give pause to



those who say that Indonesia's salvation lies in engagement with global markets, Ariel concludes that 'the calamity and the trauma were largely responsible for Indonesia's post-1966 "political stability" and pro-world market "economic growth".'

Drawing on fieldwork completed for his doctoral dissertation in the early 1990s, the centrepiece of the book is the story of three young Yogyakarta activists who were prosecuted in 1989 and 1990 under the Anti-Subversion Law. Whereas their actual crime was circulating the banned novels of Pramoedya Ananta Toer and participating in discussions, Ariel argues that the state conducted the prosecutions 'in part to reproduce the very terror that provided their basis ... This effect of power in turn added to the efficacy of that power.'

Occasionally drawing parallels with post-September 11 witch-hunts for Islamic radicals, Heryanto presents a world of fun-house mirrors, one in which those entrusted with securing the nation against the threat of communism began to believe their own lies. Like the global war on terror, the 'simulacra' of the New Order—for example, the state ideology of Pancasila or the latent danger of communism—eventually became ends in themselves.

Yet, as Heryanto repeatedly points out, nothing is ever so simple. People like my friend, victims of the witch-hunts, also became complicit in the violence by accepting the rules of the game on some level. Ariel exposes with devastating precision how the power of the witch-hunts lay in their very taken-for-granted-ness. In this endeavour everyone was culpable, including those Westerner observers who complacently pointed to Indonesia's political stability and economic growth, tourists who saw only the charming smiles of happy villagers in Java or Bali, and officials who, like former US ambassador Paul Wolfowitz, tacitly accepted the role of state terror while famously drawing a distinction between Indonesia's economic achievements and its lack of progress towards 'openness in the political sphere'.¹

Indeed, it was only those who refused to engage with the system at all—like the student activists who disrupted legal proceedings against one of their mates by ordering both pizza and an ambulance for the presiding judge—who were truly able to subvert the process by exposing its hypocrisy, irrationality and patent falseness.

As Heryanto admits, he is 'both fascinated by and suspicious of ... theorizing', and his facility at engaging contemporary theories of the global dimension of state terrorism as well as the current discourse on 'power relations' and 'modes of domination' is dazzling. But even those who are not especially interested in the theoretical debates of hegemony, post-colonialism and post-structuralism will be fascinated by the particulars of Ariel's insights into contemporary Indonesian political culture. One of the stars of a new generation of Western-educated Indonesian scholars, Ariel is deeply engaged with contemporary Indonesian culture and criticism, and able to tease out meaning from sources as diverse as pop album covers, video games and what he calls the 'subversion by hyper-obedience' of mass rallies during election campaigns. Ariel's knowledge of and insights into Indonesian popular culture add depth and specificity to his theorising, and give his book unparalleled authority.

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¹ 'If greater openness is a key to economic success, I believe there is increasingly a need for openness in the political sphere as well.' Quoted in Alan Sipress and Ellen Nakashima, 'Jakarta Tenure Offers Glimpse of Wolfowitz', *Washington Post*, 28 March 2005.