

**Robert Cribb. *Historical Atlas of Indonesia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2000. 256 pages. Illustrations, 327 maps.**

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Robert Cribb has done the Indonesian studies community a great service with the publication of his new book, *Historical Atlas of Indonesia*. This is a deeply complex portrait of Indonesia in its many forms: historical, environmental, religious, linguistic, and governmental, to name just a few of the areas covered. The Atlas contains 327 maps and ten figures, nearly all of which are useful, and some of which are absolutely eye-popping. Organized into five broad conceptual chapters, the book takes the reader through Indonesia's physical world, into the customs and traditions of its peoples, across the archipelago's pre-modern history, into the colonial age, and, finally, into the world of Indonesia as independent nation-state. Though choices in coverage must be made in any atlas, few readers will feel that they were given anything less than a grand tour through Indonesia's past and present after perusing this volume. The book repays a reading straight through along the lines of the Table of Contents, but it also offers one a chance to meander through topics and concerns entirely of one's own choosing. Cribb's atlas will serve as a useful teaching tool for classroom instructors, as well as a basic reference work for scholars working on the region, across a variety of disciplines and fields.

The first chapter in the volume focuses on landscape and the environment; this is by far the shortest chapter in the book, yet it nevertheless imparts some important themes. Plates 1.1 to 1.4 show us the tectonic plates that make up the region, as well as how they congealed in geologic time to form the archipelago we see today. This is useful in getting a sense of the so-called "Wallace Line," the split down the middle of the archipelago that delineates Asian and Australasian variations on flora and fauna. Another plate in this series, Map 1.17, displays the many coal and oil gas basins underneath Indonesia, which are shown to be vast and nearly omnipresent, stretching from Aceh east to Biak. Plate 1.9 shows us one of the consequences of this geologic richness; the scale, dates, and deaths involved in several dozen volcanic eruptions over the past one thousand years. Some of these upheavals killed twenty, thirty-nine, and sixty-four people; Krakatau's famous blast, however, killed 36,000 in 1883, while the blast at Tambora killed approximately fifty thousand in 1815. The ash-falls and tsunamis reverberating from Krakatau are tracked in ten minute intervals far out into the Java Sea and Indian Ocean in a subsequent plate, Figure 1.15. Five hours after the eruption, the noise from the blast was heard in Western Australia (Figure 1.16); ten hours later (almost unbelievably), it was heard in Madagascar.

We can also get a sense in this atlas of more human phenomena, such as the spread of Christianity in Indonesia. This topic forms only a subset of a subset in Chapter II, but it is also richly illuminating. Plate 2.28 shows us the dispersion of Christianity in Eastern Indonesia between 1546 and 1613; attempts were made to Christianize Ternate (which largely failed), Ambon (where the project found better success), and Manado, which is still heavily Christian today. A following map (2.29) shows us the number of converts in Indonesia by ecclesiastical province in 1927. These statistics are divided for each region into Europeans, "Natives," and "Foreign Orientals," the latter being the population group where the mission was (usually) least successful. Plate 2.30

exhibits the actual mission fields in the Indies, and their zones of operation; these are shown to be unendingly complex, with Mennonites, Lutherans, Catholics, and an array of Protestant “Zending” missions all competing for a limited number of souls. By 1980 (the subject of Plate 2.31) most of these converted Christians were located in Eastern Indonesia. A further map here displaying the religious tensions in Maluku over the past two years would have (unfortunately) added a grim postscript to these figures.

One of the most useful successions of maps delineates the expansion of the Dutch East Indies state through several conceptual windows. Plate 4.63 shows the regular services of the KPM (*Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*, or Dutch Steam Packet Service), a semi-official company which carried all government goods through the Indies in the years on both sides of the twentieth century. The connected port-nodes of the KPM illustrate how this shipping service helped unify a vast archipelago, especially through advances in steam. Plates 4.64 and 4.67 deal with similar projects of connection and expansion, namely the growth of telegraph services (some of which stretched all the way to Hong Kong, China, Australia, and even America), and agricultural extension agents, who were increasingly visible in the Indies’ “Outer Islands.” A further index used here is the growth of railroads in the Indies, which are shown to multiply almost organically in Java (Plates 4.59 to 4.62), while only in pockets in Sumatra. Indeed, the presence of Dutch rails only in West Sumatra (where great coal reserves lay), South Sumatra (where there were agricultural supplies), and in Aceh (where the rails were used for a military tram) shows the uneven quality of Batavia’s push into the periphery. The “*Buitenbezittingen*” (“Outer Islands”) could be reached, but only parts of them were deemed worth “developing” in depth by the Dutch imperial project.

Some of these maps are interesting enough just to examine on their own for a long while, such as Plate 2.39. This figure, called “Slaving in the Indonesian Archipelago, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries,” is simply drawn, but imparts some important truths about social and economic conditions of the time. The map shows the principle slaving areas of the archipelago, situated (roughly) West, South, North and East: the Batak Uplands and Nias off Sumatra; the island of Bali; the uplands of South and South-Central Sulawesi; and the Bird’s Head Peninsula in West Papua. Lines of slaving movement show the destinations and directions of this commerce; slaves were sold to Dutch cities (such as Batavia, Makasar, and Melaka), as well as to independent polities, such as the Sultanate of Aceh. One wonders if there could not have been more information in and around this particular map, however, as slaving was an extremely important activity in this part of the world. Though debt-bondage and the outlines of slave commerce are covered in the accompanying text, there’s little on the important role of women in these trades, and also nothing on the identity of the slavers themselves (often Bugis, Iban, Taosug, and Iranun peoples, not to mention the Balangingi-Samal). A few “counter-arrows” might also have been helpful here, as European state-making projects tried to eliminate these trades as part of their “civilizing mission” over the course of the nineteenth century.

Another way to profit from this atlas is to focus on a theme of one’s own choosing and follow that thread throughout the course of the book. I did this for “Sumatra,” and found seemingly unrelated sequences of plates which nevertheless imparted a strong sense of regional history and continuity. Plate 3.5 gives us an outline of Srivijaya

at its height, showing a maritime “field” of influence which stretched across the Malacca Straits and all the way down to Java for centuries. Plate 3.11 gives us a later view (1650–1700 CE), when the Dutch, British, Acehnese, and other regional interests were all vying for control of Sumatra’s trade wealth, albeit in different places. By the nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries, the Dutch were crawling up the length of the island and dividing it into administrative units, trying to rationalize control over a land mass whose basic cadence had always been international. Plates 4.24 to 4.27 show this long process, as Sumatra was subsumed under the Dutch political yoke while its crops still flowed into the wider world. After the Japanese Occupation, therefore, local peoples began trading across these Straits as they had always done, this time for supplies and weapons. These feeder routes (shown on Plate 5.14) helped keep the resistance going, as the Dutch tried to salvage their island empire after the devastation of World War II.

It’s a credit to Robert Cribb (and his editorial team) that a real effort has been made to have accurate, meaningful maps of contemporary Indonesia included as well. This must have been a nightmare, as events were changing very quickly just as this book was coming to publication. Map 5.60 shows the strategic situation in East Timor (as related by Fretilin) in 1986, with grim concentration areas and guerrilla units sketched out, both dotting the Timorese landscape. The next map in this series (5.61) displays this arena almost ten years later, when East Timor had been turned into a vast military and administrative grid by the Indonesian state. A smaller map adjacent to these two (5.62) gets us down even to the very local level, sketching out the geography of Dili and the Santa Cruz Cemetery, where a state-sponsored massacre of Timorese in 1991 brought this harrowing situation to the attention of the world. This plate seems to lead us inexorably to the last image of the book, Figure 5.68, which sketches out regional unrest and disturbances throughout the archipelago as of the year 2000. There is too much ink on this map, unfortunately. Acehnese separatists, Madurese/Dayak conflict in West Kalimantan, the killings of *dukun* in East Java, not to mention religious strife in Maluku and revolt in West Papua, paint a grim picture. This isn’t the most sanguine note on which to end an atlas, but it is realistic. An historical atlas of Indonesia published in 2005, in fact, might end with a very different map of this country—one whose boundaries and borders might be only partially recognizable to us today.

This is really a fine book, one that will be useful to many different people interested in Indonesia. The plates are attractive and informative, and small amounts of text supplement the maps, sketching out themes in slightly wider detail (a quibble is in the presentation of the maps; there’s very little color used, and these might have made the plates even more visual and attractive). As a reference work, Cribb’s atlas compares favorably with the recent Archipelago Press series on Indonesia, and it is also a useful complement to older reference standbys, such as the *Encyclopedia van Nederlandsch-Indie*. As the book has plates covering *Hajj* voyages to Mekka, the radials of Javanese *transmigrasi*, Golkar election results in 1971, and the Dutch salt monopoly in 1881, I find it difficult to think of a scholarly faction who will not be pleased by this book. Additionally, the amounts of work put into data collection for all of these aspects of Indonesian history, and then put it into getting the results into presentable, legible form, must have been enormous. This *Historical Atlas of Indonesia* should be with

us for quite a long time, serving many constituencies and many scholarly interests for many decades to come.