



A History of Modern Indonesia

By Adrian Vickers

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Although Indonesia has the fourth largest population in the world, its history is still relatively unknown. Adrian Vickers takes the reader on a journey across the social and political landscape of modern Indonesia, starting with the country's origins under the Dutch in the early twentieth-century, and the subsequent anti-colonial revolution which led to independence in 1949. Thereafter the spotlight is on the 1950s, a crucial period in the formation of Indonesia as a new nation, followed by the Sukarno years, and the anti-Communist massacres of the 1960s when General Suharto took over as president. The concluding chapters chart the fall of Suharto's New Order after thirty two years in power, and the subsequent political and religious turmoil which culminated in the Bali bombings in 2002. Adrian Vickers is Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Wollongong. He has previously worked at the Universities of New South Wales and Sydney, and has been a visiting fellow at the University of Indonesia and Udayana University (Bali). Vickers has more than twenty-five years research experience in Indonesia and the Netherlands, and has travelled in Southeast Asia, the U.S. and Europe in the course of his research. He is author of the acclaimed *Bali: a Paradise Created* (Penguin, 1989) as well as many other scholarly and popular works on Indonesia. In 2003 Adrian Vickers curated the exhibition *Crossing Boundaries*, a major survey of modern Indonesian art, and has also been involved in documentary films, including *Done Bali* (Negara Film and Television Productions, 1993).

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Editorial Review

Review

"Vickers's Modern Indonesia is no one-thing-after-the-other textbook. Innovatively framed around the writings of Pramoedya Ananta Toer, and invoking the arresting insights of Indonesian novelists and playwrights, it provides a stimulating, fresh understanding of Indonesia's modern, often tragic, trajectory. This is not a book written over the shoulders of nationalist politicians and military officers, but one that evokes the senses, flavours, turmoils and smells of everyday life in that irresistably complicated country." -- R.E. Elson, Professor of Southeast Asian history, The University of Queensland

"I think this will become the standard history textbook on Indonesia for introductory classes and it will last because it is so beautifully written. I suspect it will set a new standard also because of the interpretations taken, implicit as they are." -- Gerry van Klinken, H-Asia

"Vickers interprets 20th-century Indonesian history through the writings of the Indonesian novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer. A Marxist, Toer sees the colonial period as oppressive, believes strongly in the hope of the national movement for social revolution, laments the failure of this goal during the early independence period, and strongly opposes the New Order (1966-1998), with its emphasis on development rather than revolution and its authoritarian, militaristic base."

Choice

"Adrian Vickers uses a unique style to provide his readers with a view of twentieth-century Indonesia...A History of Modern Indonesia is a thorough and informative account of Indonesia's history and political development in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries." - Florence Lamoureux

"Vickers draws a compelling narrative of cogent historical detail, while also incorporating insights from other disciplines such as literature, anthropology, sociology and political science." - Trevor W. Preston, University of Toronto, Canada

"Vickers has written a useful book that provides an entertaining and mostly informative account of a country whose history should be better known." - David Webster, University of Toronto

About the Author

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