

The self-restriction to “only” one side of the civil war – that of the “insurgency” – may be criticized. Even if this limitation is legitimate, the author missed the chance to compare the politico-military fate of Khmer Rouge defectors to the Vietnamese with those who returned to guerrilla warfare. However, the only real shortcoming is the exclusion of the refugee camps and their significance for the socio-political and economic situation as a breeding ground for “insurgents”. This omission does not detract from the merits of Bultmann’s work, and his monograph can be recommended to all who are interested in the recent past of Cambodia, especially the civil war, in civil war research and in the sociology of (civil) wars in general and Bourdieu’s theoretical work in particular. Military sociologists or historians are presented with a convincing case study exemplifying how biographies, power relations and discourses may influence war strategies, command-and-control, and even combat tactics. Indeed, the pen is mightier than the sword.

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JOHN MONFRIES, *A Prince in a Republic. The Life of Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX of Yogyakarta*. Singapore: ISEAS, 2015. XXVIII, 376 pages, US\$35.90. ISBN 978-981-4519-38-0 (pbk)

Hamengku Buwono IX (1912–1988), known before his accession as Gusti Raden Mas Dorajatun, was Sultan of Yogyakarta from 1939 until his death nearly half a century later. The Yogyakarta kingdom (1,223 square miles) was not even half the size of Brunei, yet its population was considerably larger, rising from 1.2 million inhabitants in 1912 to 1.85 million thirty years later (compared to growth from only 22,000 to 40,000 in the Bornean sultanate over the same period). Yogyakarta city alone increased from around 100,000 to 435,000 over the lifetime of Hamengku Buwono IX (henceforth HBIX).

HBIX played a prominent role in the Indonesian Revolution of 1945–9, joined the national cabinet in 1946, and served as Coordinator of Internal Security and/or Minister of Defence for much of the period from 1948 until January 1953. In the (comparative) wilderness for the next 13 years, he returned to government as the coordinating minister responsible for economic affairs from 1966 until 1972. He was Vice-President of Indonesia, a largely ceremonial role, from 1973 until his retirement from national politics in 1977. Throughout his career he evinced a Talleyrandesque capacity to survive régime change and to back the winning side; he was “always at the centre of events yet managed somehow to leave the impression that he was not connected with them” (pp. 2, 231; AJP Taylor’s verdict on Lord Halifax, regarded as applicable to HBIX as well).

A Leyden intellectual, fluent in Dutch, and a doctoral student (the outbreak of the war prevented him from completing his thesis), HBIX was a competent, albeit dull public speaker. Possessed of a charming smile, he looked diminutive

and dapper in traditional Javanese costume. Between 1940 and 1947 he married four aristocratic Javanese women; his first daughter was born in 1943 and his son and heir in 1946. After one of his (concomitant) wives died, he married for a fifth time in the 1970s, this time a commoner. He had a total of twenty-one children.

Dorojatun arrived back in Batavia on 18 October 1939 and his father Sultan Hamengku Buwono VIII (ruled 1921–39) died almost immediately afterwards. Under the Dutch system, as opposed to that in British-protected Malay States such as Brunei, every prospective local ruler in the Indies had to negotiate a new political contract. Much more business-like than his father, HBIX's negotiations with the Governor Lucien Adam (1890–1978) lasted four months, itself an indication of his strength of character and suggestive of a "firmer cast of mind than his modest manner would indicate". The coronation took place on 18 March 1940, which, by coincidence, was the day after Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin (ruled 1924–50) was belatedly crowned in Brunei Town. In the next two years under the Dutch he consolidated his personal authority in Yogyakarta and established a *modus vivendi* with Dutch power. It was said that the treatment of indigenous servants by Dutch families in Java and the contrast between Dutch democracy in Europe and the reality of Dutch repression in the Indies turned him into a nationalist. Yet, he was also careful to keep his own record "clean"; the reserved young man's patriotic pride remained hidden. Having learned to restrain his passions and conceal his innermost thoughts, he remained discreet all his life.

HBIX had a genius for making the correct call in times of crisis. Two examples: first, following the Japanese invasion in 1942, he rejected the chance offered by the Dutch to flee, saying that his place was with his people. This was "his first opportunity to exercise his own untrammelled political judgement, and to demonstrate his fitness to be sultan" (p. 96). Second, in 1945 he supported the Indonesian declaration of independence from the outset, an option which at the time was brave and not without risk; from 1946 to 1948 Yogyakarta itself was the capital of the new republic and the heartbeat of the revolution.

On the other hand, the Dutch had reasonable grounds to feel aggrieved, if not betrayed. HBIX was, after all, raised in Dutch families, educated at the best Dutch university and a guest at both Princess Juliana's wedding in 1937 and Queen Wilhelmina's fortieth jubilee celebrations in 1938. If he were anti-colonial all along, he appears to have been less than transparent in 1939–42 in his relations with the Dutch authorities in Java. Even as late as 1949 they were under the illusion that he had been acting under duress in supporting the nationalist government. His career is also a lesson that the provision of education is no guarantee of the student's subsequent goodwill towards the provider.

After the Japanese invasion cooperation with the Japanese was the only realistic option (defiance being a demonstrably perilous undertaking). HBIX issued a statement offering to cooperate with the occupying forces and thanking Japan for freeing his country from the Netherlands. On 1 August 1942 the Japanese formally recognised HBIX as *Koo* of the Yogyakarta *kooti* (princely

region). As the occupation advanced, he showed increasing signs of wanting to be an activist sultan. The key political relationship in his life was with Sukarno, whom he first encountered in these years.

A politically-astute, trustworthy, non-ideological pragmatist lacking in personal ambition, he exercised real power only at certain times of his career. HBIX's performance during the revolution was his finest hour. He ensured his own political survival as head of the Yogyakarta region and safeguarded the continued existence, within the republic, of his principality and dynasty. His greatest failure was his underestimation of the forces opposed to his defence reforms in 1952. His steering of the Indonesian economy in 1966–73 was highly commendable, particularly compared with the mismanagement of the Sukarno years, which had resulted in, among other things, rampant inflation. Although he neglected Yogyakarta after he entered national politics, and it remained one of the poorer regions of Indonesia, HBIX (unlike Sukarno and Suharto) retained popular support and even affection; his funeral was attended by no fewer than 200,000 people.

The author of the book, an Australian diplomat whose career included postings to Indonesia and Brunei, returned to academia after retirement and this book, the first English-language biography of HBIX, is based on his doctoral thesis, written "several years ago". In complete command of his brief and conscious of the potential pitfalls, John Monfries provides incisive analysis based on exemplary sifting and assessment of the source material. Readers see the authentic approach of the historian, reading events forwards, avoiding anachronism, and detecting where the record has been "corrected" with hindsight. He also points out where the evidence is too slight for a conclusive pronouncement. There is, moreover, a series of brilliant digressions, including those on biography as a genre, the intellectual climate at the University of Leyden in the 1930s, and the history of Yogyakarta.

The weakness of this rewarding and exhilarating book is the biographer's apparent lack of access to his subject's private papers. Although he says he "visited the palace archives" (p. xv), he comments elsewhere that "holdings of documents of political and historical interest are relatively scanty" (p. 357) and that some records relating to HBIX's later life are not yet available (p. 4). Monfries has retreated perforce to writing a political biography and to providing an empirical narrative that places HBIX in historical and political context (pp. 3, 21). This cannot, therefore, be regarded as the definitive account. Nevertheless, given the limitations under which the scholar was labouring, it is the best that can be expected.

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