The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics. The Deployment of Adat from Colonialism to Indigenism, Jamie S. Davidson & David Henley (eds)  

Stephen C. Headley
qu’un islam démocratique et civique y ait été bien ancré depuis des décennies. Feillard et Madinier mentionnent bien les divers ouvrages ayant marqué ce débat, mais hésitent à prendre position. Il est possible que cette hésitation reflète un certain manque de recul et d’analyse sociologique des facteurs soutenants du radicalisme. Bien que son émergence et sa propagation soient très bien cadrées dans une analyse historique, et bien que les auteurs les relient au changement de régime, à la propagation d’un discours radical au niveau national et international, à l’intervention efficace d’élites influentes, et à l’utilisation de ressources matérielles et idéationnelles dans l’édification des réseaux, il manque une certaine analyse systématique de l’effet de transformation des institutions politiques, de la consolidation de valeurs et d’institutions démocratiques, ou de changements socio-économiques pouvant soutenir ou contenir le radicalisme.

Le chapitre dédié principalement à faire le point met surtout l’emphase, par exemple, sur le rôle et les idées de personnages présentement influents au sein des grandes organisations islamiques du pays, une situation qui peut rapidement changer au fil des mutations organisationnelles. Par ailleurs, l’analyse de l’émergence et de la participation de groupes radicaux aux conflits ethno-religieux ayant marqué le début de la transition à la démocratie repose beaucoup sur les faits et gestes des divers groupes, tels que décrits au sein de plusieurs études de l’International Crisis Group. Or cette analyse aurait pu bénéficier de la prise en considération d’analyses reposant sur les changements du cadre institutionnel indonésien, en rapport à la progression et à la contestation du modèle national indonésien, et à des conséquences sur les rapports entre chrétiens et musulmans lors des divers conflits qui ont éclaté à partir de 1995. Le raffermissement d’un modèle reposant sur la quasi-sécularisation de l’état, ainsi qu’une plus grande ouverture au sein de l’élite politique à l’accommodement de la diversité, a permis depuis 2001 de solidifier certains aspects de la démocratie, et suggère que l’espace politique démocratique débordant le cadre de l’islam politique (radical ou modéré) semble créer un obstacle de plus en plus ferme à la progression du radicalisme, qu’il soit exprimé au sein de conflits inter-religieux, par le biais d’actes terroristes, ou par la voie de la mobilisation en faveur de la charia.

Néanmoins, cet ouvrage demeure une ressource indiscutablement utile et riche pour comprendre l’état actuel du radicalisme islamique indonésien et pour démystifier un sujet qui sombre trop souvent dans des explications simplistes et alarmistes sur l’islam politique. À cet égard, l’ouvrage de Feillard et Madinier vient enrichir considérablement la littérature émergente sur l’islam politique en Indonésie, tout en offrant une analyse bénéfique pour le grand public en quête d’analyses sérieuses pouvant atténuer l’anxiété souvent amplifiée par des conclusions souvent trop hâtives et stéréotypées face à l’islam radical.

* Science politique, Université de Toronto, Canada.


By Stephen C. HEADLEY

The title of this book immediately gives an idea of its bread of perspective and the approach adopted by its editors. In March, 2004, the Singapore-based Asian Research Institute (ARI) organized on the island of Batam a workshop, “Adat revivalism in Indonesia’s democratic transition,” that gave rise to this publication. It is a most timely and useful collection bringing into focus different strands of the debate about the relevance of adat (customary law), and this in a variety of perspectives encouraged by the editors. In fifteen chapters, they have succeeded in covering the diversity of Indonesia, even if they regret (p. 37) not having devoted a chapter to Java, the relationship between Islam and adat, or the role of adat in contemporary Papuan politics. Chapters 2-5 (Gees Fasseur & Peter Burns; David Henley & David Bourchier) treat the historical and modern forces that have shaped the role of adat. The other nine chapters treat the revival of customary law: ch. 7, the “return of the sultans” (Gerry van Klinken); ch. 8 & 9, the revival of adat among the Balinese and Minangkabau (Carol Warren, Renske Biezeveld); ch. 10-15 deal with the marginalized masyarakat adat among “indigenous” groups, in Kalimantan (Jamie Davidson); “post-tribal” Catholics on Flores (Maribeth Erb); the pan-Indonesian adat movement (Sandra Moniaga); while chapters 13-15 take up the role of adat in central...
Sulawesi (Greg Acciaioli, Arianto Sangaji, Tania Li). These chapters show us the full variety of regional settings and historical contexts of adat, as well as the various dynamics of local movements for adat revival.

The editors focus nearly completely on the political dimensions, trying to balance between a critique of its instrumentalism and a critical analysis of adat discourses as political competition, while bypassing the authenticity of many of these revival movements in terms of their local perspectives. Nevertheless, for anyone not aware of the revival of adat in Indonesia since 1998, the editors' introduction (pp. 1-49) provides a ample and thought-provoking overview. Given that custom and tradition, for the editors, mean “sedate order and consensus,” they are obliged to explain how since 1998 adat has come to connote activism, protest, and violent conflict. This approach clearly reflects concern for the conflicts of local populations with Bugis immigrants in Kalimantan and Sulawesi. But the editors hasten to show that the issues are much broader. The Jakarta-based organization, AMAN (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara), in its first congress in 1999, stated pointedly: “If the state will not acknowledge us, then we will not acknowledge the state.” This is only comprehensible, of course, in the context of the “decentralisation and dismantling of the authoritarian state,” after Soeharto’s fall in May, 1998. In fact, this book is aimed at contributing to this enquiry via an examination of adat, as the title of its introductory chapter, “Radical conservatism: the protean politics of adat,” shows. Now, although the editors admit (p. 3) that “[t]oday much of the way societies are organized, rights allocated, and disputes resolved in Indonesia still has little to do with the state or its laws,” they nonetheless define adat as (1) “a complex of rights and obligations” tying together history, land, and law in a specifically Indonesian way; and (2) a formulation of an ideal society. And they add immediately thereafter (p. 3): “Neither our concentration in this book on power politics nor our use [...] of the term ‘deployment’ should be taken to imply that political manifestation of adat necessarily reflect the cynical manipulation of tradition by self-interested actors.” But why must one defend AMAN or any other group from instrumentalism, if one tries to provide a “nuanced and critical” (p. 4) assessment of the way in which AMAN uses adat to redress basic injustices? The very nature of sociability should be the focus of the evaluation.

Much of the editors’ inquiry is concerned with the scruples that they themselves experienced in proving that the recent Indonesian adoption of adat as empowerment brings along with it “inherent restrictions and dangers.” Having tried to circumvent “Indonesia’s notoriously corrupt and ineffective formal legal system” (p. 4), the adopting of adat is surely questionable, comparatively speaking. So the editors ask, how often is adat a justification for ethnic violence? aren’t individual interests really being subordinated to communities dominated by traditional elites? This rush to evaluate leads them to worry (pp. 4-5) that as a political ideology adat is just a subject to political manipulation because it is informal, uncodified, and idealized stability and order. But is such a comparative politics approach, preoccupied as it is by the topics of democratization, legal reform, and ethnic violence, not a straightjacket to understanding the different sociabilities set in motion by the revival of adat?

To address this issue, the editors’ introductory chapter takes up the following reasons for adat revival. Four factors are presented as explaining the nature and causes of revival: (1) support from international organizations; (2) oppression of the New Order regime; (3) the opportunities of Reformasi; and (4) role of adat in the nationalistic political imagination. Is it true, as the cynical observers of indigenous identity believe (p. 6), that “indigenous” is defined not so much by ancestry, culture, or marginality, and more by recuperation of international organizations; (2) oppression of the New Order regime; (3) the opportunities of Reformasi; and (4) role of adat in the nationalistic political imagination. Is it true, as the cynical observers of indigenous identity believe (p. 6), that “indigenous” is defined not so much by ancestry, culture, or marginality, and more by recuperation of the international discourse on indigenous rights? While the editors realize that this is an extreme view, they tend to refuse any final coherence to culture because of their horror at its instrumentalism. What is not instrumentalized? What of the unending lies that the practice of democracy is forced to project? So what if, for some, indigenism is nothing more than a “handy tool” in the struggle against globalization, as long as it serves local interests. The editors show that the second cause of the revival of adat (p. 9) is the disenfranchisement, the refusal of any political rights. Under Soeharto, cultural difference and ethnic identity went unrecognized and were brutally punished if declared in the public sphere. After his fall (1998),
the reaction in areas of transmigration was one of renewed self-organization of the indigenous populations and, more rarely, pogroms towards immigrants. The state likewise directly administered religions via the Pancasila state ideology, which was touted as promoting “tolerance,” i.e., normalization for those areas “lacking” real “religion” (agama). Once the top of the pressure cooker of the Soeharto decades was off, the Reformasi era provided of course positive opportunities (p. 14) “[…] to find bases for political order other than the bureaucratic hierarchy, economic patronage, state propaganda, and the military force of the New Order. The difficulty of creating new democratic institutions at the local level, the weakness of the existing legal system, and the threat of violence and disorder inclined people in many places to look to tradition as a course of both consensus and justice.” This revival of adat in certain areas, like Lombok and West Sumatra (ch. 9), could be seen as a secular complement to Islam rather than having any ultimate cosmological reference.

One of the editors’ main concerns (pp. 23-28) is to distinguish between protection through and domination by adat “politics.” Tania Li, in the final chapter (pp. 365-366), claims that both on the local and national levels, appeals to adat “tend to privilege elites, especially senior men, who are empowered to speak on behalf of a presumed whole.” Worse still, the link between ethnic rights and ethnic cleansing seems to the editors to evoke the Blut und Boden of Nazi Germany. Clearly, there are limits to the usefulness of an empowerment so locally focused as, inter alia, Warren shows (p. 191, n. 4). But local micro-holisms are nonetheless real social groups, and an improvement on the anarchy that the New Order left behind. If everything is treated as a question of empowerment, then there is no need to speak of any hierarchy of values, for power is the only value that characterizes social relations.

The editors, however, defend another thesis (p. 31), namely, that in Indonesia Islam has historically provided the most “effective bridge between local cultures.” For if one is looking to create civility “in the Enlightenment sense of toleration and restraint with respect to differences in culture, opinion, and faith,” then it is possible to claim that Islam “plays a kind of civilizing role in Indonesian political life.” This is not true every-

where for, as the editors write (pp. 32-33), “[t]he current adat revival, not coincidentally, is concentrated either in areas where the progress of Islamic conversion is blocked by Christianity or Hinduism, or in areas where Islamic conversion has taken place but pre-Islamic elements remain unusually important in social life […]”

The editors’ ultimate critique of adat arises from their belief that adat is almost always an expression of some wishful thinking about the ways things ought to be rather than how they are. Nor has adat, historically speaking, fulfilled its promise and therefore (p. 33), “adat as a guarantee of peace and harmony is misleading not only as a prescription for the future but also as an interpretation of the past.” Can’t the same thing be said of democracy, that hope-filled renaissance of sociability that always profiles itself on a yet further horizon? The editors seem to me to have provided a rich empirical collection of data that they would like to denigrate. But what do they have to put in its place. The credibility of the concept of “civil society” has had a short shelf life in eastern Europe (see Hann 2006), where the secular transcendence of nationalism is strongly linked to identifications of forms of eastern and western Christianity. The most universal of religions can be provincialized. But then, is civility to be defined by trust in and the recognition of individual agency in complex societies? If that is the case, then masyarakat adat communities had better be dissolved in order to attain a more complete reign of the ideology of individualism where a “principled conception of the individual upon which rights and duties and obligations of a civil polity and society” (Seligman 2000: 75) can be brought to center stage. That way, we could slowly evacuate (p. 35) “[…] the adat-based claim to preferential rights on the basis of historical precedence, cultural identity, and territorial possession, a claim which challenges the principles of equality and legal impartiality on which Indonesian (and most other modern) citizenship, at least in theory, is based.”

Having subjected adat to such a severe critique, the editors finally recognize (p. 38) that adat is a “specifically Indonesian ideological tradition in which land community and custom […] provide the normative reference points for political struggles.” Secondly, that (p. 41) “[f]irm legal acknowledgement of customary land rights, together with restitution of already alienated adat land […]
matters of simple justice.” But the revival of community trust is no simple matter of justice if one adopts the point of view of the community, unless one speaks in the most abstract legal terms. And the editors recognize this (p. 40): “[…] national legislation is increasingly irrelevant to local developments, and adat has been caught up [in] a profusion of local conflict and contestation which for the moment is largely beyond legal and institutional control.” So is adat just a “tool of ethno-politics,” as Li in the concluding chapter suggests? Each reader will have to make up his mind on the basis of the richness of the descriptive chapters and by taking advantage of the sharpness of the analysis provided by the authors, whose distance from their topic only reflects the human dramas that have thrown up on the shores of social science such a sensitive and important topic.

*CNRS/EPHE, Paris

References


Par Laurence HUSSON

L’ouvrage dirigé conjointement par Firman Lubis, qui enseigne la médecine familiale à la faculté de Médecine de l’université Indonesia, et Anke Niehof, anthropologue et professeur de sociologie de la famille à l’université néerlandaise de Wageningen, est dédié à deux chercheurs qui ont consacrés une grande partie de leur travail à l’étude du changement social et démographique dans l’archipel indonésien : Masri Singarimbun, du Population Studies Center de l’université Gadjah Mada de Yogyakarta, et Hans D. Speckmann, professeur à l’université de Leyde. Comme le titre l’indique explicitement, cet ouvrage collectif examine de façon exhaustive les multiples facettes du planning familial durant les trois décennies du régime dit de « l’Ordre nouveau » du président Suharto.

Quiconque a arpenté l’Indonésie aura en effet remarqué, dans les villes, les bourgades et même les villages, l’omniprésence des affiches incitant à se conformer à la sacro-sainte formule : « Deux enfants, c’est assez » (Dua anak cukup), créant ainsi la famille modèle idéale à deux enfants.

Le développement du programme de planning familial indonésien (Keluarga Berencana Nasional, KBN) est étudié non seulement dans son contexte politique, mais aussi en tant que tel. La politique démographique conçue au début du régime de l’Ordre nouveau reflète la foi dans les modèles de développement économique planifié qui prévalaient dans les économies capitalistes à cette époque. Pour les auteurs, il s’agit d’analyser l’idéologie et les pratiques du contrôle planifié des naissances dans la société indonésienne. Mais aussi au-delà du contexte indonésien spécifique, en tenant compte du débat mondial sur la population, qui par ailleurs influence les Indonésiens et la politique en matière de famille.

Ce recueil d’articles suit un déroulement chronologique. Après une introduction (chap. 1), les chapitres 2 à 6 replacent le KBN dans une perspective historique et politique. Le chapitre 7 traite des pratiques locales de planning familial. La seconde partie, qui commence au chapitre 8, met l’accent sur l’impact et les résultats de ces politiques. Elle se penche aussi sur une question importante : la signification du planning familial pour les femmes. L’approche générale se partage entre niveau macro et niveau micro.

L’ouvrage est composé de douze articles, dont trois articles conjoints de Lubis et Niehof – l’introduction, une analyse de cas (chap. 7) et la conclusion —, un article de Lubis (chap. 3), un article de Niehof (chap. 9) et, il faut le souligner, la participation de deux ténors australiens de la démographie indonésienne, Terence H. Hull (chap. 4) et Gavin W. Jones (chap. 8), qui maîtrisent et synthétisent parfaitement le sujet.

Une des grandes questions auxquelles tente de répondre l’ouvrage concerne le déclin de fertilité enregistré sous l’Ordre nouveau, attribuable ou non au planning familial. L’ouvrage entend, en effet, tout d’abord éclairer la transition qui s’est produite dans le domaine de la fertilité et le rôle que les programmes de KBN ont pu jouer dans cette évolution. Puis, en

Moussons 11, 2007, 233-248