

Martin Harper



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One Nation, One People, One Language

The Story of Indonesia
& Bahasa Indonesia



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One Language

The Story of Indonesia & Bahasa Indonesia

eum

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One Nation, One People, One Language The Story of Indonesia & Bahasa Indonesia

The Republic of Indonesia is a chain of islands between Asia and Australia comprising Java, Bali, Sumatra, Sulawesi, three-quarters of Borneo and half of New Guinea. Until the 20th century, the archipelago was more like a continent than a country, home to hundreds of ethnic groups with neither a common racial identity, a common culture nor a common tongue to unite them. In this divided state, its inhabitants succumbed to a succession of foreign powers, from the Portuguese and the Spanish to the Dutch, the British and the Japanese. This book tells the story of how a particular dialect of Malay was adopted as the nationalist movement's language of unity and the role it played in facilitating a struggle for self-determination which, by 1950, had culminated in full independence. It explains how history has moulded Bahasa Indonesia (the Indonesian language), how Bahasa Indonesia shaped history, and the extent to which the ideal of "One Nation, One People, One Language", espoused at the Indonesian Youth Congress of 1928, has been realized.

Martin Harper taught in Indonesia for several years before joining the University of Macerata in 1992. He currently works for the University's Language Centre and teaches at the Department of Economics and Law.



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