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Javanese Gentry

By Umar Kayam

Lontar. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 398 pages. Dimensions: 8.4in. x 5.5in. x 1.1in. In my mind rose a misty picture of a little girl in a floral dress. As for her face: nothing. I could only hope that she had been pretty. I sat overcome. What a procession of developments in one day! Only that morning I had left Madiun; at midday I was wobbling on a buggy past an ocean of rice fields; tonight, suddenly, I had been renamed by my parents and handed a wife. Thus begins Sastrodarsono's life, returning to his village as a newly-appointed schoolteacher, and by virtue of that position, a member of the priyayi - functionary gentry awesomely elevated above the peasantry of his origins. From those most traditional of Javanese institutions - change of name and a virtually imposed marriage - he moves on with his bride to found a line of modernizing generations active across the whole span of recent Indonesian history: the 20th century late-colonial period, Japanese occupation, war of independence and two decades of social disorder ending in the mid-1960s with the rise of Suharto's authoritarian New Order government. The ideal of gentrification threads through this saga, both in the implicit...



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