At the Edges of States
Dynamics of State Formation in the Indonesian Borderlands
Michael Eilenberg

Set in West Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo, this study explores the shifting relationships between border communities and the state along the political border with East Malaysia. The book rests on the premise that remote border regions offer an exciting study arena that can tell us important things about how marginal citizens relate to their nation-state.

The basic assumption is that central state authority in the Indonesian borderlands has never been absolute, but waxes and wanes, and state rules and laws are always up for local interpretation and negotiation. In its role as key symbol of state sovereignty, the borderland has become a place where central state authorities are often most eager to govern and exercise power. But as illustrated, the borderland is also a place where state authority is most likely to be challenged, questioned and manipulated as border communities often have multiple loyalties that transcend state borders and contradict imaginations of the state as guardians of national sovereignty and citizenship.


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