

# Churches of Sumatra

by Kirby Olson (June 2018)



*Amsterdam, Irina Rumyantseva, 2015*

The tigers of Sumatra and the orangutans  
of Borneo may not have been bothered  
by the Dutch missionaries who largely failed  
to transform Indonesia into a church-

driven society, as the prevailing Muslims  
quietly but firmly retained a strangle-hold  
on faith. In the far-off jungles cryptozoologists claim  
pterodactyls still circle, eyeing carbon-based

life as a caloric adjunct to solar  
glucose. Plain white spires compete  
with onion-domed mosques, whereas some  
painters, some poets left a record

that the Jakartans would take to heart.

The peoples of Papua New Guinea  
continue to hunt heads, shoot darts  
from blow-guns, and boil missionaries  
in round-bellied pots, while in Amsterdam  
Indonesian immigrants enjoy Frank Sinatra.

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