

Indonesia Council Digest February 2009

This is the digest of the Indonesia Council, a regional grouping within the Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA). As the Indonesia Council does not have a separate fee structure, we urge those of you who find this bulletin useful or who attend the Indonesia Council's free biennial conference to become **financial members of the ASAA**. **You can now join online** at <https://www.registernow.com.au/secure/Register.aspx?ID=594>.

The Indonesia Council Digest is circulated monthly. If you have information about conferences, Indonesia-related news, resources, job opportunities, new books etc, send it in at any time by replying to this email. Older copies of the digest can be downloaded from the Indonesia Council website (<http://indonesiacouncil.anu.edu.au/digest.php>). If you know of anyone who may like to be added to the list please ask them to contact the list moderator directly at michele.ford@usyd.edu.au.

NEWS

Congratulations to **Edward Aspinall**, who has been promoted to Senior Fellow, Department of Political and Social Change, RSPAS, ANU.

Indonesia Council Open Conference abstracts are NOW DUE. Please send your name, a short bio and your abstract to icoc2009@google.com. If your paper is part of a pre-organised panel, please forward your abstract to the panel organiser, who will submit all the abstracts for that panel. Please check <http://indonesiacouncil.anu.edu.au/icoc2009.php#papers> for details of the conference, which will be held at the University of Sydney from 15-17 July. Don't forget that the ASILE conference is scheduled immediately beforehand (see details below).

RECENT JOURNAL ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Edward Aspinall (2008) 'Ethnic and religious violence in Indonesia: a review essay', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 62 (4), pp. 558-572

Reviewing three recent books (by Jamie Davidson, John Sidel and Gerry van Klinken) on the ethnic and religious violence that enveloped parts of Indonesia in the post-Suharto period, Aspinall notes that such violence was geographically and temporally concentrated. Scholarship on ethnic and religious violence, in Indonesia as elsewhere, has thus moved far beyond from the primordialist assumptions and easy generalizations that once dominated the field. Many studies now try to explain the particularities and specificities of violence. The books reviewed do so by focusing on different (though overlapping) violent episodes and by using different theoretical and methodological approaches. Davidson, in his study of violence in West Kalimantan, demonstrates the importance of close case studies and of historical context in understanding violence; van Klinken shows the utility of both social movement theory and of instrumentalist approaches stressing elite interests; Sidel stresses the centrality of identity uncertainty and links identity to social and political power structures. Each book strives to explain why violence occurred when, where and how it did. To different degrees they also share an emphasis on broad structural factors and elite agency, even manipulation, in their explanations. The review ends by identifying

lacunae in the study of Indonesian violence: an absence of analyses of places where violence did *not* occur, yet where general models and theories would lead us to expect it, and depictions of the voices and experiences of the foot soldiers of ethnic and religious violence.

MacRae, Graeme and I Nyoman Darma Putra. 2008." 'A peaceful festival of democracy': aristocratic rivalry and the media in a local election in Bali", *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, vol. 42, no. 2, pp. 107–46.

The decentralisation of power and budgets to district level throughout Indonesia has led to new forms of local politics. In Bali at least, traditional aristocracies and the media have emerged as significant players in local elections. There is evidence from elsewhere in Indonesia of collusion between remnant elites from the New Order period to form ongoing political "cartels" and "oligarchies" and also of significant public disorder and violence accompanying elections. This paper reports on a recent election of a district head in which neither of these tendencies was evident and which in effect became the stage for continuation of a long-standing contest between rival palaces. We argue that contemporary electoral politics in Indonesia are more diverse and complex than attempts to characterise politics at a national level would suggest.

BOOKS

Marcus Mietzner (2008) *Military Politics, Islam and the State in Indonesia: From Turbulent Transition to Democratic Consolidation*, ISEAS, Singapore.

Based on a decade of research in Indonesia, this book provides an in-depth account of the military's struggle to adapt to the new democratic system after the downfall of Suharto's authoritarian regime in 1998. Unlike other studies of the Indonesian armed forces, which focus exclusively on internal military developments, Mietzner's study emphasizes the importance of conflicts among civilians in determining the extent of military involvement in political affairs. Analysing disputes between Indonesia's main Muslim groups, Mietzner argues that their intense rivalry between 1998 and 2004 allowed the military to extend its engagement in politics and protect its institutional interests. The stabilization of the civilian polity after 2004, in contrast, has led to an increasing marginalization of the armed forces from the power centre. Drawing broader conclusions from these events for Indonesia's ongoing process of democratic consolidation, the book shows that the future role of the armed forces in politics will largely depend on the ability of civilian leaders to maintain functioning democratic institutions and procedures.

O'Shaughnessy, Kate. *Gender, State and Social Power in Contemporary Indonesia. Divorce and Marriage Law*. Abingdon, Routledge, 2009.

This book examines gender, state and social power in Indonesia, focusing in particular on state regulation of divorce from 1965 to 2005 and its impact on women. The 1974 Marriage Law, which for the first time regulated marriage for both Muslim and non-Muslim Indonesians and restricted access to divorce.

Lizzy van Leeuwen, *Lost in Mall. An ethnography of middle-class Jakarta in the 1990s.* Leiden, KITLV Press, 2009.

In this study, based on extensive anthropological fieldwork throughout the 1990s, this new middle class is examined as a socio-cultural phenomenon. Despite a global orientation and a taste for democracy, its members seemed have internalized the New Order along with some lingering latecolonial notions as their guidelines. How 'new' was the new middle class anyway? Lifestyle and material cultural practices in the suburb of Bintaro Raya - in public space as well as in the intimacy of living rooms - illustrate the everyday ambiguity of people who appear to be trapped in their imagined middleclassness: they were 'lost in the mall'.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

The **Indonesia Council Open Conference 2009** will be held in Sydney from 15-17 July. Please check <http://indonesiacouncil.anu.edu.au/icoc2009.php#papers> for details of the conference and register ASAP by sending an email to icoc2009@gmail.com.

Maju bersama - Working together to build Australia's Indonesian language potential Australian Society of Indonesian Language Educators Biennial Conference Sydney 14 - 15 July 2009. Details of the conference are available at <http://www.mltansw.asn.au/asile.htm>. Abstract submissions are due on **Friday 6 February, 2009**. Please send your abstract to Andrea Corston (acorston@internode.on.net).

The **3rd SSEASR Conference on Waters in South and Southeast Asia: Interaction of Culture and Religion** will be held at **Denpasar from June 3 to 6, 2009 in Denpasar**. We would be pleased if you would present paper on any subject covering the scope of the Conference. The information can be seen also at www.sseasr.org and the pre-registration form can be filled in online.

Improving the Quality of Social Life in Asia Pacific: a Challenge for Sociology. June 13 - 15, 2009, Kuta, Bali, Indonesia. The Department of Sociology - University of Indonesia and the Asia Pacific Sociological Association (APSA) will host the 9th Conference of APSA on June 13-15, 2009 in Kuta, Bali, Indonesia. The deadline for submission of abstracts is Saturday, **Jan 31, 2009**. For more informaton please visit: www.apsa-uiconference.org.

PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITIES

JAPSS Press, a branch of the *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* is calling for chapter proposals for an Edited Volume dealing with **Regionalism and Development in the Asia Pacific Region**. Some possible topics are: South to South Cooperation International Norms and Regionalism in the Asia Pacific Region - Globalization and Regionalism, Development, Human Rights and Regionalism, Cultural Change and Regionalism. The book will be published under the name of the Journal and will be distributed in the United States and the World. The expenses for this project will be covered by the Journal and its supporting organizations. Editorial work will be undertaken

by qualified scholars affiliated with the Journal. This is a wonderful opportunity for junior scholars and scholars from the developing world to share their research with the wider academic community. If interested please submit a short abstract of the proposed chapter in addition to a brief resume to the Editor in Chief of the Journal. Otto F. von Feigenblatt, Editor in Chief, JAPSS editor@journal.vpweb.com journalalternative@hotmail.com Otto. Visit the website at <http://www.iapss.org>

SCHOLARSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS/RESEARCH/FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Each year, the **School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ**, invites up to twenty scholars to be in residence for the full academic year to pursue their own research. The School welcomes applications in economics, political science, law, psychology, sociology and anthropology. It encourages social scientific work with an historical and humanistic bent and also entertains applications in history, philosophy, literary criticism, literature and linguistics. Applicants must have a Ph.D. at time of application. Each year there is a general thematic focus that provides common ground for roughly half the scholars; for 2010-2011 the focus will be Secularism. The application deadline is **November 1, 2009**. Applications must be submitted beginning June 1 through the Institute's online application system, which can be found, along with more information, at www.sss.ias.edu/applications.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Faculty of History, Philosophy, and Theology, Department of History, At Bielefeld University invites applications for 4 postdoc research positions (E13 TV-L) in the history of a non-European region (one position in Antiquity or the Middle Ages, three positions from the Early Modern period to the Present), starting April 1, 2009. The positions are limited to three years, with a possible extension for another two years. In line with the Bielefeld approach, applicants should be interested in a theoretically informed historical analysis. Applicants should have a PhD in history and further publications in a relevant field. The Department of History explicitly encourages experienced researchers to apply (holding their PhD for more than five years). Applicants are also expected to teach. They should be willing to learn German within an appropriate time period. For further information, please contact: Prof. Dr. Angelika Epple(Angelika.Epple@uni-bielefeld.de). Priority will be given to applications received by **February 6th, 2009**.