



PRODUCING INDONESIA

The State of the Field of Indonesian Studies

EDITED BY ERIC TAGLIACOZZO



Eric Tagliacozzo, Editor

Producing Indonesia

The State of the Field of Indonesian Studies

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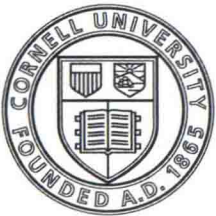
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Producing Indonesia



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The title of "Producing Indonesia" for this volume is used with some trepidation. As a collective of some two dozen scholars of the country, spread across six disciplines, we know of course that we are not "producing" a nation that has (in fact) produced itself, through indigenous hands, over many years. In this sense, therefore, the title of our combined efforts in book form is meant in an ironic sense. But we do acknowledge that the production of knowledge about a place happens all the time, and that we as academic interpreters of the country play a part in that dialectic. In the pages that follow, a number of scholarly visions of the state of the field of Indonesian Studies are on view, as articulated by senior practitioners of this process. Many people need to be thanked for making this effort come to fruition. Thak Chaloemtiarana and Tamara Loos, former directors of Cornell's Southeast Asia Program, both helped make this volume and the conference that preceded it a reality, through their encouragement and their allocation of programmatic funds. Neither would have happened without their support. We are also very much indebted to the staff of SEAP, particularly Nancy Loncto and Wendy Treat, who aided enormously in the logistics for this project. In addition to the Cornell professors who served as discussants for the six sub-sections of the book here, our colleague Andrew Willford gave of his time and expertise at the conference, and through his careful critique of the papers on his panel. Deborah Homsher and Fred Conner at SEAP Publications helped usher the volume through the publication process, and were guardian angels in helping all appear in print. Fred Logevall and the Einaudi Center at Cornell also provided much needed financial support. Finally, Anto Mohsin, a graduate student in Science and Technology Studies at Cornell, kindly served as chronicler of the conference, and prepared an impressive sheaf of notes on the proceedings. We thank all of these people and institutions in helping us to realize this book project. We hope this volume will usher in a new stage in the evolution of Cornell's Modern Indonesia Project (CMIP), active since the 1950s in Ithaca, and will help launch a series of planned volumes on the breadth and depth of Indonesian Studies in the years to come.

— Eric Tagliacozzo

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INTRODUCTION: THE STATE OF THE FIELD OF INDONESIAN STUDIES

Eric Tagliacozzo

In late April 2011 an extraordinary gathering was convened at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. The meeting focused around the “State of Indonesian Studies” (the gathering’s putative title), and eighteen senior scholars, scattered across six disciplinary fields and from literally all over the world, were flown in to spend a long weekend at the Kahin Center for Advanced Research on Southeast Asia. To our knowledge, a conference of this kind had never been attempted before—one that gathered many of the world’s senior Indonesianists, representing many disciplines, into one room to talk with one another about the arc, breadth, and health of our common field. Cornell’s Modern Indonesia Project faculty (CMIP¹) hosted this event with humility, because it was really fortunate for us that so many top scholars took time out of their busy schedules, during the height of the teaching term, to come to Ithaca (as some say, the “most centrally isolated place in the United States”) to be with us for those two days. Yet we also did this with pride, because Cornell has played a special role in building Indonesian Studies, not just in America, but in the world at large, a fact that comes out clearly from many of the papers assembled here.

This project of “building something sturdy in the field” was not accomplished by the generation of Cornell faculty members running the conference. Rather, it was done by an older generation (actually, several older generations now) of professors who have trained a large number of the specialists from around the world who continue to try to explain Indonesia as an entity across a large number of fields. So it seemed fitting that the meeting was held in Ithaca, and, at the same time, it was also fitting that when one looked out over the assembled audience, there were, in fact, a number of intellectual traditions representing various genealogies of knowledge on Indonesia. These were from Cornell, but also from Yale University (New Haven CT), Brown University (Providence, RI), the universities of Wisconsin (Madison, WI), Washington (Seattle, WA), and Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI), and the University of

¹ The Cornell Modern Indonesia Project was initiated in 1956 with translations of significant documents and literature concerned with (then) modern Indonesia. Over the years, the program resulted in translations of primary source materials as well as original studies of Indonesia’s political events and the evolution of its history and government up through the end of the twentieth century.

California–Santa Cruz, for example. They were also from a number of traditions outside of the United States, including the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Australia, and, perhaps most importantly of all, from Indonesia itself. And this, certainly, is a good thing. It leads one to suppose that the bloodlines have been mixing, and that the state of the organism, at least from a genetic point of view, is healthy in that our collective parentage is mixed, and will mix further in the future.

What we hope happened over the two days of the conference is that we received some ideas from all those assembled, individually and collectively, in answer to Gauguin's famous three questions: Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going? We feel this volume helps us to know something of the answers to those questions, and debates our gathered responses as much as we are able to do so several decades down the line from the initial founding of CMIP more than fifty years ago. This is important, perhaps especially now, as Indonesia is clearly "moving up in the world" and is becoming a place that seems more and more to be on the agendas of the wealthy, the powerful, and of influential states in global circles. We hope that these essays are able to tell us all something of the focus and direction of Indonesian Studies writ large, as well as from the perspectives of individual disciplines—anthropology, art, history, linguistics, government, and music. We are publishing here what we learned over the course of the conference so that not only those who took part in the meeting may benefit from the discussion, but also the wider public at large can benefit from this exercise in "taking stock." We hope that this first volume, a broad and diffuse attempt at measuring where we are, will be followed by others more closely focused on the individual academic disciplines represented below, so that we may extend this conversation to a larger group of scholars as finances and time commitments allow.

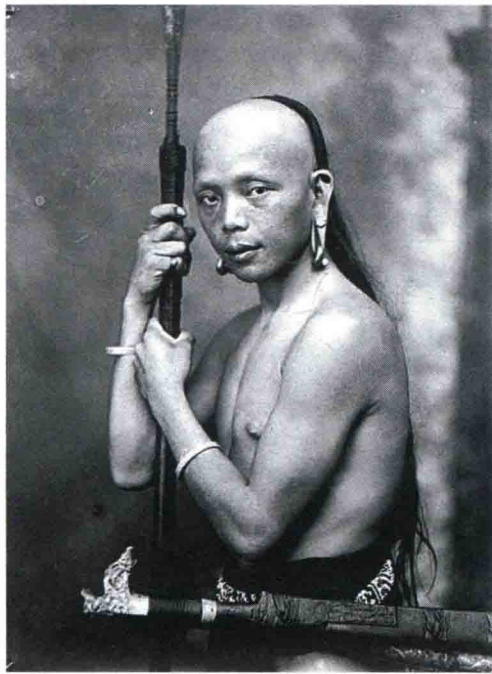
* * *

Anthropology. Marina Welker and Andrew Willford got us started by chairing the anthropology panel, which opened the proceedings. Welker is the author of several important articles on a US mining company in rural Indonesia that have been published in top-shelf ethnographic journals in the field over the past several years.² She was asked to introduce the papers of the assembled anthropologists and to provide some shape and context to their contributions as a whole. The first of these essays was by Danilyn Rutherford, the Chair of the Anthropology Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Rutherford's work has been focused mostly on the Indonesian province of West Papua, or what was formerly called Irian Jaya, the western half of the island of New Guinea. She has been concerned with both nationalism and the problem of audience in this unstable, often marginalized place.³

² For Marina Welker, see, for example, "The Green Revolution's Ghost: Unruly Subjects of Participatory Development in Rural Indonesia," *American Ethnologist* 39,2 (2012): 389–406; and "Corporate Security Begins in the Community: Mining, the Corporate Social Responsibility Industry, and Environmental Advocacy in Indonesia," *Cultural Anthropology* 24,1 (2009): 142–79. Andrew Willford, a Malaysianist by training, helped us enormously in co-chairing the panel, but, by agreement with Marina Welker, left the essay here for her to produce.

³ See Danilyn Rutherford's two influential monographs, *Raiding the Land of the Foreigners: The Limits of the Nation on an Indonesian Frontier* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003); and *Laughing at Leviathan: Sovereignty and Audience in West Papua* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

Rutherford argues that the “mysterious” is a spectral presence in many of the best ethnographies about Indonesia; both strange, unexplained occurrences and people who seem to be beyond easy definition or definite placement in categories hover in standout ethnographies of this part of the world. This is important, because Indonesia during anthropology’s coming-of-age period from the mid-1960s to nearly the end of the 1990s was ruled by the New Order state, a regime that had a real stake in the “mysterious” in certain ineffable ways. The New Order engaged in rigorous taxonomy and classification of its subjects to enforce its police-state structure. But, at the same time, it kept things “mysterious” and vague when it needed to, in order to deny Indonesians clarity in the processes that kept them as ruled subjects of a coercive apparatus. Rutherford explores this dichotomy in interesting and provocative ways in her contribution, maintaining this tension throughout the arc of her piece.



“A Dayak with Earrings and a Lance, SE Borneo, circa 1920,” with permission

Ken George, formerly chair of the Anthropology Department at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and since decamped to the Australian National University, writes about another form of the mysterious, that is, translation in its many forms. George has been instrumental in translating Indonesian life-ways, first with regard to headhunting in Sulawesi, and, more recently, with regard to Indonesian Islamic art through his study of an important modern painter in the archipelago.⁴ George is interested in the ways that information on Indonesia is translated and packaged for the outside world—including by ethnographers. He laments in his essay the lack of

⁴ See Kenneth M. George, *Showing Signs of Violence: The Cultural Politics of a Twentieth-Century Headhunting Ritual* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996) and *Picturing Islam: Art and Ethics in a Muslim Lifeworld* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

specificity and locality that is often implied in this process, Indonesia being a place where “big concepts” have traveled well, but the actual lived realities—often very difficult ones—have not. George asks why this has been the case, when life on the ground in the country has often been so difficult, certainly in normative times, but particularly so in times of stress and upheaval. He asks for an anthropology of the archipelago that pays more attention to these local situations, and which doesn’t only deal with big-picture issues that find eager audiences and welcome receptions when transmitted to the west. Toward this end he hopes for alliances to be forged among the various humanities and social-sciences disciplines, Indonesian subjects, and academic purveyors of knowledge who might be induced to report and translate on the realities for a large, global audience. Indonesians, he notes, deserve to have more known about the daily, lived realities of their struggle in the region.

Finally, Patricia Spyer, of Leiden University, presented a paper that was squared on how violence has been central to Indonesian society, both as a repeatedly recurring episode in various guises, but also in everyday life. Spyer’s work is well-known in anthropological circles for its uses of history and circulation in thinking about transmission processes in the archipelago in a variety of ways.⁵ Here Spyer explores how anthropologists in Indonesia can (and, she argues, should) use their profession to uncover modalities of violence, which have been nearly omnipresent in Indonesian life-ways for the past several decades. She argues for interrogating this state of affairs from both top-down and bottom-up perspectives. She sees the political history of the New Order as part and parcel of these equations, but she also asks that ethnographers approach the “violence of everyday life” in Indonesia from fieldwork vantages, not just from the realm of state policies and state changes that have riddled the modern history of the nation. As a witness to and interpreter of these processes, she sees symbols of violence in many places scattered across the country, and puts forward a plea that future ethnographers will work to identify and explain these iconographies as part of their work on the ground.

Taken as a set, then, the three anthropological contributions tease out and inform larger trends in the representation of Indonesia as a society ripe to be “known” in divergent ways. The essays have sound internal logics, but are also referential to each other in interesting and complex ways, and provide something of a blueprint for the future, as well as an explication of the past of ethnography in this nation.

* * *

Art History. Anthropology was followed by art history, chaired by Kaja McGowan, who is a specialist on Bali and well-published in this area.⁶ Natasha Reichle, of the San Francisco Museum of Asian Art, got us all going with a broad and

⁵ Three of the more important works in this vein include Patricia Spyer’s monograph *The Memory of Trade: Modernity’s Entanglements on an Eastern Indonesian Island* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000) and two edited volumes, *Border Fetishisms: Material Objects in Unstable Spaces* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998) and *Handbook of Material Culture* (London: Sage, 2006).

⁶ See Kaja McGowan’s many articles and book chapters, but also *Ida Bagus Made: The Art of Devotion, a Volume Honoring the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Puri Lukisan Museum, Bali, Indonesia* (Denpasar: Yayasan Ratna Wartha [and Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press], 2008).

interesting paper on Indonesian art history.⁷ Reichle notes in her piece that Indonesian art history is not a crowded field, as she delicately puts it—there are few monograph-length studies on Indonesian Art when compared to other, more traveled parts of the world. Yet, she manages to ink quite an accomplished list of contributions nevertheless, precisely by opening up what is thought of as “art” and being very inclusive in her designations. So, while she certainly has something to say about the great temple structures of Java, which are recognizable icons of a tradition, she also brings forth the huge and bewilderingly complex category of “objects” as Indonesian art, too, significantly complicating matters. This is art history, but it’s also archaeology, and it’s anthropology to boot, so she speaks to a number of “allied disciplines.” Reichle is nothing if not inclusive in describing what she sees as the “arc of the field,” though she is careful to recategorize this definition in ways that suit her. The result is a well-drawn picture of what art not only is, but what it can be in the Indonesian context, across centuries, across geographies, and across disciplines, ultimately, as one tries to sketch a “field.” Textiles, gold figurines, temple lintels, and even mundane objects all fall into her ambit, and to ours, to our great profit.



“Bas-Relief on the Borobodur, 1900–1940 Photo,” with permission

Ed McKinnon, formerly with the Asia Research Institute in Singapore and also with the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) in Aceh, delivered a very different kind of paper. McKinnon is one of the best-known archaeologists working on this part of the world. He has been in the field for decades, and has conducted some of the most cutting-edge research on classical-period digs in Indonesia, and

⁷ Natasha Reichle’s two most important contributions are: *Bali: Art, Ritual, Performance* (San Francisco, CA: Asian Art Museum, 2011) and *Violence and Serenity: Late Buddhist Sculpture from Indonesia* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

particularly in Sumatra.⁸ McKinnon gave a genealogy of archaeological management in Indonesia, parts of which (as a field) stretch back to the Dutch colonial period. He is explicitly interested in the notion of antiquities management as a subset of the larger issue of "cultural preservation," a rubric that is given government sanction in Indonesia and that encompasses, in fact, quite a lot of material on the ground to protect. He is interested in the ways that legal and administrative norms have come together both historically and in the present to create an extremely local-specific milieu for the preservation of archaeological and other monuments, scattered across the width and breadth of the Indonesian archipelago. Since McKinnon has had experience digging and prospecting in many places, he was able to give quite a detailed panorama of how these laws and regulations work in various parts of the archipelago, a subject that he has had to learn in some detail to be able to do what he does for a living. As was true in Reichle's case, there aren't a lot of people squarely situated in this field, but there are enough that the "rules and regs" matter, and their vagaries dictate the kinds of knowledge that can be produced. McKinnon showed this dialectic very clearly in his contribution, and showcased a sub-field of "art history" that often has been shunted to the side in Indonesian Studies, though doing so has been a loss for everyone involved.

Finally, the last art history presentation of the day was delivered by Astri Wright, of the University of Victoria. Wright is the author of noted studies on modern Indonesian art, and she provided a wonderfully different contribution and perspective relative to the more classically inspired Reichle and McKinnon essays.⁹ And she did not disappoint on being different, in fact, wowing all present with her never-(ever)-to-be-plagiarized title, "The Arc of my Field is a Rainbow with an Expanding Twist and All Kinds of Creatures Dancing: The Growing Inclusivity of Indonesian Art History." All mirth (and post-modernism) aside, Wright provided an important essay that, in fact, echoed Reichle's in some respects, arguing for a wide interpretation of what Indonesian art history "is," and, perhaps more importantly, what it "can and should be." Crucial to her vision is modern Indonesian art—a notion so new, that it has not really been institutionalized yet in most places as a field of study in any recognizable way. Wright points to the trailblazing work of John Clark, who put modern Southeast Asian Art on the map in some respects, but she is also important in this initiative, and her books have helped pave the way toward new horizons. Wright talks about the place of architecture, the internet, and photography in her essay; this is not "your father's art history," not for this part of the world, to be sure. Yet she filled in a vital lacuna for all present in her analysis, as this newer work is for the most part material that not even most card-carrying Indonesianists know about, regardless of their specialties or disciplines. One can't say that of the Prambanan or of Borobodur, but it certainly seemed the case after we

⁸ See, for example, two of his books: E. Edward McKinnon, *The Pulau Buaya Wreck: Finds from the Song Period* (Jakarta: Ceramic Society of Indonesia, 1998) and *Kota Cina: Its Context and Meaning in the Trade of Southeast Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1984).

⁹ The two most important works here are Astri Wright's *Soul, Spirit, and Mountain: Preoccupations of Contemporary Indonesian Painters* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1994) and her coauthored text, with Agus Dermawan, *T. Hendra Gunawan: A Great Modern Indonesian Painter* (Jakarta and Singapore: The Ciputra Foundation and the Archipelago Press, Editions Didier Millet, 2001).

were enlightened about several decades' worth of developments on the newest directions of Indonesian "art."

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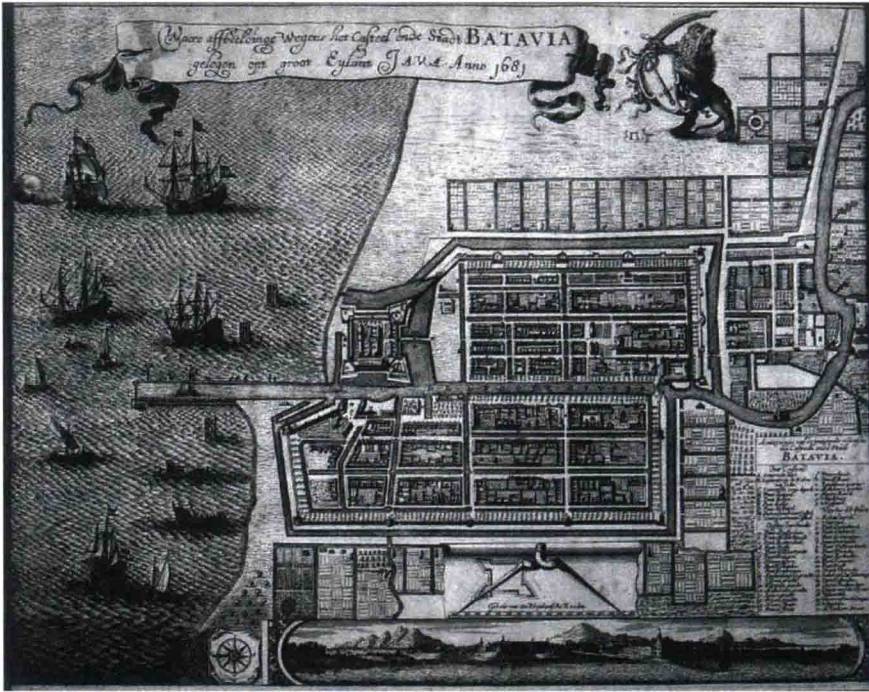
History. The day ended not with the future, though, but with the past. Tagliacozzo chaired the history panel,¹⁰ and Rudolf Mrázek, professor of history at the University of Michigan, was the first historian to present a paper to the group. A continuous theme in his essay was the notion of "returns"—he described this concept vis-à-vis several prominent practitioners in the field, who had started with a certain epoch in historical time and then moved outward from there, only to come back at a certain point, as if drawn back in. Cornell's George Kahin was among this group, Mrázek argued, and Kahin's work, particularly, "turned" on the year of 1945, a year that Mrázek calls a "chasm" in modern Indonesian historiography. For Jim Siegel and Ben Anderson, two more Indonesianists in the Cornell tradition who were referenced by Mrázek, neither of them card-carrying historians but both of them crucial for understanding the history of that same nation, 1965 was the "chasm" year, and they both returned to this year in their writings. Anderson had to turn literally away from this "tear" in history because he was banned from entering Indonesia as a result of his writings about 1965's events (Anderson et al., 1966, the so-called "Cornell White Paper"), but the "return" in his mind colored all of his later writing nonetheless. Yet Mrázek sees still other "returns" in the lineages of historical writing about Indonesia in its various schools: via Harry Benda (Yale), Herb Feith (in Australia), and others from various other traditions whom he mentions. These "returns," in fact, created schools to some extent, as temporal spaces were delineated into theaters of knowledge-production, and ultimately adapted conceptually by different lineages of historians of the nation.

Laurie Sears, professor of history at the University of Washington, delivered the next paper. Sears is the author of an oeuvre of work that combines history and the literary into one category; she is equally at home in both genres, and sees important convergences in how the two have mixed in modern Indonesian historiography.¹¹ In her contribution here, she argues that a circulation and recirculation of texts has been important to the making of modern Indonesian history, both as a field of inquiry and as the lived history of many millions of human beings. She is particularly interested in how Pramoedya—perhaps modern Indonesia's most notable author—fits into this process, through his writings about an important literary/historical figure (that is, an actual person) from the turn of the twentieth century in his fiction. This convergence, among others, serves to push Sears forward in looking at landmark works in the slipstream of Indonesian Studies, a process she describes in some detail in her essay. Edward Said, Benedict Anderson, and Don Emerson are all identified here, but it is another, less-famous author, the modern feminist Ayu Utami, who emerges as

¹⁰ My books encompass the history of smuggling in Indonesia, and also the history of the Hajj in the region. See Eric Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States Along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865–1915* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005) and *The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹¹ Two of Laurie Sears's most important books are *Shadows of Empire: Colonial Discourse and Javanese Tales* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996) and *Situated Testimonies: Dread and Enchantment in an Indonesian Literary Archive* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2013).

crucial in the unfolding of this discourse, due to the warnings she has bequeathed to the nation. Sears looks at the place of all of these figures in regards to 1965, the “tear” in history that Mrázek had also noted, a year that still haunts the intellectual life of the nation. Her contribution shows how literature and history sustain one another in the Indonesian context, and gives us a genealogy of knowledge with many of the field’s major players being brought together in one, syncretic text.



“Map of Batavia and its Citadel, 1681,” with permission

Jean Gelman Taylor, of the University of New South Wales, who presented the history panel’s last essay, perhaps traveled the farthest of all the participants to be part of the conference. Gelman Taylor is well-known for her early work on the social history of Batavia, but also for her overarching studies of Indonesian history.¹² Like Sears, she is also concerned in her contribution with genealogies, discussing the various *aliran* (or streams) of historical knowledge that came out of Indonesian history traditions in various places over time. Gelman Taylor speaks in depth about the Cornell model, and notes that the “house that Kahin built” from the mid-1950s into the mid-60s marked a time of incredible engagement with Indonesia, as fieldwork was accomplished in large quantities by those affiliated with the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project via the labor of many hands. After 1965, however, much of the CMIP analysis had to be conducted from farther away. Cornell’s then-new journal *Indonesia* became one of the main ways to keep track of what was happening in the country and the intellectual trends therein. Gelman Taylor counterposes this

¹² See Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983) and *Indonesia: Peoples and Histories* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), in that order.

history of knowledge production with the “Leiden school” and the founding of the KITLV in 1851, as well as later developments with other knowledge-production sites in Amsterdam, and, ultimately, inside Indonesia itself. In total, she presents a story-arc of how thinking about Indonesia changed over a century and a half of colonialism, war, occupation, and independence, vis-à-vis a number of sites scattered across the world.

* * *

Language, literature. On the second day of the conference, “language and literature” took center-stage for the early morning session. This panel was chaired by Cornell’s Abby Cohn (professor of linguistics) and Jolanda Pandin (Cornell lecturer in Indonesian). Both of these scholars have been important in thinking through the more technical aspects of language in Indonesia, though in very different ways.¹³ The first presenter on this panel was Joseph Errington, a professor of linguistic anthropology at Yale University and the author of a number of books.¹⁴ Errington argues that Indonesian has been inscribed with a history that seems to make the language the glue of New Order Indonesia. This is an assertion that proclaims Indonesian’s institution as the lingua franca in the archipelago as a vital achievement of the Suharto regime. He argues against this vision and suggests, instead, that Indonesian was imposed coercively by Suharto during the New Order, and that it was used by the government to keep the masses pliable and responsive to its dictatorial programs. Rather than seeing the widespread use of Indonesian as something positive, Errington instead examines alternative histories, which challenge the usefulness of Indonesian across the entire archipelago in a post New Order world. He undertakes this examination both at the geographic level (setting trends in places like Java against those in Eastern Indonesia, for example), and on the demographic level (analyzing Indonesian’s use in mid-size towns, large cities, and the countryside) to see how shifting the locus of inquiry changes the impressions of linguistic “facts” on the ground.

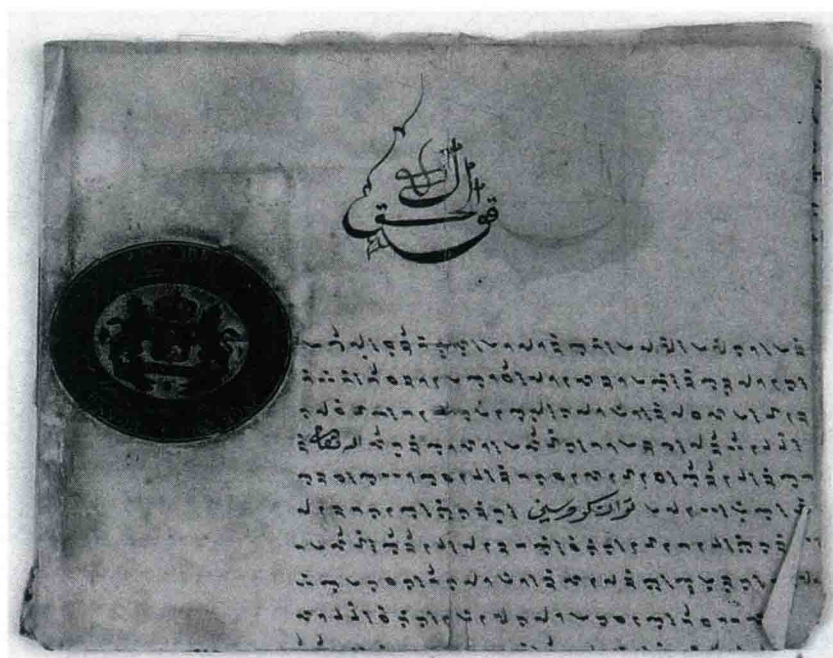
The second contribution on language is offered by Bambang Kaswanti Purwo, professor of linguistics at Atma Jaya University, Jakarta.¹⁵ Purwo takes issue with the commonly held notion that Indonesian is an easy language to learn, one of the truisms one hears when one takes steps toward learning Bahasa Indonesia either for its own sake, or to do research in this sprawling country of more than seventeen thousand islands. Purwo refutes this notion, and offers instead an essay explaining

¹³ While Jolanda Pandin attends to the teaching of the language in the classroom, Abigail C. Cohn is the author of many technical linguistic articles on the forms and function of Indonesian and Indonesian languages, linguistically, as well as co-editor (with Cécile Fougeron and Marie K. Huffman) of the *Oxford Handbook of Laboratory Phonology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

¹⁴ See, for example, J. Joseph Errington, *Linguistics in a Colonial World: A Story of Language, Meaning, and Power* (Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), *Shifting Languages: Interaction and Identity in Javanese Indonesia* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), and *Structure and Style in Javanese: A Semiotic View of Linguistic Etiquette* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988).

¹⁵ Purwo is the author of, among other studies, *Panorama Bahasa Nusantara* (Masyarakat Linguistik Ind Rbit Referensia and *Pertemuan Linguistik Lembaga Bahasa Atma Jaya Keenam: Analisis Wacana, Pengajaran Bahasa* (Penerbit Kanisius).

how complex the language is in reality, especially when context and aspect are taken into consideration. A large part of his contribution has to do with “expectation” in Indonesian, and how expectation is built into the discourse of the language in interesting and often very delicate ways. One has to keep an ear finely attuned to these figments of language to really have a chance to grasp meaning across a wide spectrum of intended linguistic variance, he posits. This technical formation is useful in thinking through the basics of a language that is important in studying any and all of the other disciplines mentioned in this volume, from anthropology to history and from the fine arts through all of the social sciences. Students of Bahasa Indonesia will do well to realize that basic competence in this language is far different than actually “understanding Indonesian,” a feat that is much more difficult to achieve.



“Act with the Stamp of the Lord of Bone, Sulawesi, 1864,” with permission

Tineke Hellwig, of the University of British Columbia, was the last scholar to present on the importance of language in the Indonesian case. Hellwig is a specialist on Indonesian literature, particularly from the colonial period and especially that literature having to do with gender.¹⁶ Hellwig’s contribution in this volume is the most encyclopedic of the language and literary offerings. She presents a full menu of attempts to categorize, classify, and explain the literature of the country over the past hundred-plus years, from Dutch colonial times stretching into the near-present. She is interested in showing how the philological origins of “studying Indonesian literature” were formed and developed over time, and how these moved from the colonial situation, where Indonesian literature was examined as a vestige of a

¹⁶ See Tineke Hellwig, *Women and Malay Voices: Undercurrent Murmurings in Indonesia’s Colonial Past* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2012) and *Asian Women: Interconnections* (Toronto: Women’s Press, 2006).