

tables in Part III, he claims his 'computational rhetoric' method and positivistic collection of data to be superior to other keywords studies on Indonesia.

Part III is dedicated to a keyword approach and analysis of humour. The origin and global popularity of the keyword approach has been widely attributed to the book *Keywords* by Raymond Williams (1976). In Graf's book the term means something else that will disappoint those familiar with the legacy of Williams' perspective. While citing various books inspired by Williams, the author ignores the theoretical insights and methodological rigour that have been developed in the growing body of literature. His own version of the keyword approach means calculating the numerical frequency of words used by six individual members of the Indonesian top political elite between 1997 and 2000.

Keyword analysts usually begin with examining how certain keywords have power to 'bound together certain ways of seeing culture and society' (Williams, 1976: 15) and how they change over time. Language is taken as a form of social relations that is both indicative and constitutive of history, and politics is understood in its broadest sense. In the book under review, however, language is seen as a tool in the hands of individual politicians in a series of media interviews. Politics is understood very narrowly: formal state institutions and state officials.

The book is undoubtedly a product of hard labour, with rich empirical details on one of the most unstable moments in Indonesian history. That moment was just the beginning of a series of rapid political changes in the country, however, rendering many of the details from the period under study here obsolete by the time this book was published a decade later.

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*Five centuries of Indonesian textiles: The Mary Hunt Kahlenberg collection*

Edited by RUTH BARNES and MARY HUNT KAHLENBERG

Prestel: DelMonico Books, 2010. Pp. 408. 300 Colour Plates, Maps, Bibliography, Index.

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With its ambitious title, *Five centuries of Indonesian textiles*, a heavy volume (3.7 kilogrammes), edited by Mary Hunt Kahlenberg and Ruth Barnes, portrays some exquisite textiles of the Kahlenberg collection. Complete with a glossary and an index (which is not necessarily the case in textile books) and richly decorated, the volume is divided into seven geographical areas, some of which earned an essay: Java (Rens Heringa), Bali (Marie-Louise Nabholz-Kartaschoff), Borneo (Traude Gavin), Nusa Tenggara (Roy Hamilton) and the Moluccas (Toos van Dijk).

In a long opening note Mary Hunt Kahlenberg, a former museum curator (Textile Museum in Washington, DC, Los Angeles County Museum of Arts) and later owner of a fine gallery in Santa Fe, reflects on her passionate endeavour in collecting hundreds of

pieces over three decades directly in the field or through intermediaries. The last 10 years were more specifically dedicated to the search for 'old' and 'rare textiles' (p. 12), some having since been dated as far back as the fifteenth century. Discussing the position of the collector in the field, weighing emotional, aesthetic and economic considerations, she touches upon the problem of the compensatory and 'reasonable offer' (p. 13) for the 'Other'. Not only are the physical characteristics of a cloth, like techniques, colours and patterns analysed, but also their intangible aspects: first the power contained in handwoven cloths, which an outsider does not feel, and, second, the anonymity of a textile. While old textiles 'belong to the ancestors', more recent production stayed anonymous only because collectors and dealers did not inquire about the allegedly 'anonymous Other(s)' who created or designed meaningful patterns, or dyed and wove the cloths. Fortunately, this trend is being reversed.

In her introduction to the volume Ruth Barnes (Senior Curator, Yale University Art Gallery) outlines the history of the weaving traditions in Indonesia through the migration routes of Austronesians who brought their weaving techniques to the archipelago, a view backed through linguistic evidence (p. 28). She traces the main lines of the history and development of textile research in Indonesia throughout the twentieth century. Her significant essay on 'Early Indonesian textiles' reveals how scientific dating has revolutionised textile research, which until recently had to rely on epigraphic evidence or stylistic comparison so that dates advanced for a piece often had to stay speculative. The carbon-14 method brought stunning results for some cloths in the Kahlenberg collection, dating them to the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries. Surprisingly enough, most of these are of exquisite quality with elaborate designs and in superb condition. Barnes remembers that until then one 'was thought foolish to entertain dates earlier than the nineteenth century' (p. 35) for a piece kept in a tropical climate. Yet she warns that radiocarbon dating can only give approximate dates covering decades and cannot be the sole criterion in analysing and tracing back a woven cloth; therefore historical, technological and anthropological data are still highly relevant (p. 44).

The reader should not feel compelled to read the core of the book in a chronological order. It consists of some 100 large plates with blown up details, corresponding to seven geographical areas. The textiles of Sumatra and Java, already well researched, are generously represented with 30 and 28 plates, respectively, but Borneo is accorded five plates only. These are textiles of the Iban people, an ethnic group living on both sides of the Sarawak and Kalimantan border so that the label Borneo for the section is still justified. The editors succeeded in winning the involvement of specialists who had contact with the field over decades and could provide in-depth knowledge for detailed information on each cloth displayed in the plates. Besides the authors of essays giving valuable comments, the contribution of anthropologists (Sandra Niessen, for the Batak and Roxana Waterson for the Toraja) is worth mentioning. On a practical note, a list of plates with corresponding page numbers would have been helpful in locating those mentioned in the essays.

Based on genuine research, the papers emphasise different aspects of textile investigation. Using two batik cloths radiocarbon dated to the seventeenth century, Heringa argues for the North Coast of Java as the origin of batik traditions of the island, challenging the common opinion that fine batiks originated at the courts of Central Java. Instead of analysing categories of Balinese cloths through the usual similarities of patterns,

Nabholz-Kartaschoff studies their technical aspects, concluding that the most sacred textiles and those relevant to rituals were made exclusively of handspun cotton and on ancient types of looms and display simple, asymmetrical designs which are less appealing to most collectors. Gavin's paper goes beyond her field of study among the Iban of Borneo and addresses issues of shallow research. Tracing the development of terms widely used in textile scholarship such as 'tumpal' and 'tree of life', she shows how meanings that apply to one particular textile culture are too easily transferred to other parts of Indonesia without proper investigation. Roy Hamilton and Toos van Dijk deal with textiles of eastern Indonesia. The former examines the textiles of Nusa Tenggara, and, more specifically, how identity is constructed and expressed through textiles (p. 301). Sadly, the textiles of the island of Savu that play a rather unique role as identity markers are absent in the analysis (a lapse in the collection?). Van Dijk gives an overview of the textile tradition in tiny islands in the southern Moluccas, the most eastern frontier for weaving traditions in Indonesia, an area less accessible, therefore less studied.

In summary, *Five centuries of Indonesian textiles* is a valuable source of information for collectors, art historians, curators, anthropologists and even historians. Undeniably, the exquisite textiles from the highlands of Sulawesi, dated fifteenth to sixteenth century, open the way to new methods of investigation while raising pressing questions. Indeed the carbon-14 method can revolutionise knowledge of handwoven textiles and necessitates reconsidering a number of pieces in museums and private collections. Compared to similar weavings of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for instance, the sarong in Plate 68 surpasses in quality the production of similar cloths of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and its structure and patterns remind us of textiles from Nusa Tenggara and the Moluccas. More research is needed on the disappearance of knowledge that weavers possessed five centuries ago and whether this is connected to the migration of weavers from eastern Indonesia.

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*Islam und Staat in den Ländern Südostasiens: Islam and state in Southeast Asia*

Edited by FRITZ SCHULZE and HOLGER WARNK

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This volume is a compilation of revised papers presented at a symposium in Frankfurt in 2008. It is part of a book series by the Department of Southeast Asian Studies at Frankfurt University, which, alongside other similar series, indicates an active field of area studies in Germany. As often is the case with conference proceedings, however, the chapters of *Islam und Staat* are only loosely connected and there has been no editorial attempt to pull the whole collection together in the form of a substantial introductory or concluding essay. A total of 11 essays are presented, six