

## News

### Indonesian social case studies and sociographic data: a longitudinal treasure trove

The University of Sydney's Fisher Library, has placed 59 Indonesian social case studies dating from 1959-60 on the internet. The studies were produced by anthropology and anthropology students at the University of Indonesia and Gajah Mada University under the supervision of Professor Mervyn Jaspán.



Indonesian shadow puppet.

MERVYN JASPAN (1926-1975), originally from South Africa, gained sociology and anthropology degrees from Natal and Oxford. In 1955 he was appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, and in 1959 he was appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Padjadjaran University, Bandung. He later taught at the Australian National University and at the University of Western Australia, before relocating to Hull University where he died in 1975.

While teaching in Indonesia, Dr Jaspán supervised the theses of a vast number of anthropology and sociology students at both the University of Padjadjaran and Gajah Mada University. The theses provide a rich sociographic record of Indonesian village life in 1959-1960 and contain information on education, wealth distribution, politics, religion and social structure. A few of the theses have an urban focus.

When he came to Australia, Dr Jaspán arranged the microfilming of 59 of the social case studies of his Indonesian students. These materials have now been digitalised and are easily accessible on the internet. There are 37 village studies spread throughout Java (14 in West Java, 14 in Central Java, and 9 in East Java).

There are also a number of ethnic studies carried out in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Nusa Tenggara and Sulawesi. There are also sociological studies of such diverse social groupings as academic staff at a unit of FKIP Bandung, an adult education committee in Karees, orphan children in a Tasikmalaya institution, an urban fire brigade, shoe factory workers, the Chinese community of Magelang, manual workers at a Bandung Home for the Blind, and lottery ticket vendors in Bandung.

These materials lend themselves most immediately to village longitudinal studies, using the original data, in order to examine social, economic and political change over the past 50 years. They could be used by undergraduate students studying individual villages for their final year theses, and also by higher degree students and scholars who might focus on a number of such villages to develop comparative analyses. Quantitative data from 37 of the villages on Java is already available in a comparative form in the appendices of my MA thesis: R. A. Witton, *Schooling and Adult Education in Rural Java: A Comparative Study of 37 Villages*, M.A. dissertation, University of Sydney, 1967, and is available on the internet at: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/1761>.

In Appendix 1 of that study there is a short description of each of the 37 villages including its geographical location. The study also lists the names and authors of the 37 Java village studies at pp. 383-6.

A community of scholars already interested in the re-study of the villages and communities has been developed under the creative leadership of the University of Indonesia's Professor Iwan Pirous ([iwan.pirous@gmail.com](mailto:iwan.pirous@gmail.com); [pirous@ui.ac.id](mailto:pirous@ui.ac.id)). The scholars interact through the internet group he established ([datadesa@yahoo.com](mailto:datadesa@yahoo.com)) which is open to new members. It is designed to ensure that the planning for, and eventual results from, further studies of the villages are disseminated among the group and within the Indonesian academic community generally.

A full listing of the studies, and .pdf files of the original studies, will be found at: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/5935>

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