Conference Programme
Organiser: Prof. Ken George

Culture & Infrastructure: New Ethnographic Projects in Indonesia & Beyond
14-15 April 2016
Humanities Research Centre
Conference Room

Culture & Infrastructure: New Ethnographic Projects in Indonesia & Beyond

Infrastructures are essential to the everyday workings of contemporary societies in Asia and the Pacific and to their articulation with globalizing forces. Yet most analyses overlook the profoundly cultural character of infrastructures and their role in the very feel of contemporary human life. “Infrastructure” typically receives analytic treatment as a techno-functional system without cultural dimension. At the same time, studies of “culture” seldom set their sights on the techno-political operations of built infrastructural networks. These analytic and theoretical dispositions need to be questioned and reframed so as to reveal the aesthetic, political, religious, and experiential dimensions of infrastructural systems. New studies from Indonesia promise fresh, innovative, and perhaps model ways of bringing “culture” and “infrastructure” into a single frame of description and analysis.

This two-day conference and workshop aims to engage scholars, policy-makers, and others interested in Asia and the Pacific with its interdisciplinary emphasis on linking the humanities and qualitative social sciences to policy, public works, technology, labour, diplomacy, education, corporate business, and development. Taking their inspiration and point of departure from ethnographic projects currently under way in Indonesia, our keynote speakers will explore ways to bring humanities-oriented anthropological approaches to bear on the ethnographic depiction and understanding of infrastructures with the aim of revealing their politico-aesthetic power, design, and purpose.

Ken George
Professor of Anthropology
School of Culture, History and Language. ANU College of Asia and the Pacific.

Sponsored by the Humanities Research Centre (CASS) and the Research School of Asia and the Pacific (CAP), with assistance from the U.S. Fulbright Program.
Keynote Speakers
In order of presentation

Joel Kuipers
Professor of Anthropology and International Affairs at The George Washington University.

Assoc. Professor Kuiper’s research has been guided by an interest in the relation between language and the ethnographic description of social life, particularly authority and its various institutional forms: ritual, clinical, classrooms, and courtrooms. Drawing on extensive audio and videotaped recordings collected as part of ethnographic and linguistic fieldwork, and analysed in their social, cultural and historical context, he asks the following questions: how can we describe how people use language to represent their social lives to one another? How do they use language to construct authoritative representations in classrooms, clinics, and courtrooms? How have these representations changed over time? Why and with what consequences?

Drawing on long standing interests in how privileged forms of poetic speech represent and constitute forms of authority in Indonesia, he is currently investigating the role of Arabic in Java. By examining how Javanese deploy Arabic language resources in the construction of identity, media, and networks, he is writing a manuscript that demonstrates the connection between piety, performance and the emergence of new kinds of bourgeois selves.

James B. Hoesterey
Assistant Professor in the Department of Religion at Emory University.

Professor Hoesterey’s research focuses on Islam, media, and politics. His first book chronicles the rise and fall of Indonesia’s most famous Muslim televangelist, Aa Gym (Rebranding Islam: Piety, Prosperity, and a Self-help Guru, 2016). This ethnographic study of a celebrity preacher, and his self-help psychology of “Heart Management”, sheds light on broader themes of religious authority, Muslim subjectivity, and the cultural politics of public piety.
Hoesterey’s current book project, bridging the study of religion and diplomacy, examines how Indonesia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs promotes the idea of Indonesia as the home of democratic, modern, and ‘moderate’ Islam. Essays related to this research have been published in *The Immanent Frame, Review of Middle East Studies (RoMES)*, and the Middle East Institute’s *Middle East-Asia Project*. Hoesterey currently serves as secretary for the American Institute for Indonesian Studies (AIFIS), and also served (2011-2015) as the chair of the Indonesia-Timor Leste Studies Committee at the Association for Asian Studies (AAS).

#### Marina Welker
Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Cornell University.

Assoc. Professor Welker’s first book, *Enacting the Corporation: An American Mining Firm in Postauthoritarian Indonesia* (University of California Press, 2014), is an ethnographic study of Denver-based Newmont Mining Corporation’s Batu Hijau copper and gold mine in Indonesia and the company’s engagement with the Corporate Social Responsibility industry. She is currently conducting ethnographic research on the production, marketing, distribution, and consumption of HM Sampoerna’s clove cigarettes in Indonesia.

#### Joshua Barker
Associate Professor of Anthropology, Vice-Dean Graduate Education, & Director of the Ethnography Lab at the University of Toronto.

Professor Barker’s research interests include urban anthropology, political anthropology and the anthropology of infrastructure. He is currently editor of *City & Society* and a contributing editor of the journal *Indonesia*. 
### Thursday, April 14

#### Keynote Papers & Discussions

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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| 9.00 – 9.30am | **Welcome**  
Overview of the Workshop |
| 9.30 -10.45am | **Keynote 1**  
Joel C. Kuipers  
*Muhammadiyah & the Poetics of Islamic Infrastructure in Indonesia*  
Prof. Emeritus James J. Fox & Evi Eliyanah  
Response |
| 11:15-12:30pm | **Keynote 2**  
James B. Hoesterey,  
*Diplomacy, Infrastructure, and the Making of "Moderate Islam" in Indonesia*  
Assoc. Prof. Greg Fealy & Maria Myutel  
Response |
| 1:15 - 2.30pm | **Keynote 3**  
Marina Welker  
*Traditional Stores and the Architecture of Cigarette Circulation in Indonesia*  
Prof. Kathryn Robinson & Meghan Downes  
Response |
Afternoon Tea

**Keynote 4**
3pm - 4.15pm

Joshua Barker
*Of Infrastructure and Superstructure in Indonesia*

Prof. Ken George & Ben Hegarty
Response

**Reflections**
4:30 - 5.30pm

Reflections from ANU Colleagues & Ph.D. Students

Conference Dinner

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## Friday, April 15
Comparative Discussions & HDR Master Class

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<td>Kirin Narayan &amp; Ken George</td>
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<td><em>Religion &amp; Infrastructure in Modi’s India</em></td>
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<td>Session 2</td>
<td>11.15 - 12.30pm</td>
<td>Case Studies from China &amp; South Korea</td>
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<td>Tom Cliff</td>
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<td><em>Soft Infrastructure in China’s Industrial Edgeland</em></td>
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<td>Roald Maliangkaij</td>
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<td><em>Soft Powder: Selling Korea’s New Masculinity</em></td>
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<td>Session 3</td>
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<td>Workshop Roundtable &amp; Master Class</td>
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<td><em>New Directions for Ethnographic Research on Infrastructure</em></td>
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Responders

**Tom Cliff**, Postdoctoral Fellow in the School of Culture, History, and Language in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific.

Tom is currently investigating the role of the informal institutions of family and enterprise in responding to economic uncertainty and the ageing population in China. The broader framework is that of "Informal Life Politics" – how people organise themselves to protect their health and livelihood from threats that may emanate from state action or the lack of state action – in Northeast Asia. Tom has conducted long-term fieldwork in Xinjiang, and his book, *Oil and Water: Being Han in Xinjiang* will be published by Chicago University Press in June 2016.

**Greg Fealy**, Associate Professor in the Coral Bell School of Asian and Pacific Affairs, in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific.

Greg’s interests in Indonesian politics and Islam were awakened as an undergraduate at Monash University and they have remained the focus of his academic and professional activity since then. Greg’s PhD thesis was a study of the traditionalist Muslim party, Nahdlatul Ulama. More recently, he has examined terrorism, transnational Islamist movements and religious commodification in Indonesia, as well as broader trends in contemporary Islamic politics in Southeast Asia.

**James J Fox**, Professor Emeritus at ANU and former Director of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific.

Professor James J. Fox was educated at Harvard (AB ‘62) and Oxford (B Litt. ‘65, DPhil. ‘68) where he was a Rhodes Scholar. He has taught at various American Universities: Harvard, Cornell, Duke and Chicago and at various European Universities: Leiden, Bielefeld and the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. He is a Foreign Fellow of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences and a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

Professor Fox’s area of primary interest is Indonesia, with special focus on Java and eastern Indonesia. He has carried out considerable research in Timor, most recently in East Timor. More generally, his interests are in comparative issues affecting the whole of the Asia Pacific region.
Ken George, Professor of Anthropology and former Director of the School of Culture, History and Language, in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific.

Ken joined the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific in 2013 as Professor of Anthropology and Director of the School of Culture, History and Language, having served previously at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Harvard University and the University of Oregon. He is a specialist on Southeast Asia and a Past Editor of the Journal of Asian Studies (2005-2008). His ethnographic research in Indonesia has focused on the cultural politics of minority ancestral religions (1982-1992), and more recently (1994-2008), on a long-term collaboration with painter A. D. Pirous, exploring the aesthetic, ethical, and political ambitions shaping Islamic art and art publics in that country. Ken has been the recipient of major postdoctoral fieldwork fellowships from the Social Science Research Council, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture. His fellowships for writing and study include awards from the National Endowment of the Humanities, the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, and the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton.

Kathryn Robinson, Professor Emerita in the School of Culture, History, and Language in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific. She specializes on Indonesia, and is past editor of The Asia-Pacific Journal of Anthropology

Roald Maliangkaij, Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of East Asian Studies, in the School of Culture, History, and Language in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific.

Since finishing his PhD on the preservation of intangible cultural properties in South Korea (SOAS), Maliangkaij has expanded the scope of his research to include the history of popular entertainment. Fascinated by the mechanics of cultural policy and the challenges of studying the dynamics of major cultural phenomena, he analyses Korea's cultural industries and consumption from the early twentieth century to the present.

Philip Taylor, Associate Professor and Deputy Director for HDR Affairs in the School of Culture, History, and Language in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific. Philip Taylor lived and worked in Vietnam for five years and is fluent in Vietnamese, Khmer and French. He has held several consultancy, research and teaching positions
in Australia. He is the author and editor of eight books and many refereed articles and chapters on contemporary Vietnamese society and served as editor of the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Anthropology* and is currently researching the ethnic and religious subcultures of the Mekong delta.

**Kirin Narayan**, Professor of Anthropology in the School of Culture, History, and Language in the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific. She specializes on India.

Kirin Narayan was born in India to an American mother and Indian father, and moved to the United States to attend college. As a graduate student, she studied cultural anthropology and folklore at the University of California—Berkeley, writing a dissertation on storytelling as a form of religious teaching through an ethnography of a Hindu holy man in Western India who often communicated teachings through vivid folk narratives. The book that resulted, *Storytellers, Saints and Scoundrels: Folk Narrative in Hindu Religious Teaching* (1989), won the first Victor Turner Prize for Ethnographic Writing from the American Anthropological Association and was co-winner of the Elsie Clews Prize for Folklore from the American Folklore Society. She then wrote a novel, *Love, Stars and All That* (1994) that was included in the Barnes and Nobles Discover Great New Writers program. In the course of researching women’s oral traditions in Kangra, Northwest Himalayas, she collaborated with Urmila Devi Sood to bring together a book of tales in the local dialect with discussions of their meaning and ethnographic context in *Mondays on the Dark Night of the Moon: Himalayan Foothill Folktales* (1997). An interest in family stories and diasporic experience inspired her to write *My Family and Other Saints* (2007), a memoir about spiritual quests. Her most recent book is *Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov* (2012).
PhD Candidates

**Meghan Downes**, School of Culture, History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific

**Thesis Title**: The Modernity Metaphor: Perspectives from Indonesian Popular Culture

My research combines audience ethnography with close readings of popular texts from contemporary Indonesia, to examine ongoing contestations around what it means to be a 'modern' Indonesian citizen. In doing so, I critically evaluate broader scholarly engagement with terms like 'modernity' and 'tradition,' using examples from Indonesian popular culture to explore ways of thinking around and beyond these convenient container categories.

**Evi Eliyanah**, Gender, Media and Cultural Studies, History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific

**Thesis Title**: Reel New Man: Masculinity and Gender Identity Politics in Post-Authoritarian Indonesian Cinema

My thesis examines the social construction of a softer form of representation of masculinity, often called as New Man, in the post-authoritarian Indonesian cinema. I explore the socio-political background and production politics underlying the emergence and celebration of this representation male masculinity which is characterised as sensitive, gentle, caring, and (seemingly) supportive of women.

**Ben Hegarty**, School of Archaeology and Anthropology, ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences

**Thesis title**: Globalised transgender and its relationship to political economy in Indonesia

My PhD research explores the globalisation of 'transgender' and its translations in Indonesia from the late 1960s onwards. The research articulates everyday experiences and encounters during this period as they relate to three main areas. A) Transnational capitalism and the market. B) Emergent sex work economies and queer intimacy. C) Mass-media, consumerism and liberalism. I locate these experiences within the history of medical and social theoretical models of knowing sex and sexuality. This allows for reflection on their relationship to wider rearrangements of gender, sexuality and kinship in Indonesia. The research is based on 18 months of
fieldwork (January 2014-June 2015) and archival research in Indonesia (Jogjakarta, Jakarta).

Maria Myutel, School of Culture, History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific

Thesis: Indians and television content production in Indonesia: behind the seen

My thesis examines the relationship between Indian Indonesians, and more precisely the community of Indonesian Sindhis, and the Indonesian nation-state and society through the analysis of national television content production culture in the period between the 1990s and the early 2010s. I argue that ethnicity and race remain important categories of social stratification in contemporary Indonesia despite significant changes in political, economic and social life. At the same time, I show that the relations of ethnic minority groups and the state are much more complex than is often suggested and go far beyond dominance of the nation-state and inferior status of minority groups.