

8-31-2014

Editorial: Indonesian Decentralization

Lisandro E. Claudio

Ateneo de Manila University, lclaudio@berkeley.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://archium.ateneo.edu/socialtransformations>

Recommended Citation

Claudio, Lisandro E. (2014) "Editorial: Indonesian Decentralization," *Social Transformations Journal of the Global South*: Vol. 2: Iss. 2, Article 1.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.13185/2799-015X.1052>

Available at: <https://archium.ateneo.edu/socialtransformations/vol2/iss2/1>

This Editorial is brought to you for free and open access by the Ateneo Journals at Archium Ateneo. It has been accepted for inclusion in Social Transformations Journal of the Global South by an authorized editor of Archium Ateneo.

EDITORIAL

Indonesian Decentralization

Indonesia has always been crucial to the development of the Global South. It was, after all, in the Bandung Conference of 1955 that the notion of “Third World” solidarity was born. Recently, Indonesia witnessed an election emblematic of other political contests in the Global South, with one candidate representing the old divisions of the Cold War and another representing the optimism of a provisional reformism.

This special issue of *Social Transformations: Journal of the Global South* focuses on the issue of decentralization as a key issue in the study of Indonesian politics. As a method of sublimating tensions between a national bureaucracy and local elite, decentralization has been a convenient tool to smooth over the tensions of postcoloniality. In her broad overview of the decentralization process, however, Joan Ricart-Angulo points to the problem of elite takeover on the local level. Does an ostensibly democratic process merely consolidate anti-democratic political set-ups occurring in small political units?

The function of elites in decentralization is always complicated and ambivalent. In their case study of Mentawai, West Sumatra, Maskita Delfi and Johan Weintré examine the role of educated Mentawaians who return from the mainland. Their study reveals an irony. It is precisely the engagement of educated Mentawaians with new political ideas about indigenous rights and local identity that force them to recover older notions of identity. The issue of decentralization thus surfaces more questions than answers.

The editors would like to thank Frank Dhont and Jafar Suryomenggolo for assisting us in putting this issue together.

LISANDRO E. CLAUDIO

Editor