



Asian Studies Centre,
St. Antony's College,
University of Oxford



Southeast Asia Seminars

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Deakin Room, Founder's Building, St Antony's College

State and Islamic education growing into each other in Indonesia

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Under Dutch colonialism, religious education and secular education were entirely separate enterprises in the Netherlands East Indies. Since that time, nationalism (both anti-colonial and post-colonial), rising Islamic orthodoxy, and political exigency have pushed Islamic education and state education closer and closer together in Indonesia. This presentation will document the shifts on both sides towards greater religious content in state-sponsored schools and greater non-religious content at religious educational institutions. From the 1950s, when the government founded a few religious tertiary institutions and private Islamic schools increased their secular content in order to secure government support, government involvement in the religious education sector has increased. At the same time, the mass Islamic organizations that sponsor huge networks of Islamic schools have undertaken to bring their education in line with the expected standards for state education. On the state's side, skepticism about the role of religion in national education in the 1950s gave way to an emphasis on religiosity as a bulwark against Communism in the 1970s and 1980s, leading into the Islamic revival since the 1990s. In this national environment of a more resurgent Islam, religious lessons in public schools became not only mandatory but also graded and then a more integral part of the state's educational vision, building into some regional regulations today that require Islamic knowledge for other life tasks (e.g., marriage licenses). Thus, over the course of a century, religious and state education have gone from mutually exclusive to highly interdigitated, a major transformation in Indonesia's educational system.

Kevin W. Fogg studies the place of Islam in Southeast Asia in the 20th century, especially in Indonesia. He is fascinated by how the newly-independent state treated Islam and how Muslims organized themselves to support their own religious life. In addition to articles in English and Indonesian on these subjects, he is looking forward to the publication of his monograph, *Indonesia's Islamic Revolution*, on the divergent ideas about the fight for independence among the country's Muslims.

All are welcome

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Picture: Islamic school in Palu, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. Copyright Kevin Fogg.