

tional Security Council and making other institutional innovations concerning the conduct of foreign policy. As far as the bomb was concerned he had the full support of Narasimha Rao. Kapur reports that when handing over power to Vajpayee in 1996, Narasimha Rao passed on a note to him: „The bomb is ready, you can go ahead with it“. Although Kapur deals very comprehensively with all other aspects of India's foreign policy, he does not pay much attention to the nuclear dimension. He does mention Vajpayee's bus trip to Lahore in February 1999 but he remains silent on the subsequent Kargil war, the first conventional war between nuclear powers. Pakistan relied on India's fear of nuclear escalation and India was severely handicapped by this when defending the Line of Control in Kashmir. Vajpayee took a calculated risk by ordering the Indian airforce to intervene in this war which greatly contributed to winning it – and thus to Vajpayee's victory in the elections of November 1999.

Manmohan Singh emerges as a very effective diplomat in Kapur's account. He has dealt firmly with many issues without much fanfare. Being rated highly by an expert like Kapur helps to set the record straight, because being a very quiet man, Manmohan Singh is often underestimated by people in India who are used to politicians who talk a lot and love to be in the limelight.

Dietmar Rothermund

### **Jonathan Woodier: The Media and Political Change in Southeast Asia: Karaoke Culture and the Evolution of Personality Politics**

Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, Ma., USA: Edward Elgar, 2008. 384 S., GBP 95,00

Western scholars of the media in Southeast Asia face the problem that most of Southeast Asia's media, as well as most of the academic discourse on these media, are in lan-

guages other than English – notably Indonesian and Malay, but also Thai, Vietnamese, Burmese, Dutch, French etc. This is why the study of the media in these countries usually has to be based on a very good knowledge of the relevant languages – a fact that is reflected in the requirements of internationally respected programs of Southeast Asian Studies, e.g. in Leiden, London, Paris, Cornell etc. In this regard, research on the media (and politics, culture, history etc.) of Southeast Asia can be compared to, for instance, research on the media in Japan. Who would trust any academic contribution about Japanese media if the author does not know Japanese and does not refer to any Japanese source?

Unfortunately, the author of this book does precisely this: He relies exclusively on English-language material, without being able to check errors and mistakes. Consequently, much of the country-specific information, for instance on Indonesia, is simply wrong or highly distorted. To give a few examples: The Indonesian word *halus* (= refined) does not mean 'respect', as Woodier has it (p. 162), nor is the newspaper *Jawa Pos* spelled *Java Pos* (p. 160). The highly respected daily *Kompas* is not *Kompass* (p. 158), and the state television TVRI (*Televisi Republik Indonesia*) definitely not *Televesi Republik Indonesia* (p. 146). Woodier writes that President Megawati 'succeeded Walid (sic!) in 2000' (p. 157) – what he means is probably her succession to Abdurrahman Wahid in 2001. Similarly wrong is that Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono became President 'in 2005' (p. 156) – it was 2004. Highly nonsensical is also the assessment that 'Kompass (sic!) editorial line often reflected the views of radical Muslim groups' (p. 158), since it is well-known that *Kompas* is a newspaper with a Catholic background. There is even a scholarly monograph with that title, *Kompas 1965 – 1985: een algemeene krant met een katholieke achtergrond binnen het religieus pluralisme van Indonesië*, by De Jong (1990). Unfortunately, according to his bibliography, Woodier has not

consulted this Dutch-language book, nor does he seem to have much knowledge of French, which used to be important in the early press history of the archipelago. Consequently, in Woodier's book, the early Dutch newspaper in Batavia, *Memories des Nouvelles*, turns into *Memorie dex Nouvelles* (sic!, p. 145).

Can one use this book for teaching purposes at a university? Definitely not with uncritical students who might believe every word that Woodier is writing. However, for advanced courses it might be an interesting assignment for MA and PhD students to check every 'fact' that Woodier presents. At least, this book seems to be the outcome of a (successful?) PhD project at the University of Queensland, Australia. Unfortunately, this important information is not provided in the book itself, for instance in the 'Acknowledgements'. Rather, one can obtain it from a review of this book in the *Straits Times* (Singapore), which is available on the Internet. Accordingly, the author worked for nearly 20 years as journalist in Asia before he embarked on his PhD project. On the cover of the book the information is provided that Woodier is now working for a bank in London. This bank has even inserted a disclaimer (p. iv) that 'the work is the sole responsibility of the author and does not represent the views' of that bank.

With this disclaimer in mind, one should view this book as a contribution to a more general, one could say: journalistic discourse on 'Southeast Asia' in a very broad sense, as Woodier also includes data on Hong Kong, Japan, and even Australia in this book. The question is whether good journalism should not be based on solid information and checked facts, dates, terms, and names.

Arndt Graf

**Christine Holike: Islam und Geschlechterpolitiken in Indonesien: Der Einzug der Scharia in die regionale Gesetzgebung**

Regiospectra Verlag: Berlin, 2008. 101 S., EUR 21,90

Das vorliegende Buch ist eine überarbeitete Version einer an der Humboldt-Universität eingereichten Magisterarbeit, welche die Islamisierung der indonesischen Gesellschaft und ihre Auswirkungen auf Frauen thematisiert. Wie die Entwicklungen in Indonesien seit der Konzeption der Studie gezeigt haben, sind Fragestellungen und Ergebnisse der Arbeit nach wie vor relevant und stellen eine gute Grundlage für die weitere Forschung auf dem Gebiet der Transformations-, Islam- und Geschlechterforschung dar.

Holike stellt die zentrale Frage, warum immer mehr Lokalverordnungen verabschiedet werden, welche den Focus auf die Reglementierung von Frauen legen. Wie ist dies mit einem moderaten Islam in Indonesien vereinbar, wie er ansonsten von allen Experten eingestuft wird. Holike argumentiert, dass die Forderungen nach Einführung der Scharia und ein damit verbundener, teilweise gewaltvoller Zugriff auf den Frauenkörper, auf einer seit mehr als einem halben Jahrhundert propagierten Geschlechterideologie basiert. Die Focussierung auf den weiblichen Körper ist dabei als Mittel politischer Definitionsmacht und staatlicher Kontrollmacht zu sehen. Die Inszenierung von Weiblichkeit als einem Grundpfeiler der Nation, so die These Holikes, stellt ein bereits aus der Politik der Neuen Ordnung Suhartos bekanntes Muster dar, auf dem der Diskurs zur Einführung der Scharia basiert.

Zur Untermauerung dieser These führt Holike überzeugend aus, dass die politisch-strategische Funktion des Frauenkörpers als Symbol einer gemeinschaftlichen Identität bereits seit Jahrzehnten besteht. Die Kontinuität liegt dabei darin, dass der Modernisierungsprozess in Indonesien jeweils mit einer