By Jasper van de Kerkhof

P
dria Spyer challenges what she calls ‘the taken-for

granted but hopelessly impoverished’ anthropological vision of ‘ethnic/homogeneous’ contexts. The protagonists of these narratives are often brought to the fore, often in a way that makes them seem more significant than they actually are. The narratives themselves are often simplified, and the situation in which they arise is often simplified as well.

Spyer’s work focuses on the role of the media in the final years of the Suharto regime and the subsequent period of Reformasi. She examines the role of the media in the conflict and how it affects the understanding of the situation. She argues that the media play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and understanding of the conflict.

Spyer cites the examples of the “almost all” research contributions in Excerpta Indonesica, as well as less publicized publication in small countries with few researchers. The claimed scope is worldwide, although certain other disciplines and regions are underrepresented.

The analysis of the aggregate numbers of the 1990s shows in which regions and countries contributions on Indonesia are published. This is important to note since the data collection and analysis is not based on a random sample, but on a database of publications.

The introduction typically includes general statistics indicating the numbers of contributions on Indonesia listed in the database according to country of publication. This is important to note since the data collection and analysis is not based on a random sample, but on a database of publications.

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Publication Trends in International Indonesian Studies: The Asia-Pacific Region as New Gravitation Centre

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This analysis surveys some basic quantitative trends in international Indonesian Studies in the 1990s. The source material is taken from Excerpta Indonesica, the bibliographical periodical published twice a year at the KITLV in Leiden (the Netherlands). Excerpta Indonesica provides a unique source in that it renders annotated citations of almost all research contributions (mostly articles) in journals and read-

ers published on Indonesia. The disci-

plines covered are mainly from the human sciences and social studies, although certain other disciplines also appear (geography, medicine, etc.). The claimed scope is worldwide, although certain countries and journals are more favourably represented than others. This is traditionally true for articles published in the Netherlands, since they naturally find their way more easily into the holdings of the KITLV library, which constitutes the material basis for Excerpta Indonesica. The inclusion/exclusion policy of Excerpta Indonesica is often more problematic in the field, since this bibliographical journal only accepts an impor-
tant gatekeeping function in the dissemina-
tion and, hence, the produc-
tion of knowledge in Indonesian studies. This makes it a knowledge generation tool that is interesting to look at the representa-
tion of international Indonesian Studies in this influential journal.

Early in the 1990s, after a period of relative inactivity, the circulation of the journal increased significantly. This was probably due to the increasing interest in Indonesian studies on the part of many countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The rise in circulation was accompanied by a significant improvement in the quality of the journal. This is reflected in the increase in the number of citations in the journal, which has doubled since 1994.

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