
The book is based on Dunham’s research, over a period of 14 years, among the rural craftsmen of Java. At the request of Dunham’s daughter, Maya Soetoro-Ng, two anthropologists — Alice G. Dewey, Dunham’s graduate adviser, and Nancy I. Cooper, a fellow graduate student — have revised and edited the dissertation, which is called “Surviving Against the Odds: Village Industry in Indonesia.”

“Surviving against the Odds” centers on the metalworking industries in the Javanese village of Kajar, and how they offer a viable economic alternative in a rice-dependent area of rural Southeast Asia.

“It is a great privilege for Duke University Press to be publishing this remarkable work by Ann Dunham,” said Ken Wissoker, editorial director of Duke University Press. “Her global perspective and obvious respect for other people’s intelligence and self-direction is a model we all can learn from. Her children clearly have!”

Robert W. Hefner, director of the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs at Boston University and current president of the Association for Asian Studies, wrote the afterword for the book. He said he finds Dunham’s work on metalworkers prescient. “Ann Dunham’s legacy remains relevant today for anthropology, Indonesian studies, and engaged scholarship,” he said.

Maya Soetoro-Ng said she was “delighted that our mother’s book is being published, and I am grateful to Duke University for making this dream of hers come true. My hope is that this book will be read by those who come to love the particularities of its world and who also see the myriad potential application of its ideas and methods to other worlds.”

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