



BRILL

BIJDRAGEN TOT DE TAAL-, LAND- EN
VOLKENKUNDE 174 (2018) 393–421



brill.com/bki

Pilgrims, Prostitutes, and *Ritual Seks*

Heterodox Ritual Practices in the Context of the Islamic Veneration of Saints in Central Java

Volker Gottowik

Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Frankfurt

Gottowik@em.uni-frankfurt.de

Abstract

The general fixation on globally spreading forms of Islam and other religions (*agama*) has contributed to an undervaluing of the current and parallel boom in local, often heterodox ritual practices (*adat*). These ritual practices include forms of pilgrimage that encourage the performance of a sexual act on the tombs of saints, which is regarded as conducive to the redemption of the wishes and hopes associated with such a pilgrimage. The possible sexual partners involved in *ritual seks* (ritual sex) include not only husband and wife, but also other pilgrims to whom one is not married; even prostitutes are regarded as completely legitimate partners. For a number of years, pilgrimage sites known for this remarkable conjunction of religion and sexuality have been experiencing an unprecedented boom, in sharp contrast to the often diagnosed Islamization of Indonesian society. Against this background, this article examines the media discourses that are controversially related to *ritual seks* and supports the thesis that the current religious boom ('religionization') not only involves globalized Islam, but all religious forms, even the deviant.

Keywords

Indonesia – Islam – ritual – sexuality – media

1 Introduction

In Central Java, a number of pilgrimage sites exist that are visited by pilgrims of both sexes either to communicate with each other sexually or, in the case of male pilgrims, to have sexual contacts with prostitutes. The pilgrims are con-

fidient in both cases that the sexual act consummated on such a site can help them redeem the actual goals of their pilgrimage, namely wealth, health, and happiness.

The pilgrims adhere to a local form of Islam that is strongly influenced by mysticism and Sufi traditions.¹ The veneration of local saints is part of their ritual repertoire, as are pilgrimages to sacred sites that are associated with them. These sacred sites are visited on auspicious days (Jumat Kliwon, Jumat Pon, et cetera), in particular when they fall within the first month of the Islamic calendar (Suro or Muharram). Here I would like to highlight three of them as illustrative examples:

- the sanctuary Puri Cepuri in Parang Kusumo, a village on the south coast of Central Java;
- the tomb of Roro Mendut in Gandu, a village on the outskirts of Yogyakarta;
- the tomb of Pangeran Samudro in Pendem, a village on a hill north of Surakarta, better known as Gunung Kemukus.

What these sacred sites have in common, according to local terminology, is *ritual seks*, or *ritual persetubuhan*, that is, the idea that a sexual act can or should be one of the ritual acts performed by the pilgrims. Central to the legitimation of these heterodox ritual practices are local legends that not only tell of the exceptional love of particular couples in the historical past, but also link their happiness or unhappiness to particular places. Pilgrims visit these places and try to re-enact the behaviour of these sacralized lovers mimetically in order to acquire some of the spiritual power they embody. And what they mimetically re-enact is what ultimately gives love expression and fulfilment: the sexual act.

According to one of the central arguments of this contribution, the sexual act as a mimetic act aims to establish a connection with the personal qualities of these exemplary love couples, who are considered to have been particularly strong, rich, and happy.² Following Michael Taussig, ‘the magical power of replication’, which is being addressed here, is based on the principle that ‘the representation shares in or takes power from the represented’ (Taussig 1993:2). Mimesis here is not a procedure confined to imitation, but a process of active appropriation and embodiment, which Pierre Bourdieu illustrates with the following example: ‘The body believes in what it plays at: it weeps if it mimes grief.

1 On the various currents within Islam on Java, see, for example, Geertz 1960, Mulder 1978, Stange 1986, Woodward 1989, Beatty 1999, Ricklefs 2003, and Van Bruinessen and Howell 2007.

2 On mimesis as a magical act, see Frazer 1989 [1890]:15–8 and Durkheim 1994 [1912]:473–88. On mimesis in the ritual context, see Kramer 1984, 1987:238; see also Taussig 1993, Gebauer and Wulf 2003, Henn 2003, and Wulf 2005.

It does not represent what it performs, it does not memorize the past, it *enacts* the past, bringing it back to life. What is “learned by the body” is not something that one has [...], but something that one is’ (Bourdieu 1990:73, emphasis in original). The intention of this ‘practical mimesis’ (Bourdieu 1990:73, 92) was finally described by Christoph Wulf as follows: ‘The aim of the mimetic process is to follow the exemplary actions or people, to become similar to them and to converge with them’ (Wulf 1997:1017, my translation).

In contrast to this rather analytic approach to *ritual seks*, the local actors refer to ritualized forms of sexuality at sacred sites as *pesugihan* (from the Javanese root *sugih*, meaning ‘rich’), in the sense of a mutual pact concluded with a supreme being or spiritual powers to obtain wealth and happiness in exchange for the veneration of these powers represented by local saints. There are various places, particularly in Central and Eastern Java, that are considered suitable for *pesugihan*, and other ritual practices at these places include meditation, fasting, sacrifices, et cetera.³ However, it is only at those places that are associated with outstanding love couples and their memorable fate that *ritual seks* is practised.

Heterodox ritual practices like *ritual seks* are highly controversial in Indonesia and have received widespread public attention for many years. They have been covered in words and pictures by journalists and writers, but so far hardly any ethnographic study has been published on this topic: none of the three sacred sites mentioned above, nor other sites that are known for a ritual linking between religion and sex in Central Java, has been investigated comparatively thus far.⁴

There are two reasons for this neglect. First, the phenomenon is partly overlaid by commercial prostitution. Secondly, as a mass phenomenon it emerged only recently. It is only with the ‘religionization’ of Indonesian society, that is, its increasing self-interpretation within a standardized religious idiom, that local pilgrimages have become popular again, including pilgrimages to sacred sites that are known for building a ritual bridge between religion and sex.⁵ The process of religionization has contributed not only to a strengthening of Islam

3 See, for example ‘Tempat-tempat pesugihan’, *Kisah Nyata Pesugihan*. Blog entry. <http://kisahnnyatapesugihan.blogspot.de/2016/05/tempat-tempat-pesugihan-di-indonesia-261.html> (accessed 20-2-2018).

4 It should be noted that Bianca Smith and Mark Woodward (2016) have published an article on this topic in the meantime, which emphasizes that ‘female sexuality, and sexuality in general, remain possible sources of spiritual power in Muslim Java and, paradoxically, that transgression of Sharia sexual norms can be both a sign and a source of spiritual power’ (Smith and Woodward 2016:330).

5 On the boom of local pilgrimages in Java, see Quinn 2004; see also Fox 2002 and Slama 2014.

(‘Islamization’) and other globalized religions (*agama*), but also to a revitalization of local religious traditions (*adat*) in Indonesia.⁶ In other words, the rising tide lifts all boats. Andrew Beatty in particular has explicitly pointed to these transformations: while he still describes the religious dynamics of Java in the second half of the 1990s in dark colours (as suggested by the title of his work *A shadow falls in the heart of Java*, Beatty 2009), following a return visit to his research site twelve years later, he remarked: ‘The ways of the ancestors—the subtle humanist philosophy of Javanism, the rituals and spectacles deplored by reformist Islam—have found fresh justifications and a powerful motivation’ (Beatty 2012:5).

The development of *ritual seks* into a mass phenomenon that has only emerged over the last twenty to thirty years is in line with this statement. It clearly contradicts the frequently diagnosed Islamization of Indonesian society, in so far as it is conceptualized as an irreversible process that successively captures all social spheres at the expense of traditional beliefs and practices, not least gender relations.⁷ As is well known, for Muslims any sexual contact before and outside of marriage is strictly forbidden, and for the devout among them even the veneration of local saints is a violation of the principle of monotheism. Against this background, the boom in *ritual seks* at places where Islamic saints are venerated in Central Java displays both a conflicting trend and an anti-structural moment that has already provoked strong reactions in the Indonesian general public.⁸ Various Islamic organizations, from the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI, Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars) to the potentially violent Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Islamic Defenders Front), have demanded the shutting down of Gunung Kemukus and a ban on *ritual seks* at this pilgrimage site and other sacred places.⁹

6 On the religionization of Islam and other belief systems such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, see Hefner 2011:72–3; on the revitalization of *adat* in ritual and political contexts, see, for example, Avonius 2004, Davidson and Henley 2007, and Gottowik 2008. The term *adat* should not be reduced to local religious traditions, as it comprises many customary spheres of life. However, here *adat* is conceptualized in contrast to *agama* as a standardized, scripturalized, and globalized form of religion.

7 On the impact of Islam on gender relations, see, for example, Blackwood 2007, Robinson 2009, Von Wichelen 2010, Smith and Woodward 2014, and Bennett and Davies 2015.

8 The term ‘antistructure’, as defined by Victor Turner (1969), refers to the in principal ambivalent character of ritual and pilgrimage, as their impact on society is always both stabilizing and subversive. His well-established definition of ‘communitas, or social antistructure’ reads as follows: ‘It is the *fons et origo* of all structures and at the same time their critique’ (Turner and Turner 1978:250). On antistructure, subversion, and transgression in ritual contexts, see also Koepping 2002, Rao and Hutnyk 2006, and Donnan and Magowan 2009.

9 See Kurniawan, ‘MUI Sragen desak Pemkab tutup prostitusi Kemukus’, *Solopos*, 21-11-2014.

The governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pronowo, certainly had the instruments of power to enforce these demands directly and to prohibit the ritual practices concerned *permanently*. That he has not done so thus far, but rather displays an ambivalent attitude towards these practices, throws light on the complex religious and political landscape of Indonesia and 'the idea of power in Javanese culture', as highlighted in Anderson's publication of the same title.¹⁰

The controversy over *ritual seks* is an example of the social and political disputes in Indonesia that are currently transforming the country with the world's largest Muslim population. Displays of sexuality in public that had been considered legitimate (for example, at *dangdut* concerts) have now come under pressure, and this is not just a result of the passing of the so-called pornography law of 2008, which established the required legal framework to proceed against such performances with all the power of the state.¹¹ Which way is Indonesia going? Will this country remain pluralistic in the future, or is it about to slide into dogmatism and orthodoxy? This contribution aims to examine these issues paradigmatically, by means of the social discourses that controversially refer to the phenomenon of *ritual seks*.

<http://www.solopos.com/2014/11/21/ritual-gunung-kemukus-mui-sragen-desak-pemkab-tutup-prostitusi-kemukus-553796> (accessed 15-08-2016) and Ukky Primartanyo, 'FPI minta penginapan di Kemukus ditutup sejak 2011', *Tempo*, 22-11-2014. <http://nasional.tempo.co/read/news/2014/11/22/058623625/fpi-minta-penginapan-di-kemukus-ditutup-sejak-2011> (accessed 11-08-2016). Time and again the FPI 'raids' sacred sites such as Gunung Kemukus in order to intimidate pilgrims and prostitutes, as well as to exert political pressure.

- 10 According to Anderson, 'the ability to concentrate opposites' is of central importance to this idea (Anderson 1972:14). However, the opposites mentioned are considered not only to be in contradiction to one another, but also complementary to each other. Thus power then becomes manifest when this 'unity-in-opposites' is free and easily effected. In other words: 'A man of real Power does not have to raise his voice and does not have to give overt orders. The halus-ness [sophistication] of his commands is the external expression of his authority' (Anderson 1972:43). The ambivalent attitude of leading politicians in Central Java towards heterodox ritual activities like *ritual seks* may be evidence of the pressures of competing religious and economic interests groups and the need to respond to shifting political circumstances. However, the fact that the political decision-makers have successfully avoided a permanent clampdown at Gunung Kemukus is in line with the traditional Javanese concept of power following Anderson.
- 11 On the dispute over *dangdut*, see Von Gliszczynski 2006 and Weintraub 2008; on the so-called pornography law, see 'Indonesia passes far-reaching anti-porn law', *ABS/CBN News*, 30-10-2008. <http://news.abs-cbn.com/world/10/30/08/indonesia-passes-far-reaching-anti-porn-law> (accessed 29-9-2016); see also Bennett and Davies 2015.

2 Site, Legend, Ritual

In the course of my ethnographic research in central Indonesia (Java, Bali, and Lombok) on mixed sacred sites and shared ritual events, it was in Parang Kusumo—a multi-religious site *par excellence*—that the phenomenon *ritual seks* attracted my attention.¹² Subsequently, in 2014 and 2015, I did additional research at the other two sacred sites mentioned at the start of the previous chapter, which comprised conversations with local actors (pilgrims and prostitutes), religious experts (*juru kunci, dukun, imam*) and representatives of the authorities (mayors and police officers). As a result of this research I would like to present here the following outline of the relationship between site, legend, and ritual at, respectively, Puri Cepuri in Parang Kusumo; Makam Roro Mendut in Gandu; and Makam Pangeran Samudro on Gunung Kemukus.¹³

2.1 *Puri Cepuri in Parang Kusumo*

Local legends have it that the sanctuary Puri Cepuri in Parang Kusumo is the place where Ratu Kidul and Penembahan Senopati exchanged marriage vows, which, as we know today, made them the most successful couple in the history of Central Java. According to these marriage vows, the goddess of the South Sea would not only help Senopati to win power, but would also ensure power for all his successors to the throne as long as they, as the highest representatives of the Mataram dynasty, also agreed to marry her. To this day this agreement is commemorated on the beach of Parang Kusumo in elaborate ceremonies (*labuhan*) that take place on the anniversary of the enthronement of the respective sultan and at the same time confirm the status of Ratu Kidul as the most powerful local goddess on Java.¹⁴ In commemoration of the union between Ratu Kidul and Senopati, numerous pilgrims travel to Parang Kusumo on the two ritually significant days of Jumat Kliwon and Selasa Kliwon not only to sacrifice and pray at this sacred site, but also to look for a sexual partner. With this partner, the male and female pilgrims retreat to the spacious beach and dune landscape to have sexual intercourse. As far more male than female pilgrims arrive, for some time prostitutes have frequented Parang Kusumo to meet the demand

12 For other publications on shared and contested sacred sites that have resulted from this research, see Gottowik 2012, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2016, and 2018.

13 There are various, and in part contradictory, legends regarding these three sacred sites, which have been passed down orally. In what follows, I refer exclusively to those versions that are significant in the context of *ritual seks*.

14 On Ratu Kidul and the Mataram dynasty, see, for example, Laksono 1986, Resink 1997, Wessing 1997, and Schlehe 1998. On the spatial relationship between Parang Kusumo, the Kraton in Yogyakarta, and Gunung Merapi ('magic axis') see Hennings 2007.

for sexual contacts. Since the early 1990s, however, the number of prostitutes has increased continuously, with numerous 'PSK' (*perempuan seks komersial*) having become established on the spot. The women offer their services at the start of the night directly between the sanctuary Puri Cepuri and the adjacent Darus Salam Mosque, retreating with their clients into the cheap hotels (*penginapan*) that have opened at this sacred site. These practices are tolerated by the local authorities, even though prostitution is explicitly prohibited in the district of Bantul (compare with Fauzi 2012), as the community greatly benefits not only spiritually but also economically from the up to 4,000 visitors who come to Parang Kusumo twice within a cycle of 35 days. The blogger Peter Gray describes the coexistence of pilgrims and prostitutes, religion and sex, at this sacred site as follows: 'Everything seemed to clash yet there was no trace of conflict' (Gray 2008c).¹⁵

2.2 *Makam Roro Mendut in Gandu*

In contrast, the tomb of Roro Mendut is a highly contested sacred place. It is the place of burial of a young woman who took her own life so as not to betray her love for Ponocitro. Both are now united in this tomb. This love couple is often called 'Java's Romeo and Juliet' (Hatley 1988:17), and the associated legend, situated in the seventeenth century, has received numerous representations in film, literature, music, and drama.¹⁶ Since Roro Mendut resisted the most powerful men of her time, she is honoured in Indonesia as a champion of women's rights and sexual self-determination (see also Sen 1993:126). Contemporary interpretations of the legend of Roro Mendut characterize it as follows: 'Such "modern" preoccupations as sexuality, gender identity and individual freedom are emphasized' (Hatley 1988:24). Today, the grave of Roro Mendut is on the eastern outskirts of Yogyakarta, and a small building (*cangkup*) that has been built above it is visited by married and unmarried couples, who may stay there overnight. However, since two Muhammadiyah-led boarding schools (*pesantren*) opened in the 1990s in close vicinity to the tomb, the local authorities have been pushing for a ban. The relevant *juru kunci* (key manager) no longer performs his official duties since experiencing massive intimidation

15 See also Labodalih Sembiring, 'A safe place. A monologue', *Bekabuluh. The travelling gardener*, 19-5-2011. <http://bekabuluh.com/2011/05/19/a-safe-place/> (accessed 19-1-2015).

16 Priyono 1982; Mangunwijaya 1983; Dina Intrasafitri, 'Countering women stereotypes, "Roro Mendut" to grace the stage', *The Jakarta Post*, 12-4-2012. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/04/12/countering-women-stereotypes-roro-mendut-grace-stage.html> (accessed 23-2-2016); Adesolografi, 'Tari Roro Mendut buka IDF 2014', *Soloraya*, 5-11-2011. <http://soloraya.com/2014/11/05/> (accessed 23-2-2016); see also Rosidi 1968 and Harjo 2003.

by an unidentified group of people, and the community is neither willing to keep the access roads repaired nor to restore the earthquake-damaged building. Again and again, unknown persons try to block the entrance to the tomb in response to media reports according to which *ritual seks* is still performed at the tomb of Roro Mendut.¹⁷ Little is known about the details, but it fits with the concept of Muhammadiyah to take action against the veneration of local saints. According to Indonesia's second-largest Islamic mass organization, visits to shrines are allowed only to honour a diseased person (*zikrul maut*), but not to ask for spiritual protection or blessing (*mintu berkah*). The latter is condemned by Muhammadiyah as *syirik* or *musyrik*, that is, a violation of monotheism, and combated as a heterodox ritual practice.

2.3 Makam Pangeran Samudro on Gunung Kemukus

The best-known site associated with *ritual seks* is certainly Gunung Kemukus, a rather inconspicuous hill situated about thirty kilometres north of Surakarta. This is where a certain Pangeran Samudro is buried, of whom the legends tell that he indulged in a sexual relationship with his mother or stepmother Nyai Ontrowulan. As a result he had to flee, but his father's captors found him and killed him on the spot. However, shortly before his death he took a vow to help all those who would follow his example and enter into a prohibited relationship at Gunung Kemukus by providing them with wealth, health, and happiness.¹⁸

Especially since the 1990s, many pilgrims of both sexes have arrived at Gunung Kemukus to have sexual relations with a person to whom they are not married.¹⁹ It is considered to be particularly promising to have sexual inter-

17 Ivan Aditya, 'Antara ritual dan seks di makam Roro Mendut', 9-7-2013. <http://krjogja.com/read/179509/antara-ritual-dan-seks-di-makam-ro-ro-mendut.kr> (accessed 23-2-2016); Kresna, 'Makam Roro Mendut dikenal sebagai tempat ritual seks dan pesugihan', *Merdeka*, 8-12-2014. <http://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa/makam-ro-ro-mendut-terkenal-sebagai-tempat-mencari-pesugihan.html> (accessed 23-2-2016); Bayu Adi Wicaksono and Dody Handoko, 'Menguak ritual seks pencari berkah di makam Roro Mendut. Hubungan seks dilakukan di makam atau di luar area makam'. *Nasional News* 11-9-2015. <http://nasional.news.viva.co.id/news/read/672694-menguak-ritual-seks-pencari-berkah-di-makam-ro-ro-mendut> (accessed 23-2-2016).

18 The local authorities took action against this legend by distributing leaflets putting forward a desexualized counter-version (see Pemerintah Kabupaten Sragen, no date). The political dimensions of this legend are emphasized by De Guzman 2006; see also Haris Firdaus, 'Politisasi mitos Pangeran Samudro', *Rumahmimpi*. Blog entry. <http://rumahmimpi.blogspot.de/2009/06/politisasi-mitos-pangeransamudro.html> (accessed 22-12-2015).

19 The *juru kunci* at the grave of Pangeran Samudro, Hasto Pratomo, defines *ritual seks* in a remarkably gender-neutral way. According to this definition, *ritual seks* is (hetero-)sexual

course on seven consecutive Jumat Pon with the same partner and as close as possible to the tomb.²⁰ As the number of male pilgrims by far exceeds the number of female pilgrims, numerous prostitutes have settled at Gunung Kemukus (as in Parang Kusumo), working in the immediate vicinity of the tomb in karaoke bars. However, in November 2014 the authorities intervened, expelling all the prostitutes, closing all the bars and prohibiting local people from renting rooms to pilgrims. This was in response to a documentary that had been aired on Australian television only a few days earlier under the title *Sex mountain* (Abboud 2014). The media attention that this prohibition attracted was enormous nationwide, and even the *Jakarta Post* reported on it.²¹ For a long time the future of Gunung Kemukus seemed completely uncertain, but since Idul Fitri in 2015 a slow return to the status quo ante has taken place, and in October of that year around 5,000 pilgrims were counted again visiting Gunung Kemukus on Jumat Pon.²² Despite the interim banning of *ritual seks*, this sacred site has lost none of its paradigmatic significance: ‘what is truly surprising

intercourse (‘hubungan intim’) with a man or woman, who is not a legitimate partner (‘dengan laki-laki atau perempuan yang bukan pasangan sah’); see Kurniawan, ‘Prostitusi Gunung Kemukus. Ini asal mula penyimpangan ziarah dan praktik prostitusi’, *Solopos*, 17-5-2014. <http://www.solopos.com/2014/05/17/prostitusi-gunung-kemukus-ini-asal-mula-penyimpangan-ziarah-dan-praktik-prostitusi-508204> (accessed 15-8-2016). As Islam does not allow any sexual activities outside of marriage, the heterodox ritual practices at Gunung Kemukus display a tremendous subversive potential that seriously concerns both the MUI and the FPI; Kurniawan, ‘MUI Sragen desak Pemkab tutup prostitusi Kemukus’, *Solopos*, 21-11-2014 and Ukky Primartanyo, ‘FPI minta penginapan di Kemukus ditutup sejak 2011’, *Tempo*, 22-11-2014.

20 That *ritual seks* are particularly effective when performed on seven consecutive Jumat Pon with the same partner is not deducible from the legends but, according to the pilgrims, an empirical finding (see also Fuhrmann 2000:319).

21 The article in *The Jakarta Post* (2014) was published under the heading ‘Central Java governor bans ancient sex ritual on Mt. Kemukus’; see Ainur Rohmah, ‘Central Java governor bans ancient sex ritual on Mt. Kemukus’, *The Jakarta Post*, 26-11-2014. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/11/26/central-java-governor-bans-ancient-sex-ritual-mt-kemukus.html> (accessed 15-8-2016). See also Danar Widiyanto, ‘Seks bebas di Kemukus harus dihentikan!’, *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 22-11-2014. <http://img.krjogja.com/read/238259/seks-bebas-di-kemukus-harus-dihentikan.kr> (accessed 15-8-2016); Agus Sigit, ‘Kemukus ditutup, warga protes’, *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 16-2-2015. <http://img.krjogja.com/read/248965/kemukus-ditutup-warga-protes.kr> (accessed 15-8-2016); Jafar Sodiq Assegaf, ‘Ritual seks Gunung Kemukus disorot media Australia’, 19-11-2014. <http://www.solopos.com/2014/11/19/ritual-seks-gunung-kemukus-disorot-media-australia-553314> (accessed 15-8-2016); and Kurniawan, ‘MUI Sragen desak Pemkab tutup prostitusi Kemukus’, *Solopos*, 21-11-2014.

22 Personal observations on 15/16-10-2015, confirmed by Marcello Suparno, executive manager of the local tourist board (Kepala Unit Pelaksana Teknis Dinas Pariwisata), who sells tickets to visitors at Gunung Kemukus and keeps detailed accounts of all incomes.—At present, the practices at Gunung Kemukus are again under pressure. At the end of 2017,

is that even while Indonesia undergoes a steady shift towards more orthodox Islam, the ritual on Gunung Kemukus is exploding in popularity. It's a quintessentially Indonesian contradiction.²³

The three selected pilgrimage sites are characterized not only by similarities but also by differences. At Gunung Kemukus the local legends directly invite the pilgrims to enter into an illicit relationship (*hubungan terlarang*) and to act mimetically in conformity with the couple who had once lived in such a relationship at this site. At the tomb of Roro Mendut and in Parang Kusumo, by contrast, the pilgrims emulate idealized love couples mimetically by having sexual relations at this site either with prostitutes, other pilgrims, or their own partners. As the legends characterize Roro Mendut not only as a moral ideal, but also as a successful tobacco and cigarette saleswoman, her tomb was mainly visited by female traders, who expected sustained support in business matters from their pilgrimage. In contrast, Parang Kusumo is frequented by young couples, who meditate inside the sanctuary Puri Cepuri at so-called love stones (*batu cinta*) and commemorate Ratu Kidul at the so-called love beach (*pantai cinta*) to strengthen their own relationship. However, young love couples not only visit sacred places in Central Java that are known for exemplary relationships, in negative correspondence with this mimetic principle they also avoid places like Candi Prambanan, where Pangeran Bondowoso's love for Roro Jonggrang failed tragically.

What the three pilgrimage sites have in common beyond all differences are mimetic patterns of conduct that follow certain exemplary love couples, as well as ritual practices to which I refer here as anti-structural and transgressive, as they are contrary to prevailing moral values and undermine the increasingly sexually hostile legislation of the Republic of Indonesia. Whether the aforementioned legends actually guide individuals' actions in the context of *ritual seks*, or whether illicit sexual contacts are legitimized *post-hoc* by recourse to these narratives can only be decided on a case-by-case basis.

In this context, it is interesting to see that pilgrims of both sexes quite openly refer to these ritual practices. They concede that they apply these practices to absorb (*menyerap*) some of the spiritual power that is concentrated at these

the authorities closed all karaoke bars and expelled most of the prostitutes. The pilgrims, however, continue to go to Gunung Kemukus and perform 'ritual seks'—under the eyes of the authorities.

23 Aubrey Belford, 'The swingers' guide to Islam', *The Global Mail*, 10-10-2012. <http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/the-swingers-guide-to-islam/419/> (accessed 8-7-2014). The author of the passage just quoted, the Australian Aubrey Belford, has worked as Southeast Asian correspondent for the news agency Reuters.

sacred sites. But in general the pilgrims follow a rather pragmatic and empirical approach: They stress that those who wish to learn more about *ritual seks* should practise it themselves, while emphasizing that they know people or have heard about people (a distinction between first- and second-hand information is not always drawn) who have performed the ritual and are better off today. Detailed models of explanation are neither necessary for the pilgrims nor available from them. In addition, there are varied motives to visit these sacred sites, including an interest in *ritual seks*, but often also simple curiosity, excitement, and commercial interest; the latter applies to the large number of prostitutes, hawkers, and healers who visit such sites to offer their goods and services. Given the remarkable relationship that sexuality and spirituality (prostitution and religion) enter into at the above-mentioned pilgrimage sites, a more comprehensive ethnographic knowledge of the phenomenon of *ritual seks* and the controversial media coverage on this subject is desirable.²⁴ A synoptic overview of the three pilgrimage sites in Central Java, provided in this chapter, already shows that the social discourses about *ritual seks* indicate no clear trend: toleration of heterodox ritual practices (Parang Kusumo) contrasts with open repression (Roro Mendut) and a rather ambivalent attitude of the authorities (Gunung Kemukus). Therefore it is even more intriguing to investigate *ritual seks* as a parameter for socio-religious transformations in Indonesia and to follow the social discourses that are related to this phenomenon in academic publications, the media, and beyond.

3 *Ritual Seks* and Academic Publications

To my knowledge there are very few academic publications that address the performance of ritualized sex at sacred sites in Central Java. They include the dissertation ‘Formen der javanischen Pilgerschaft zu Heiligenschreinen’ by Klaus Fuhrmann, who refers to the ritual events at Gunung Kemukus in one chapter of his work (Fuhrmann 2000:317–68).²⁵ However, since Fuhrmann reduces *ritual seks* to ‘adulterous intercourse’ (Fuhrmann 2000:345, 364, 375),

24 In November 2014, immediately after the authorities had banned *ritual seks* at Gunung Kemukus, in the four daily newspapers *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, *Kompas*, *Solopos*, and *Tempo* alone more than one hundred articles appeared that discussed critically and controversially the religious, social, and political background of these heterodox ritual practices and their embeddedness in Javanese society. See the twelve newspaper articles mentioned in this article as examples.

25 The translation of the title of this PhD thesis reads as follows: ‘Types of Javanese pilgrimage to shrines’ (Fuhrmann 2000).

he largely misses the subversive potential of these practices, which becomes apparent from the presence of the many young, unmarried couples at Gunung Kemukus who frequent this sacred site not only to recite prayers but to live out their sexuality.

Among the authors who mention the phenomenon in their publications, at least, is George Quinn, one of the best-known authorities on pilgrimage in Java. In one of his publications on this topic he states the following with regard to Gunung Kemukus: 'The site has become controversial for its numerous prostitutes and a regimen of devotions that requires pilgrims to engage in promiscuous sex' (Quinn 2007:71; see also Wessing 1997:342, footnote 38). I suggest, however, that, in contrast to the petition for blessings (*berkah*) and the presentation of offerings (*nyekar*), *ritual seks* belongs only partly to a 'regimen of devotions', as every pilgrim is free to participate in this ritual exercise, and groups of pilgrims who suspend the anonymity of the individual renounce it entirely without compromising the success of their pilgrimage.

Finally, I would like to refer to Judith Schlehe, who has been working as an ethnographer focusing on Central Java since the 1980s. In one of her publications she states rather casually: 'the holy place in Parang Kusumo [...] is increasingly interpreted as a place that is particularly suitable for physical love' (Schlehe 2008:227, footnote).²⁶ Schlehe also refers to prostitutes in Parang Kusumo, but even at the beginning of the 2000s she could not have predicted that demand for their services would evolve into a mass phenomenon.²⁷ This increasing demand is the result of a process that Schlehe describes elsewhere as a 'democratization' of the relationship between the descendants of the Mataram dynasty and Ratu Kidul. Since these descendants no longer claim any matrimonial relationship with Ratu Kidul, but concede only a spiritual or familial, or at any rate an asexual relationship with her, 'their "subjects" are now apparently free to experience it [the matrimonial relationship] for themselves. All can contact Ratu Kidul [...]. And not a few men experience a sexual relationship with Ratu Kidul or one of her subordinate beautiful female spirits' (Schlehe 1991:203; see also Schlehe 1998:145).

Also according to my findings, some male pilgrims associate the prostitutes in Parang Kusumo if not with Ratu Kidul, then at least with the female spirits just mentioned, *ritual seks* being an opportunity to pay homage to them

26 'der heilige Platz in Parang Kusumo [...] wird zunehmend dahin gehend interpretiert, dass es sich um einen Ort handle, der sich in besonderer Weise für die körperliche Liebe eigne' (Schlehe 2008:227, footnote).

27 Personal communication, December 2015.

and their power.²⁸ As a result, the ‘desexualization’ of the relationship between the sultanate of Yogyakarta and Ratu Kidul (Schlehe 1998:97, 120), which is frequently interpreted as an expression of the ongoing Islamization of Central Java (Schlehe 1991:201), coincides with the boom in *ritual seks* in Parang Kusumo.²⁹ In this respect, the pilgrims are responding to the neglect of traditions on the part of Hamengkubuwono x and other representatives of the religious and political elite on Java with an appropriation and revitalization of these traditions in their own interest.

It should be mentioned at this point that the local actors in Parang Kusumo do not refer to their ritual activities as *ritual seks*. However, the ritual practices at this sacred site correspond significantly to those at Gunung Kemukus and the tomb of Roro Mendut, as Peter Gray’s blog entries on Parang Kusumo clearly indicate: ‘Having sex can actually be a part of the doing your ritual there. [...] after offering your prayers or meditating at the rocks, you may be divinely inspired to make love with somebody. Doing this would sort of complete your ritual and help to ensure that your prayer will come true. This holds for both men and women, prostitute or not’ (Gray 2008a).

While the ritual activities at Gunung Kemukus and in Parang Kusumo receive at least some attention,³⁰ to my knowledge no academic publications are available on the ritual events at the tomb of Roro Mendut. Local print media regularly report on this sacred place (as well as on the other two pilgrimage sites), and only recently students of Universitas Gadjah Mada posted a video clip about *The sex ritual at Roro Mendut’s tomb* on the internet.³¹ However,

28 It is said about Ratu Kidul that she resides alone in her splendid palace at the bottom of the South Sea, surrounded only by other female spirits. Time and again, she fetches women and men who swim in the sea or walk on the beach to her realm, where they are drowned or forever lost. While the women must serve her in the palace, she makes the men sexually submissive (see Schlehe 1998:125). Therefore, *ritual seks* in Parang Kusumo ultimately aims to satisfy the sexual desire of Ratu Kidul and her female spirits, a task that until recently was performed by the rulers of the Mataram dynasty, but today is increasingly undertaken by male pilgrims at this sacred site.

29 Since Senopati, Hamengkubuwono x is the first sultan of the Mataram dynasty to live in a monogamous marriage. From his association with his wife Ratu Hemas five daughters have emerged, but not a single son. He is currently trying to install his eldest daughter as heir to the throne, but is facing resistance on the part of his brothers. The loss of power that is now threatening to occur is attributed by the local population, in so far as it is traditionally oriented, to the fact that Hamengkubuwono x has not adequately fulfilled his obligations towards Ratu Kidul.

30 See also Sumiarni et al. 1999 and Guzman 2006.

31 Made Bagus Baskara, *The sex ritual at Roro Mendut’s tomb*, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1TYqyb6-RA> (accessed 9-5-2018).

this comedy-like short film merely succeeds in adding to the almost unmanageable quantity of adaptations the phenomenon of *ritual seks* had already received. These adaptations include novels, radio features, TV productions, documentations, newspaper articles, and the like.³² In addition, there are about half a dozen BA and MA theses (*skripsi* and *tesis*), produced at various universities in Indonesia, each addressing one of these pilgrimage sites.³³ These texts, too, fail to provide any comparative examination of *ritual seks* as an integral aspect of ritual activities at pilgrimage sites in Central Java.

4 *Ritual Seks* and ‘Tantric Fragments’

To complete this exposition of the current state of research on *ritual seks* in Central Java, I would like to refer to two or three publications that try to bridge the 500-year gap between *ritual seks* and so-called tantric temples in Central Java, in particular Candi Suku and Candi Ceto.³⁴ Exemplary of the effort to connect the heterodox ritual practices at Gunung Kemukus with tantric sites and conceptions is the following quote: ‘People go to Kemukus prepared to “love” a total stranger—to worship the idea of love itself as separate from any identification of the actual sexual partner [...]. While the Tantric texts can help illuminate what takes place at Kemukus—and at a few other, similar sites in Java—the rituals at Kemukus can actually help to understand Tantra better’ (Levenda 2011:270).

This is not the place to explain tantric beliefs and practices in detail, but the following principle is of central significance: ‘In Tantrism, sexual union is ritual and ritual is frequently explained in sexual terms. The sexual act performed as ritual symbolizes the union of opposites and realizes the fundamental metaphysical principle of cosmic unity’ (Rubinstein 2000:108–9).³⁵

32 See, among others, Rahardi 2008, Henschke 2014, and Ghazwan 2014; see also Aubrey Belford, ‘The swingers’ guide to Islam’, *The Global Mail*, 10-10-2012; ‘Gunung Kemukus undercover: Geliat Malam Jumat Pon’, 12-5-2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNiccOZhLgo> (accessed 12-7-2018) and Agus Sigit, ‘Kemukus ditutup, warga protes’, *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 16-2-2015.

33 See, for example, Efendi 2006, Wiratsasongko 2008, Jululi 2010, and Novitasari 2015.

34 See Fic 2003 and Levenda 2011; for different perceptions of Central Javanese temple complexes and tantric practices, see Sumiarni et al. 1999 and Kinney, Klokke and Kieven 2003.

35 See also Eliade 1977:268. This refers to the practices of the so-called ‘left-handed’ tantrism that acquired strong influence from the eighth century onwards in both Hinduism and Buddhism (see Bharati 1965).

In fact, there are a couple of striking similarities between tantric practices and *ritual seks*. These similarities include the fact that the sexual act is preferably performed with an illicit partner (with a person to whom one is not married), under the free sky (before the eyes of the gods), at a sacred site (if possible, on a grave or in a cemetery) and—last but not least—as an integral part of ritual practices (and not for reproduction purposes or even out of lust or love).³⁶ Of particular note is the mimetic moment that also characterizes the sexual union of the tantric partners: ‘the woman becomes the Goddess, the yogin [her male partner] incarnates Siva; their “rite”, their ritual copulation, *is* the copulation of the divine couple’ (Zvelebil 1973:48, emphasis in original).³⁷

The fact that in Tantrism the sexual union of the partners is a mimetic act that emulates (‘dramatizes’) the primordial union of Shiva and Shakti or another divine couple to become one with these gods (*moksa*) is confirmed many times in the academic literature (see, for example, Braginsky 2004:145 and Creese 2004:201). Despite these similarities, there is a broad consensus that tantric beliefs and practices in Indonesia—for example, in Java (Becker 1993:4–8) and Sumatra (Braginsky 2004:168–70)—first merged with Sufism and were then lost entirely in the course of the nineteenth century. As a systematically developed doctrine with a coordinated ritual practice, Tantrism as an important current within Hinduism and Buddhism has disappeared in Indonesia today.³⁸

What has survived in contrast are, according to James Boon (1990:158), ‘tantric fragments’ that are detectable particularly in Bali and Central Java. These fragments include symbolic representations of sexually connoted opposites, as they are handed down with *lingga* and *yoni*, Shiva and Shakti, and the extremely popular figurative portrayal of a wedding pair as Loro Blonyo.³⁹

Recent studies go even further by stating that tantric conceptions are employed not only in the Hindu Balinese funeral ritual (*ngaben*) and the

36 See Bharati 1965:244–68, Eliade 1977:267–76, and Woodroffe 1987:361–63; also Chalier-Visuvalingam 1994:211–2 and Young 2004:141.

37 Revealing are tantric texts such as the ‘Ketuturan Semara Tantra’ (Singaraja: Gedong Kirtya 2002, Lontar No. 1097), in which the sexual partners are encouraged to emulate the continuously united divine couple Hyang Semara Ratih: ‘Siang malam bersanggama. Bagaikan Hyang Semara Ratih’ (verse 24). For the highly sexualized relationship of Shiva and Parvati as described in the Puranas, see O’Flaherty 1973.

38 References to the former spread of this doctrine mention tantric texts from the *kakawin* and *tutur* tradition, which, although they have disappeared on Java, remain in use, at least in part, on Bali. For a discussion of these texts, see Rubinstein 2000, Creese and Bellows 2002 and Creese 2004; see also Nihom 1994.

39 Hooykaas 1964:145; Zoetmulder 1995:171; Behrend 1989:183; also Roxas-Lim 1983:121–23.

ritual encounter of Rangda and Barong Ket (*calonarang*), but also in local purification rituals (*slametan besih desa*) and traditional dances, in part performed at the courts of Yogyakarta and Surakarta to the present day.⁴⁰ Of particular note in this context are the court dances of *bedhaya ketawang* and *bedhaya semang*, through which the sexual union between the rulers of the Mataram dynasty and Ratu Kidul was once initiated and which is still mimetically re-enacted today (Hostetler 1982; Woodward 1989:168; Hughes-Freeland 2008:148).⁴¹ In other words: 'A *bedhaya* dance can be appreciated [...] as a re-enactment of the union of the Goddess of the South Sea with a venerated royal ancestor' (Becker 1993:140). According to the ethnomusicologist Judith Becker, tantric concepts are employed in this union and its mimetic re-enactment: 'From the beginning to end, the *bedhaya* dance is a visual, metaphoric presentation of detailed and specific Tantric teachings' (Becker 1993:138).

Whether the subject of this contribution, that is *ritual seks* at Central Javanese pilgrimage sites, may rate as a 'tantric fragment' in James Boon's definition cannot be decided without further investigations in the ethnographic field and the respective archives and libraries. This is due not least to the current 'state of the art', which is considered insufficient in this regard: 'Tantrism remains a largely unexplored field in Indonesia as elsewhere' (Rubinstein 2000:224).

Despite this research deficit, it can be noted that the concern with the fertile union of opposites has deep roots across much of Indonesia. Robert Hefner considers this concern to have been constitutive of the prevailing religious world view in Central and East Java until well into the 1970s and 1980s. According to this world view the origin of the world is not a single act of creation, but a still incomplete process in which the divine reveals itself: 'Inasmuch as genesis continues today, the world still offers glimpses of the divine, often in the

40 Stephen 2010; Boon 1990:62, 163; Emigh 1996:84; also Roxas-Lim 1983:136–39 and Barth 1993:262. In this context also belong Barong Landung, two sacred figures ('giant puppets'), who represent a white female and a black male character. Particularly in the festive period between Hari Raya Galungan and Hari Raya Kuningan, these figures (Jero Luh and Jero Gede) are paraded through the streets of Bali, and their ritual copulation in public ('marriage') refers not only to the social integration of the Chinese minority into Balinese culture (cf. Gottowik 2005, 2008, 2010 and 2014c), but probably also to a tantric element ('porno sekali').

41 While the *bedhaya* dance is performed at the court of the sunan of Surakarta to this day (Florida 1992:22), at the court of the sultan of Yogyakarta this has not been the case since the 1920s. Little is known so far of the reasons for the disappearance of this dance from this *kraton* (Hughes-Freeland 2008:149–51).

most unexpected places. These include spaces like natural landscapes, sources of water, and the human body itself, not least of all in the act of sexual intercourse' (Hefner 2011:78).

According to Hefner, this world view collapsed at the end of the twentieth century under the influence of globalized religious conceptions (Hefner 2011:80). However, the boom in local pilgrimages not only to sacred sites where *ritual seks* is performed, but also to mountain tops and springs stands in clear contradiction to this statement (Quinn 2004; also Gottowik 2016, 2018). Even though the world view addressed by Hefner has undoubtedly gone through profound transformation, the idea of approaching the Divine in the act of love is still widespread and, at least at places like Gunung Kemukus and Parang Kusumo, more popular than ever.

5 *Ritual Seks* and the Media

The growing popularity of pilgrimage sites such as Gunung Kemukus started in the 1980s and increased almost explosively in the second half of the following decade. Since the early 1990s, ritual practices at this sacred site have been controversially discussed in Indonesian newspapers (Fuhrmann 2000:364), and since the early 2000s there has also been international journalistic interest in *ritual seks*.⁴²

Within this reporting, the work of Aubrey Belford, who became aware of this phenomenon as Southeast Asian correspondent for the news agency Reuters, is particularly noteworthy. In an article titled 'The swingers' guide to Islam', Belford set the tone for almost all subsequent publications on the topic: 'Gunung Kemukus, a mass ritual of adultery and sex, is going on in the middle of Java, the demographic heart of the world's largest Muslim-majority country.'⁴³

For many years previously, Islamic organizations such as the MUI and the FPI had been campaigning against the violation of Islamic principles through this 'mass ritual of adultery and sex', without, however, being able to push the local authorities to take action. This was achieved only by the film *Sex mountain*

42 Abigail Haworth, 'Where sex with a stranger brings good luck', *Marie Claire* (US Edition) (November 2004) 11–11:158–63; see also Peter Gray, 'Meeting Pak Agus'. Blog entry, 6-7-2006. <http://notesfromjava.blogspot.de/2008/07/meeting-pak-sigit.html> (accessed 16-12-2015); Peter Gray, 'Prayers, peddlers and prostitutes'. Blog entry, 16-7-2006. <http://notesfromjava.blogspot.de/2008/07/prayers-peddler-and-prostitutes.html> (accessed 16-12-2015); Peter Gray, 'Malam Jumaat Kliwon'. Blog entry, 25-7-2008. <http://notesfromjava.blogspot.de/2008/07/malam-jumaat-kliwon.html> (accessed 16-12-2015).

43 Aubrey Belford, 'The swingers' guide to Islam', *The Global Mail*, 10-10-2012.

(2014) by the Australian journalist Patrick Abboud: only nine days after his film was aired by Australian Special Broadcasting Service/SBS One, all ritual activities at Gunung Kemukus were banned.

The shutting down of Gunung Kemukus in November 2014 received widespread media coverage in Indonesia. In addition to *The Jakarta Post*, *Kompas*, and *Tempo*, local daily newspapers such as *Kedaulatan Rakyat* and *Solopos* reported on this unprecedented intervention in the ritual activities at Gunung Kemukus. Between November 2014 and May 2016, the Surakarta-based *Solopos* published in total almost fifty articles addressing the ban on ritual activities at Gunung Kemukus and the reactions to it in politics and society.⁴⁴

The chronicle of reporting in *Solopos* reads as follows. Intensive coverage begins immediately after the broadcasting of the film *Sex mountain* on 18 November 2014; it culminates in the official shutting down of Gunung Kemukus on 27 November 2014, remains intense until the beginning of December 2014, and finally fades away from July 2015 onwards as the ritual activities at Gunung Kemukus return to the status quo ante.⁴⁵

In view of the almost universal diagnosis of the Islamization of Indonesian society, it is interesting to observe that little importance is attached to religion or religious values in the media coverage of *ritual seks*.⁴⁶ Although some politicians consider *ritual seks* to be endangering the moral basis of society, it is basically MUI and FPI that justify their rejection of these heterodox ritual practices at Gunung Kemukus with reference to the violation of religious norms and values; they describe the place as *tempat hiburan haram* (place of forbidden entertainment). MUI's voice certainly exercises considerable weight in the general public, and the spectacular and partly violent actions of FPI are regu-

44 No other daily newspaper has reported on the events at Gunung Kemukus in more detail. This is why the reporting in *Solopos* is carefully analysed in what follows. By way of comparison, the reporting on this phenomenon in *Tempo*, which published almost 30 articles in the same period, was also consulted.

45 Since autumn 2017 the practices at Gunung Kemukus are under pressure again: all karaoke bars were closed and most of the prostitutes expelled. But the pilgrims continue to perform *ritual seks*—under the eyes of the authorities.

46 Islamization is defined here as a dynamic process that aims at the scripturalization, purification, and dogmatization of Islam. According to many observers, this process accelerated in Indonesia in the 1970s, marking an irreversible process of the extinction of traditional beliefs and practices (*adat*) by a globalized Islam (a global religion, or *agama*). However, there are also historians and anthropologists who have always emphasized, like this contribution, that Islamization in Indonesia is not normatively unitary, but antagonistically plural.

larly reported in the media. But neither of these two organizations had a lasting influence on social discourses about *ritual seks* and decision-making processes at Gunung Kemukus.

A far greater influence than Islamic associations, with their warnings and, as far as the FPI was concerned, threatening voices, was exercised by foreign media, especially Australian television. Only after the Australian TV station SBS One had reported on *ritual seks* at Gunung Kemukus did politicians in Central Java feel obliged to intervene and ban the heterodox ritual practices at this pilgrimage site.

This confirms the well-known thesis according to which it is not the information that is decisive, but the nature of its mediation ('the medium is the message'). What the film *Sex mountain* conveyed in terms of information about *ritual seks* had already been known in Indonesia for years, without anyone getting excited about it, apart from the Islamists. However, it was the mass media's dissemination of moving pictures, together with an external view of the situation that prompted the governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, to take steps against karaoke, prostitution, and *ritual seks* at Gunung Kemukus. An Indonesian online magazine addressed this issue with the following headline: 'The "divergent ritual" at Gunung Kemukus is a worldwide topic; the governor is ashamed'.⁴⁷

It was this feeling of shame triggered by mass media coverage abroad that was crucial to the shutting down of Gunung Kemukus, not the criticism in the local media or the references of conservative politicians and Islamic associations to the violation of moral norms and religious values that are everyday practice at this sacred site.⁴⁸ Therefore, the temporary shutting down of Gunung Kemukus does not support the thesis of the Islamization of Indonesian society in the sense of the ever-increasing penetration of all social areas by Islam, which, according to those who support this thesis, is affecting more and more parts of Indonesian society at the expense of traditional beliefs and practices.

47 'Ritual "terlarang" Gunung Kemukus mendunia, gubernur malu', *Dream*, 24-11-2014. <http://www.dream.co.id/news/ritual-aneh-gunung-kemukus-disorot-dunia-ganjar-pranowo-malu-141124.html> (accessed 15-8-2016). After consulting with President Joko Widodo, the Central Javanese governor Ganjar Pranowo asked the population to feel ashamed too: 'Sampai luar negeri tahu, malulah' (It is known abroad, shame on you). Since President 'Jokowi', mayor of Surakarta from 2005 to 2012, grew up in close proximity to Gunung Kemukus, it would be more than surprising if he did not personally know about the heterodox ritual practices at this pilgrimage site.

48 For a discussion of shame and its significance in Balinese and Javanese culture, see, for example, Geertz 1973:400-3 and Keeler 1983.

In the reports by *Solopos* and other newspapers that were used as a sample for this investigation (*Kedaulatan Rakyat, Kompas, Tempo*, et cetera), almost no reference is made to Islam or Islamic values in connection with the events at Gunung Kemukus. Some politicians see the morality of the people in the region as being at risk, but the actual political decision-makers are looking for pragmatic solutions in view of the decline of pilgrims at Gunung Kemukus and the resulting economic hardship for the local population.⁴⁹ They hope to establish rules that assign karaoke, prostitution, and *ritual seks* clearly defined roles at this sacred site. The permanent elimination of them from Gunung Kemukus was not being pursued consistently because of the economic consequences for the local population and has finally been abandoned altogether. In the debates over heterodox ritual practices at Gunung Kemukus, economic interests and, in the broadest sense, general welfare form the basis for political decisions, not at all abstract religious values, which would have to be enforced against the will of the majority of the local population. In other words, politics is directed at bridging opposites and not at enforcing particular religious ideals.

The underlying principle here can also be transferred to another of the pilgrimage sites presented earlier. In Parang Kusumo, all responsible individuals, from the mayor to the imam to the *juru kunci*, admit to blocking out their moral and religious objections to *ritual seks* in favour of pursuing the economic benefits of a prosperous pilgrimage site. In taking this attitude, they are in agreement with the overwhelming majority of Parang Kusumo's inhabitants, who profit greatly from the fact that several thousand pilgrims visit their community twice within a cycle of 35 days. After all, these pilgrims have caused a considerable economic boom with their demand for goods and services: Parang Kusumo, for a long time little more than a stretch of beach near Parang Tritis, will engulf this community very soon.

Even at the tomb of Roro Mendut, the third pilgrimage site discussed in this article, economic considerations play a decisive role, albeit with different consequences. There, heterodox ritual practices such as *ritual seks* were massively suppressed after a boarding school led by Muhammadiyah was built in the immediate neighbourhood for around two hundred girls and a second boarding school for as many boys only a few kilometres away. With the establishment of these boarding schools, an infrastructure has developed in the

49 'Masyarakat sudah sadar kalau Gunung Kemukus ditutup mereka akan kehilangan sandang pangan' (The society is already aware that the people will lose their means of living, if Gunung Kemukus will be closed); see Tri Rahayu, 'Prostitusi Gunung Kemukus. Karaoke mulai menggeliat lagi', *Solopos*, 4-5-2016. <http://www.solopos.com/2016/05/04/prostitusi-gunung-kemukus-karaoke-mulai-menggeliat-lagi-714609> (accessed 15-8-2016).

community that is geared entirely to the needs of these school children. There are a number of small shops selling school items, toiletries, clothing, shoes, snacks, soft drinks, and the like. These shops generate tax revenues and jobs, which are obviously so important to the community that it is refusing to restore the earthquake-damaged tomb of Roro Mendut and to maintain the access roads to this sacred site. This shows the power of this Islamic mass organization, not least economically, which is used to exert pressure on the mayor and other community leaders. These local leaders (*tokoh masyarakat*) are bowing to this pressure for economic reasons—not because the majority of the local population had accepted the religious beliefs of Muhammadiyah and rejected the veneration of local saints.

To this extent, economic interests are decisive at these pilgrimage sites, albeit in quite different ways: the toleration of *ritual seks* in Parang Kusumo and, ultimately, also at Gunung Kemukus, contrasts with the suppression of these heterodox ritual practices at the tomb of Roro Mendut. However, up to the present day, the norms and values of a dogmatic and scripturalist interpretation of Islam have not gained acceptance at the three pilgrimage sites to the extent that the local population is prepared to tolerate economic losses for the sake of these values voluntarily, or even to abandon these heterodox ritual practices entirely.

This restrained attitude towards abstract religious norms and values is also reflected in the media coverage, which time and again makes the local population's protests against the closure of the karaoke shops and the expulsion of the prostitutes at Gunung Kemukus a topic of debate.⁵⁰ The prostitutes have advocates in the parliaments, and opponents of the breaking-up of the two- or three-decades-old structures at Gunung Kemukus are given a chance to be heard.⁵¹

There are certain disadvantages in breaking up these structures, as the profession, which for good reasons is considered the oldest in the world, cannot be forbidden, but only marginalized. However, pushing the prostitutes of Gunung Kemukus further to the margins of society would not only threaten their health and safety, but also make the fight against HIV/AIDS more difficult.⁵² Therefore,

50 See, for example, the headline in *Kedaulatan Rakyat* on 16 February 2015: 'Kemukus ditutup, warga protes' (Kemukus is closed, the residents protest). Agus Sigit, 'Kemukus ditutup, warga protes', *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 16-2-2015.

51 Particularly instructive is the six-part series of articles on 'Prostitusi Gunung Kemukus' by journalist Kurniawan, which was published in *Solopos* between 13 and 18 May 2014 (see www.solopos.com).

52 Compare with Irin, 'Indonesian brothel closures hit HIV prevention: As red lights go

the shutting down of Gunung Kemukus and the expulsion of prostitutes from this sacred site cannot be justified as a measure of HIV prevention. Much more effective is what is practised in Parang Kusumo, where Yayasan Vesta Indonesia (Vesta Foundation Indonesia) offers free counselling, condoms, and fast HIV tests to pilgrims and prostitutes.

Particularly in the case of prostitution, it is possible to identify far-reaching communalities in the reporting of the print media mentioned above. The reporting of the so-called pornography law already conveyed the impression 'that editors tend to sympathize with the representatives of the counter-discourse' (Arnez 2010:95, my translation). The articles on *ritual seks* also give this impression, as they respond rather reluctantly to demands for state intervention, tending to recommend social balance and local self-regulation instead.⁵³

The commonalities mentioned are perhaps less surprising, given the fact that the media landscape of Indonesia (including *Solopos*, *Tempo*, *Kompas*, and *The Jakarta Post*) is controlled by a few consortia, most of whom are led by members of the Suharto clan and their in part ethnic Chinese business partners, such as Anthony Salim or Dahlan Iskan (Haryanto 2011:104; Ida 2011:15). The stakeholders involved are not interested in either a strict interpretation of Islam or in any state intervention, but in what they consider to be a free market and free competition. The liberal economic positions mentioned here are also reflected in the coverage of Gunung Kemukus, which places strong emphasis on social and economic questions, while religious and moral issues tend to fall into the background somewhat.

The growing concentration of media ownership and the so-called Islamization of Indonesia oppose each other in a tense relationship which is contributing to the country's social and religious dynamics. These dynamics are profoundly transforming the country with the world's largest Muslim population, but they are also creating spaces for heterodox practices such as *ritual seks*. Therefore, the results of these transformations are not unitary, but normatively diverse and antagonistic, as they openly contradict the state-supported ban on public displays of sexuality. To sum it all up: The actors in these heterodox rituals are explicitly committed to Islam, but violate its principles; Islamic

out, HIV protection concerns grow', *asia sentinel*, 4-11-2014. <http://www.asiasentinel.com/society/indonesia-brothel-closures-hit-hiv-prevention/> (accessed 15-8-2016).

53 'Pemkab harus hati-hati, regulasi jadi kata kunci' (The district government must be careful, regulation should become the key word); 'Pemkab diminta seriusi Kemukus dan Bayanan', *Solopos*, 21-12-2014. <http://www.solopos.com/2014/12/21/prostitusi-sragen-pemkab-diminta-seriusi-kemukus-dan-bayanan-561458> (accessed 15-08-2016).

mass organizations protest against it, while politicians manoeuvre between the fronts; the media report in a balanced-to-liberal way, and academics try to understand what is going on. Who else would deal in such a polyphonic way with the phenomenon in question, if not a plural society?

Acknowledgements

This article has resulted, at least in part, from my commitment to the area studies network ‘Dynamics of Religion in Southeast Asia/DORISEA’, sponsored by the Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF, Federal Ministry of Education and Research). I am particularly grateful to Odit Budiawan (Universitas Gadjah Mada), who proved to be a perfect research assistant during fieldwork in Central Java in 2014 and 2015, and Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin (Göttingen University), Gertrud Hüwelmeier (Humboldt University, Berlin), Judith Schlehe (Freiburg University), and Katharina Schneider (Heidelberg University), who commented on earlier drafts of this article. I would also like to thank the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) for granting a scholarship for further research on “Heterodoxy and Islam on Java”.

References

- Abboud, Patrick (2014). *Sex mountain*. Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) One, 18 November 2014. <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/dateline/story/sex-mountain> (accessed 16 July 2018).
- Anderson, Benedict (1972). ‘The idea of power in Javanese culture’, in: Claire Holt (ed.), *Culture and politics in Indonesia*, pp. 1–69. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Arnez, Monika (2010). ‘Der Weg in die Islamisierung? Der Pornographie-Diskurs in Indonesien’, in: Daniela Wawra (ed.), *Medienkulturen*, pp. 75–101. Frankfurt am Main etc.: Peter Lang.
- Avonius, Leena (2004). *Performing Wetu Telu: Islam, adat, and the promises of regionalism in Post New Order Lombok*. [PhD dissertation, Leiden University.]
- Barth, Fredrik (1993). *Balinese worlds*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Beatty, Andrew (1999). *Varieties of Javanese religion. An anthropological account*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Beatty, Andrew (2009). *A shadow falls in the heart of Java*. London: Faber and Faber.

- Beatty, Andrew (2012). 'Return to the field', *Anthropology of this Century* 2012-4:1-6. <http://aotcpres.com/articles/return-field/> (accessed 16 July 2018).
- Becker, Judith (1993). *Gamelan stories: Tantrism, Islam, and aesthetics in Central Java*. Arizona: Arizona State University.
- Behrend, Timothy (1989). 'Kraton and cosmos in traditional Java', in: *Archipel* 37-1:173-87.
- Bennett, Linda Rae and Sharyn Grahman Davies (eds) (2015). *Sex and sexualities in contemporary Indonesia: Sexual politics, health, diversity and representation*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bharati, Aghenanda (1965). *The Tantric tradition*. London: Rider.
- Blackwood, Evelyn (2007). 'Regulation of sexuality in Indonesian discourse: Normative gender, criminal law and shifting strategies of control', *Culture, Health and Sexuality* 9-3:293-307.
- Boon, James (1990). *Affinities and extremes. Crisscrossing the bittersweet—Ethnology of East Indies history, Hindu-Balinese culture, and Indo-European allure*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1990). *The logic of practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Braginsky, Vladimir (2004). 'The science of women and the jewel: The synthesis of Tantrism and Sufism in a corpus of mystical texts from Aceh', *Indonesia and the Malay World* 32-93:141-75.
- Bruinessen, Martin van and Julia Day Howell (eds) (2007). *Sufism and the 'modern' in Islam*. London and New York: Tauris.
- Chalier-Visuvalingam, Elizabeth (1994). 'Union and unity in Hindu Tantrism', in: Hananya Goodman (ed.), *Between Jerusalem and Benares: Comparative studies in Judaism and Hinduism*, pp. 195-222. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Creese, Helen (2004). *Women of the kakawin world: Marriage and sexuality in the Indic courts of Java and Bali*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe.
- Creese, Helen and Laura Bellows (2002). 'Erotic literature in nineteenth-century Bali', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 33-3:385-413.
- Davidson, Jamie S. and David Henley (eds) (2007). *The revival of tradition in Indonesian politics: The deployment of adat from colonialism to indigenism*. London: Routledge.
- Donnan, Hastings and Fiona Magowan (eds) (2009). *Transgressive sex. Subversion and control in erotic encounters*. Oxford and New York: Berghahn.
- Durkheim, Emile (1994) [1912]. *Die elementaren Formen des religiösen Lebens*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Efendi, Yusuf (2006). 'Dunia orang Parangkusumo: Studi kasus wong wedok nakal'. [Tesis, Program Pasca Sarjana, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta.]
- Eliade, Mircea (1977). *Yoga—Unsterblichkeit und Freiheit*. Frankfurt am Main: Insel.
- Emigh, John (1996). *Masked performance. The play of Self and Other in ritual and theater*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Fauzi, Muhammad Latif (2012 [1433 H.]). 'Religious symbolism and democracy encountered: A case of prostitution bylaw of Bantul', *Al-Jami'ah* 50–1. <http://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/9818/1/> (accessed 16 July 2018).
- Fic, Victor M. (2003). *Indonesia: The origin and evolution of its pluralism. From the Hindu-Buddhist era, through the Islamic period to a modern secular state*. Three volumes. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications.
- Florida, Nancy K. (1992). The Badhaya Katawang: A translation of the song of Kangjeng Ratu Kidul, *Indonesia* 1992–53:20–32.
- Fox, James (2002). 'Interpreting the historical significance of tombs and chronicles in contemporary Java', in: Henri Chambert-Loir and Anthony Reid (eds), *The potent dead: Ancestors, saints and heroes in contemporary Indonesia*, pp. 160–72. Honolulu: Asian Studies Association.
- Frazer, James George (1989) [1890]. *Der goldene Zweig. Das Geheimnis von Glauben und Sitten der Völker*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.
- Fuhrmann, Klaus (2000). *Formen der javanischen Pilgerschaft zu Heiligenschreinen*. Dissertation, Universität Freiburg. <https://www.freidok.uni-freiburg.de/fedora/objects/freidok:275/datastreams/FILE1/content> (accessed 29 May 2014).
- Gebauer, Gunter and Christoph Wulf (2003). *Mimetische Weltzugänge: Soziales Handeln—Rituale und Spiele—ästhetische Produktionen*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Geertz, Clifford (1960). *The religion of Java*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Geertz, Clifford (1973). 'Person, time and conduct in Bali', in: Clifford Geertz: *The interpretation of cultures*, pp. 360–411. New York: Basic Books.
- Ghazwan, Zeinaldi (2014). *Ritual seks di makam Roro Mendut di Yogya dilakukan pada Senin dan Jumat Kliwon*. [Video, 7 December 2014.] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spci3Qr_rUs (accessed 4 November 2015).
- Gliszczynski, Vanessa Julia von (2006). *Der indonesische Dangdut im Spannungsfeld von Moravorstellungen und Freiheitsrechten am Beispiel von Inul Daratista*. Dissertation, Universität Köln.
- Gottowik, Volker (2005). *Die Erfindung des Barong. Mythos, Ritual und Alterität auf Bali*. Berlin: Reimer.
- Gottowik, Volker (2008). 'The Barong wants to go out again: *Krisis moneter* and the resurgence of rituals in Indonesia', *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies* 1–2:95–104. http://www.seas.at/aseas/1_2/pdf/ASEAS%201-2-A7.pdf (accessed 16 July 2018).
- Gottowik, Volker (2010). 'Transnational, translocal, transcultural: Some remarks on the social relations between Balinese and ethnic Chinese on Bali', *Sojourn. Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 25–2:178–212.
- Gottowik, Volker (2012). 'The pilgrimage to Mount Rinjani in Lombok, Indonesia. A picture story'. <http://www.dorisea.de/de/node/1115> (accessed 15 January 2016).
- Gottowik, Volker (2013). 'Opfergaben für die Göttin des Kratersees: Eine Pilgerfahrt an

- den Mount Rinjani auf Lombok, Indonesien'. <http://dorisea.de/wordpress/?p=487> (accessed 16 July 2018).
- Gottowik, Volker (2014a) (ed.). *Dynamics of religion in Southeast Asia. Magic and modernity*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Gottowik, Volker (2014b). 'Introduction', in: Volker Gottowik (ed.), *Dynamics of religion in Southeast Asia: Magic and modernity*, pp. 9–29. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Gottowik, Volker (2014c). 'Ethnicity and violence in Bali: And what *Barong Landung* says about it', in: Volker Gottowik (ed.), *Dynamics of religion in Southeast Asia: Magic and modernity*, pp. 217–36. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press
- Gottowik, Volker (2015). 'The Lingsar Festival on Lombok, Indonesia. A picture story'. <http://www.dorisea.de/de/node/1892> (accessed 16 July 2018).
- Gottowik, Volker (2016). 'In search of holy water: Hindu pilgrimage to Gunung Rinjani on Lombok, Indonesia, as a multi-religious site', in: Michael Dickhardt and Andrea Lauser (eds), *Religion, place and modernity: Spatial articulations in Southeast Asia and East Asia*, pp. 205–43. Leiden: Brill.
- Gottowik, Volker (2018). 'The Lingsar Festival on Lombok, Indonesia: Cooperation and contestation at a shared sacred site', *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion* (in review).
- Guzman, Orlando de (2006). 'Apakah ada hubungan antara G 30 s dan munculnya mitos Pangeran Samodro di Gunung Kemukus'. [Laporan Hasil Penelitian, Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Malang.]
- Harjo, Hank (2003). *Mendut: Fabled love story of Java*. Bloomington: Author House.
- Haryanto, Ignatius (2011). 'Media ownership and its implications for journalists and journalism in Indonesia', in: Krishna Sen and David T. Hill (eds), *Politics and the media in twenty-first century Indonesia. Decade of democracy*, pp. 104–18. Land and New York: Routledge.
- Hatley, Barbara (1988). 'Texts and contexts: The Roro Mendut folk legend on stage and screen', in: Krishna Sen (ed.), *Histories and stories: Cinema in New Order Indonesia*, pp. 14–24. Melbourne: Monash University.
- Hefner, Robert (2011). 'Where have all the abangan gone? Religionization and the decline of non-standard Islam in Indonesia', in: Michel Picard and Remy Madinier (eds), *The politics of religion in Indonesia: Syncretism, orthodoxy, and religious contention in Java and Bali*, pp. 92–114. London et al.: Routledge.
- Henn, Alexander (2003). 'Zwischen Gehalt und Gestalt. Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Ritual und Mimesis', *Paragrana. Internationale Zeitschrift für Historische Anthropologie* 12–1/2:67–77.
- Hennings, Werner (2007). 'On the constitution of space and the construction of places: Java's magic axis', in: Jürg Wassmann and Katharina Stockhaus (eds), *Experiencing new worlds*, pp. 125–45. New York et al.: Berghahn.

- Henschke, Rebecca (2014). *An adulterous pilgrimage*. [Programme text to the radio broadcast *Mystic mountains*]. ABC Radio National, 21-3-2014. <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/360/5336720> (accessed 21 July 2014).
- Hooykaas, C. (1964). 'Siva-Linga: The mark of the Lord', in: C. Hooykaas, *Agama tirtha: Five studies in Hindu-Balinese religion*. Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij.
- Hostetler, Jan (1982). 'Bedhaya Semang: The sacred dance of Yogyakarta', *Archipel* 24: 123-42.
- Hughes-Freeland, Felicia (2008). *Embodied communities: Dance tradition and change in Java*. New York: Berghahn.
- Ida, Rachmah (2011). 'Reorganisation of media power in post-authoritarian Indonesia: Ownership, power and influence of local media entrepreneurs', in: Krishna Sen and David T. Hill (eds), *Politics and the media in twenty-first century Indonesia. Decade of democracy*, pp. 13-25. Land and New York: Routledge.
- Jaluli (2010). 'Motivasi dan dampak psikologis pekerja seks komersial [di Gunung Kemukus]'. [Skripsi, Fakultas Dakwah, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta.]
- Keeler, Ward (1983). 'Shame and stage fright in Java', *Ethos* 11-3:152-65.
- Kinney, Ann R., Marijke Klokke and Lydia Kieven (2003). *Worshipping Siva and Buddha. The temple art of East Java*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Koepping, Klaus-Peter (2002). *Shattering frames. Transgressions and transformations in anthropological discourse and practice*. Berlin: Reimer.
- Kramer, Fritz (1984). 'Über afrikanische Darstellungen von Fremden', *Unter dem Pflaster liegt der Strand* 14:105-32.
- Kramer, Fritz (1987). *Der rote Fes. Über Besessenheit und Kunst in Afrika*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum.
- Laksono, P.M. (1986). *Tradition in Javanese social structure, kingdom and countryside: Changes in the Javanese conceptual model*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Levenda, Peter (2011). *Tantric temples: Eros and magic in Java*. Lake Worth, FL: Ibis Press.
- Mangunwijaya, Yusuf Bilyarta (1983). *Roro Mendut. Novel sejarah*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Mulder, Niels (1978). *Mysticism and everyday life in contemporary Java*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Nihom, Max (1994). 'Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian Tantrism'. Vienna: De Nobili.
- Novitasari, Rika Dewi (2015). 'Ritual ziarah makam Pangeran Samudro di Gunung Kemukus'. [Skripsi, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial, Universitas Negeri Semarang.]
- O'Flaherty, Wendy Doninger (1973). *Asceticism and eroticism in the mythology of Siva*. London et al.: Oxford University Press.
- Pemerintah Kabupaten Sragen (n.d.). *Gunung Kemukus. Daya tarik wisata makam*

- Pangeran Samudro*. [Leaflet, published by Dinas Pariwisata, Kebudayaan, Pemuda dan Olahraga, Kabupaten Sragen.]
- Priyono, Ami (1982). *Roro Mendut*. Jakarta: Gramedia Film. [Movie, 109 minutes.]
- Quinn, George (2004). 'Local pilgrimage in Java and Madura: Why is it booming?', *IIAS Newsletter* 35:16.
- Quinn, George (2007). 'Commercial aspects of popular pilgrimage in Java', in: Greg Fealy and Sally White (eds), *Expressing Islam: Religious life and politics in Indonesia*, pp. 63–79. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Rahardi, Floribertus (2008). *Ritual Gunung Kemukus: Sebuah novel*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Lamalera.
- Rao, Ursula and John Hutnyk (eds) (2006). *Celebrating transgression. Method and politics in anthropological studies of culture. A book in honour of Klaus Peter Koeping*. New York: Berghahn.
- Resink, G.J. (1997). 'Kanjeng Ratu Kidul: The second divine spouse of the sultans of Ngayogyakarta', *Asian Folklore Studies* 56:313–6.
- Ricklefs, Merle C. (2003). *Mystic synthesis in Java: A history of the Islamization from the fourteenth to the early nineteenth centuries*. Norwalk: East Bridge.
- Robinson, Kathryn May (2009). *Gender, Islam and democracy in Indonesia*. London et al.: Routledge.
- Rosidi, Ajip (1968). *Roro Mendut: Sebuah tjerita klasika Djawa*. Jakarta: Gunung Agung.
- Roxas-Lim, Aurora (1983). 'Caves and bathing places in Java as evidence of cultural accommodation', *Asian Studies* 21:107–75.
- Rubinstein, Raechelle (2000). *Beyond the realm of the senses: The Balinese ritual of kekawin composition*. Leiden: KITLV.
- Schlehe, Judith (1991). 'Versionen einer Wasserwelt: Die Geisterkönigin im javanischen Südmeer', in: Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin (ed.), *Ethnologische Frauenforschung. Ansätze, Methoden, Resultate*. Berlin: Reimer.
- Schlehe, Judith (1998). *Die Meeresgöttin des Südens, Ratu Kidul. Geisterpolitik im javanischen Alltag*. Berlin: Reimer.
- Schlehe, Judith (2008). 'Religion, Natur und die aktuelle Deutung von Naturkatastrophen auf Java', in: Judith Schlehe and Boike Rehbein (eds), *Religion und die Modernität von Traditionen in Asien*, pp. 207–34. Berlin: Lit.
- Sen, Krishna (1993). 'Repression and resistance: Interpretations of the feminine in New Order cinema', in: Virginia Matheson Hooker (ed.), *Culture and society in New Order Indonesia*, pp. 116–33. Kuala Lumpur et al.: Oxford University Press.
- Slama, Martin (2014). 'From *Wali Songo* to *Wali Pitu*. The travelling of Islamic saint veneration to Bali', in: Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin and David Harnish (eds), *Between harmony and discrimination: Negotiating religious identities within majority/minority relationships in Bali and Lombok*, pp. 112–43. Leiden: Brill.
- Smith, Bianca J. and Mark Woodward (2014). *Gender and power in Indonesian Islam. Leaders, feminists, Sufis and pesantren selves*. London et al.: Routledge.

- Smith, Bianca J. and Mark Woodward (2016). 'Magico-spiritual power, female sexuality and ritual sex in Muslim Java: Unveiling the *kesekten* of magical women', *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 27:317–32.
- Stange, Paul (1986). 'Legitimate mysticism in Indonesia', *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* 20–2:76–117.
- Stephen, Michele (2010). 'The yogic art of dying, Kundalini yoga, and the Balinese *pitra yadnya*', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 166:426–74.
- Sumiarni, Endang, Anny Retnowati and Aloysius Wisnubroto (1999). 'Terhadap seks dan ritual di Gunung Kemukus'. [Laporan Hasil Penelitian, Fakultas Hukum, Universitas Atma Jaya, Yogyakarta.]
- Taussig, Michael (1993). *Mimesis and alterity: A particular history of the senses*. New York et al.: Routledge.
- Turner, Victor (1969). *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*. New York: Aldine.
- Turner, Victor and Edith Turner (1978). *Image and pilgrimage in Christian culture. Anthropological perspectives*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Weintraub, Andrew N. (2008). "Dance drills, faith spills": Islam, body politics, and popular music in post-Suharto Indonesia', *Popular Music* 27–3:367–92.
- Wessing, Robert (1997). 'A princess from Sunda: Some aspects of Nyai Roro Kidul', *Asian Folklore Studies* 56–2:317–53.
- Wichelen, Sonja von (2010). *Religion, politics and gender in Indonesia: Disputing the Muslim body*. London et al.: Routledge.
- Wiratsasongko, Bambang (2008). 'Perilaku wisata ritual Gunung Kemukus'. [Tesis, Program Studi Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta.]
- Woodroffe, John George (1987). *Shakti and Shakta: Lehre und Ritual der Tantra-Shastras*. Bern: Barth.
- Woodward, Mark R. (1989). *Islam in Java: Normative piety and mysticism in the sultanate of Yogyakarta*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.
- Wulf, Christoph (1997). 'Mimesis', in: Christoph Wulf (ed.), *Vom Menschen. Handbuch Historische Anthropologie*, pp. 1015–29. Weinheim and Basel: Beltz.
- Wulf, Christoph (2005). 'Zur Genese des Sozialen. Mimesis, Performativität, Ritual'. Bielefeld. [Transcript.]
- Young, Serenity (2004). *Courtesans and Tantric consorts: Sexualities in Buddhist narrative, iconography, and ritual*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Zoetmulder, Piet J. (1995). *Pantheism and monism in Javanese Suluk literature. Islamic and Indian mysticism in an Indonesian setting*. [Edited and translated by M.C. Ricklefs.] Leiden: KITLV Press.
- Zvelebil, Kamil V. (1973). *The poets of the powers: Freedom, magic and renewal*. London: Rider.