Moussons
Recherche en sciences humaines sur l'Asie du Sud-Est

29 | 2017
Le commerce du sexe en Asie du Sud-Est. Approches pluridisciplinaires

From Concubines to Prostitutes. A Partial History of Trade in Sexual Services in Indonesia

Des concubines aux prostituées. Une histoire partielle du commerce des services sexuels en Indonésie

Terence H. Hull

Electronic version
URL: http://journals.openedition.org/moussons/3771
DOI: 10.4000/moussons.3771
ISSN: 2262-8363

Publisher
Presses Universitaires de Provence

Printed version
Date of publication: 4 May 2017
Number of pages: 65-93
ISBN: 979-10-320-0110-3
ISSN: 1620-3224

Electronic reference
Terence H. Hull, « From Concubines to Prostitutes. A Partial History of Trade in Sexual Services in Indonesia », *Moussons* [Online], 29 | 2017, Online since 27 March 2017, connection on 18 December 2020. URL : http://journals.openedition.org/moussons/3771 ; DOI : https://doi.org/10.4000/moussons.3771

Les contenus de la revue *Moussons* sont mis à disposition selon les termes de la Licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale - Pas de Modification 4.0 International.

From Concubines to Prostitutes

A Partial History of Trade in Sexual Services in Indonesia

Terence H. Hull *
Australian National University, Canberra, Australia

Introduction

Few areas of social research in Indonesia are so fraught with controversy, contradiction and willful misunderstanding as the issue of heterosexual prostitution. On the surface of social discourse, the sale of sexual services is almost universally condemned. Particular criticism is levelled at women engaged in such transactions. They are called *wanita tuna susila*—women without morals— and are often stereotyped as predatory. In contrast little is said about the men who are their customers. From time to time feminists and religious moralists attempt to focus attention on *pria tuna susila* (men without morals), but the terminology has always failed to capture the popular imagination. The notion of condemning the behaviour of the male customers in commercial sex transactions is outweighed by widespread social attitudes of acceptance of the "naturalness" of male sex urges, and by extension the appropriateness of men seeking sexual satisfaction outside of marriage. In this context prostitution in Indonesia is full of contradictions. Though easily found throughout the land, it is the subject of broad condemnation. Placed in a

* Over the course of nearly five decades working on Indonesian social demography, Terence Hull has applied the full range of social science methods to explore the cultural norms and the reality of the cultures of the archipelago. He is Professor Emeritus in Demography at the Australian National University.

legal status of great ambiguity, the institutions of prostitution are often owned by governments, managed by former government officials, and subject to both regulation and taxation. Prostitution in Indonesia differs greatly in form, social setting and operation from those commercial sex institutions of Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia, and also displays many important regional variations. The reasons for these interesting patterns are to be found in Indonesian history, legal development, culture and systems of governance. This paper reviews the natural history of Indonesian prostitution up to the end of Suharto's New Order Government in 1998 in an attempt to understand how the present situation came to be, and how it might evolve in future as a backdrop to the radical changes that have since taken place to repress prostitution in the Reform governments between 1999 and 2016.

The Commoditization of Women in Indonesian History

The origins of modern prostitution in Indonesia can be traced back to the time of Javanese kingdoms in which the commoditization of women was an integral part of the feudal system. Two of the most powerful and lasting Javanese kingdoms were formed in 1755, when the kingdom of Mataram was divided into two: the Kesunanan Surakarta and Kesultanan Yogyakarta. Mataram was a Javanese-Islamic kingdom located in the southern hinterland of central Java. In this period the Javanese concept of authority of the king was described (Moedjanto 1990) as a power that was *agung-binatara* (grand and powerful). The power of the kings of Mataram was indeed great. They were often described as the owners of everything; not only the land and property, but also the lives of their subjects. In the case of women, this was an attribution which was often taken quite literally.

The king had a godly glorification; "everything in Java, the earth on which we live, the water we drink, the grass, the leaves, everything belongs to the king." It was the king's duty to establish law and justice and all persons were expected to obey him unconditionally. The extent of the king's great power was represented by the large number of *selir* (the shortened version of *sineliran* literally meaning "chosen ones" but translated by the Dutch as *bijwijf* or concubines) in the court (see Kumar 1980: 18). Some of the *selir* were daughters of noblemen given to the king as a token of their loyalty; others were tributes from other kingdoms; and many were lower-class women sold or given over by their families to take minor positions in the royal household. Such women could achieve higher status by producing children for the king. Each of the Javanese courts drew *selir* from particular regions, which came to be noted for the production of beautiful and alluring women. Such regional reputations have survived in folklore to the present day. Koentjoro (1989: 3) identifies eleven *Kabupaten* (Regencies) in Java which contain communities famous in history as sources of women for the courts, and today noted as sources of urban prostitutes. These *Kabupaten* are Indramayu, Karawang and Kuningan in West Java; Pati, Japara, Grobongan and Wonogiri in Central Java; and Blitar, Malang, Banyuwangi and Lamongan in East Java. Gabus Wetan subdistrict in Indramayu is famed as a source area for modern prostitution, but

the foundations of the practice seem to date back to the time when young women from the area were sent to the court of the Sultan of Cirebon.

The accumulation of *selir* was an effort to strengthen the position of the king. From the point of view of physical strength, the taking of many *selir* meant a rapid reproduction of princely power and the proof of spiritual superiority. Only the king and nobles in the society had *selir*. In giving out his sisters or daughters to the regents or other high officials, the king was motivated by the same desire to marshal power as was reflected in his own acquisition of a great number of *selir*: that is, to strengthen his political support and to develop his grandeur and power. Women's status under the Kingdom of Mataram was therefore reflected in their role as the currency of the *upeti* (tribute paid by subjects) and as *selir* reflecting the power of the king. While commoner men were permitted by the Moslem religion to take up to four wives, economics prevented most of them from polygamy while their social status prevented them from taking *selir*.

The treatment of women as commodities was not limited to Java, but in fact was common throughout Asia, where slavery, systems of indenture and lifelong servitude were common feudal forms. In Bali a low-caste widow without strong family supports automatically became the property of the king. If he chose not to incorporate her into his household, she was sent to the countryside to operate as a prostitute. A share of her income was to be regularly returned to the king (*ENI* 1902: 342).

Feudal systems did not contain the fully commercialised sex industry which we associate with modern industrial societies, but they did provide the foundation for the industry through the identification of the value of women as commodities to be exchanged and accumulated in the constant male quest for power and wealth.

The Commercialisation of Sex during the Colonial Period

The more organised forms of the sex industry expanded greatly during the Dutch colonial period. Traditional systems of slavery and concubinage were adapted to the needs and mores of the European communities being established in port areas of the archipelago, with sexual gratification of soldiers, traders and emissaries becoming one of the priority issues in the clash of alien cultures.

From the outset this issue posed many dilemmas for natives and Europeans alike. On the one hand, large numbers of single men brought to Indonesia by the colonial businesses and governments produced a demand for domestic and sexual services, which was readily satisfied by families with saleable daughters and women seeking material benefit from the newcomers. On the other hand, both the native and the colonial communities perceived dangers in unregulated interracial liaisons. Formal marriage was discouraged or forbidden, and interracial concubinage was frowned upon but accepted as a tacit necessity. In this context unstable and inequitable cohabitations and outright commercial relationships were options available to European men, and tolerated by their leaders.

This situation set Indonesian women in an invidious position and subjected them to many disadvantages with regard to the law, community disapprobation and personal welfare and security. During the 1600s, the government passed laws forbidding Christian families from employing native women as housekeepers, and "forbidding a person from inviting a virtuous woman into fornication", but avoiding the question as to which women were to be regarded as "virtuous". In 1650, a "house of correction for women" was established to reform prostitutes and protect the public order. One hundred and sixteen years later a regulation forbidding prostitutes from entering the wharves "without permission" testified to the failure of the attempts at correction, and the toleration of commercial sex prevailing at the time (*ENOI* 1919).

In 1852 the government introduced a new law which acknowledged the commercial sex industry but set out a series of regulations "to avoid harmful consequences resulting from prostitution". The legal framework established at that time remains basically intact to the present day. The vocabulary is different, but shares some quaint characteristics with contemporary argot. Today's "*Wanita Tuna Susila*" (*WTS*—women lacking morals) were referred to in the 1852 act as "public women", and under the regulations were to be "under the direct and strict supervision of the police" (Article 2). All registered "public women" were required to carry a chart and to undergo weekly medical examinations to detect syphilis or other contagious diseases (Articles 8, 9, 10, 11). If such a woman was found to have a disease she was required to cease her practice immediately, and be isolated in an institution (*inrigting voor zieke publieke vrouwen*) established for the care and treatment of infected women. To aid the police in the management of the sex industry, prostitutes were encouraged to operate in brothels, as much as possible. Unfortunately, the wording of the law confused many in the government and the sex industry, and in 1858 a further clarification was issued to say that the 1852 act should not be interpreted as having legitimised brothels as commercial institutions. Rather they were identified as places where medical consultation could take place "to limit the harmful effects" of prostitution. While the distinction between "acknowledgment" and "approval" may have been clear to the government, it was a grey area to the public and the prostitutes.

Two decades later the responsibility for supervising brothels was shifted from the central to the regional governments; the 1852 central government regulations were effectively repealed, to be replaced by local regulations. Venereal disease was among the most serious of the consequences worrying regional governments, but the shortage of physicians, and the inefficacy of treatment options, made attempts to prevent the spread of disease virtually impossible (*ENOI* 1919). Each Residency was required to establish its own detailed regulations to control prostitution. In Surabaya at least, the resident established three brothel *kampung* (hamlets or villages) in an effort to keep venereal disease under control, and prostitutes were not permitted to operate anywhere else. All prostitutes in these *kampung* were registered and medical checks carried out (Ingleson 1986: 127-128). In Batavia (present-day Jakarta) a regulation enacted in 1875 outlined the medical officers'

responsibilities for checking the public women. Medical officers of the third rank were to visit the public women every Saturday morning, after city rounds, while officers of the second rank were responsible for management of the institutions for sick public women.

According to most accounts, despite these regulations, the extent of prostitution increased dramatically in the 19th century, especially after amendment of the Agrarian Laws in 1870 when the colonial economy was opened to private capital (Ingleson 1986). The expansion of plantations, especially in West Java, the growth of the sugar industry in East and Central Java, the establishment of plantations in Sumatra and the building of roads and railways involved considerable migrations of male labourers, some of them itinerant. This created a demand for the services of prostitutes. During the construction of the railway linking the Javanese cities of Batavia, Bogor, Cianjur, Bandung, Cilacap, Yogyakarta and Surabaya in 1884, not only did prostitution flourish to serve the construction workers, but also, at each major town served by the railway, the arrival of rail passengers increased the demand for board and lodging and also for sexual services. Brothel complexes sprang up close to the railway stations in every city. For example, in Bandung, prostitution complexes were developed in several locations close to the station, including Kebon Jeruk, Kebon Tangkil, Sukamanah and Saritem; in Yogyakarta prostitution complexes were established in the area of Pasar Kembang, Mbalokan and Sosrowijayan. In Surabaya, the first red-light district was near the Semut station and near the harbour in the area of Kremil, Tandes, and Bangunsari. Most of these prostitution complexes operate today, even though the role of the railway in mass transport has declined, and the location of hotels in these cities has changed substantially.

The history of the sex industry in Surabaya is unique. As the second city of Indonesia, and the main focus of trade routes in Eastern Indonesia, Surabaya developed during Dutch colonial times as a major port city, naval base, garrison and railway terminus (Kunto 1993, Dick 1993). It was notorious in the 19th century for extensive prostitution.

> Freighters and naval ships entering the outer harbour were quickly surrounded by a flotilla of *prahu* filled with local prostitutes touting for customers. Until the mid-19th century prostitutes were allowed on board naval vessels, in the belief that it was better to keep sailors under some sort of supervision than to let them loose on the town. (Ingleson 1986: 126.)

An official history of Surabaya stated that in 1864 there were 228 prostitutes under the control of 18 brothel owners, but this was undoubtedly an underestimate reflecting only officially registered sex workers.

Writing in 1939, Simons divided prostitution in Surabaya into eight categories (see Ingleson 1986: 125):

- prostitutes based in small cafes near the harbour and in the old port town;
- street prostitutes from local *kampung*;

- brothels in the centre of the city owned by Chinese and Japanese;
- brothel *kampung* on the outskirts of the city;
- discreet services of native female servants;
- even more discreet services of housebound Dutch women for young, unmarried Dutch men;
- European prostitution in organised brothels;
- homosexual prostitution and pederasty.

The first of these categories, the cafes of the Tanjung Perak area, featured entertainment girls, dancing and drinking. The women had to remain in the cafes until the early hours of the morning, but afterwards could accompany customers home. The smarter cafes gave preference to non-Javanese women, particularly those from Manado, and the more expensive nightclubs featured Eurasian women (Hesselink 1987: 214). In the second category, the street prostitutes were a group often harassed by police. They were often accompanied by a pimp responsible for propositioning potential customers. Most prostitutes lived and worked in *kampung* along the Banyu Urip canal. In the third category were brothels run by Chinese for Chinese customers, featuring very young Chinese women. Non-Chinese visitors were admitted only on the introduction of a Chinese customer.

The social composition of colonial towns and cities was conducive to prostitution. There was a high proportion of single males among the civilian and military Dutch population. Half the European men were living with local concubines up till 1890, and thereafter the decline in acceptability of concubinage appeared to lead to greater recourse to prostitutes (Ingleson 1986: 124). As for the Indonesian population of the towns, as many as 40 per cent of the urban workforce in the last decades of colonial rule were circular migrants most of whom were men (ibid.). Prostitution thrived in this setting.

The plantations established in Java and Sumatra after 1870 recruited large numbers of resident labourers. Labourers in this new cash economy usually visited surrounding villages in search of sexual gratification, and in this way young village girls were drawn into prostitution. The situation was little different in the case of the Dutch supervisors and managers. One result was that in the areas south of Bandung, and in Subang, Garut, Sukabumi and Southern Cianjur, the location of the estates, many people have the physical characteristics of Europeans, due to the sexual liaisons between Dutch men and native women a century ago (Kunto 1993). The sex industry in Bandung and other larger towns in West Java derived much business—albeit at different levels—from estate managers and supervisory staff seeking entertainment at weekends, and from estate workers spending their pay and spare time in search of companionship.

It was obvious to the government and outside observers at the turn of the century that the local government regulations were hopelessly inadequate to match the speed of development of the sex industry, or the rapidity of the spread of venereal disease. Haga (1901) summarised the medical challenges in three basic

points: first, few of the operating prostitutes were registered, thus they were not examined; second, even if they were registered there were not enough physicians and facilities to process the large numbers of sex workers on a weekly basis; so third, the government must be called upon to expand resources for examinations, and institute more rational priorities for detection and treatment of dangerous infectious diseases. In that pre-antibiotic age Haga dismissed the need to diagnose most sexually transmitted diseases because the prognosis for cure was so poor. Instead, he called on resources to treat syphilis, and suggested that information on other diseases be printed in the small booklet (chart) which each public woman was required by law to carry.

In 1908, Ruitenbach expanded on Haga's criticisms of medical attempts to regulate prostitution, citing the lack of police officers, as well as the dearth of physicians to enforce the regulations; the tendency of women to operate clandestinely to avoid vexatious regulations; and the absence of any rational evaluation of the impact of the regulations, as a guide to policy development. Instead, he advocated the tolerance of the institutions of "housekeepers and concubines" as a means of meeting the sexual needs of large numbers of single (European) men, while still inhibiting the spread of venereal disease.

The legal framework established in 1852, which might be categorised as "quasi-recognition, localisation, and control, mainly to limit spread of venereal disease" was in line with prevailing laws in the Netherlands at the time. Though it was far from satisfactory either with regard to the human rights of prostitutes or in controlling venereal diseases, it was at least better than the situation faced by colonial authorities in cities such as Singapore and Indian cities by the late 1880s. They were forced to do away with similar policies of "quasi-toleration" and enforced medical checks as a result of the moral outrage of reformers in Britain, who in 1886 managed to repeal the Contagious Diseases Act. Closing of the semi-official brothel areas in these cities drove brothels underground and weakened health surveillance, leading to serious spread of venereal disease, especially in Singapore with its highly unbalanced sex ratio (Warren 1993: chapters 5-7; Raj 1993).

In part collapsing under the weight of its own irrelevance, the 19th-century model of regulation essentially ended in 1910 when routine medical examinations were terminated through a resolution of the Governor General. New "Public Morality Laws", first enacted in the Netherlands in 1910, were introduced to the Netherlands Indies in 1913, thus effectively sweeping aside the local regulations enacted after 1874. Clauses 250 and 252 of the new laws made illegal the practices of those who "purposely bring about the fornication of others with a third party and makes that his profession or habit". This clearly referred to pimps and procurers, but provided no guidance as to how such charges could be proved or enforced.

Thus in the 1920s and 1930s, Indonesia faced the anomalous situation of having strongly worded laws but no effective means of dealing with the rapidly growing number of brothels. For a time, the police could not investigate brothels without the permission of the local government leader (*ENOI* 1919: 514). Misset's estimate

of the number of prostitutes in Jakarta in 1917 was 3,000 to 4,000, which he compared with the 2,000 syphilis infections among soldiers reported each year, and the 5,000 to 6,000 cases of other venereal diseases. In placing the blame for these diseases on prostitutes he reached new heights of moral outrage, declaring that the "prostitute is like a vampire, she poisons, sucks out and ruins young men" (Misset 1917: 3). While no reliable data were available then, or over the next two decades, the conventional wisdom concluded that the numbers of prostitutes were growing rapidly as the cities expanded, and new industrial enterprises attracted clusters of young workers from villages.

Prostitution was widely and publicly condemned by the community even as the number of women selling sexual services increased, and as presumably the number of client rose as well. A small example of the moralistic and condemnatory attitudes is contained in a newspaper article published toward the end of the colonial period by a senior indigenous government official in Batavia (Sudibyo 1937). In addition to reviewing frightening data on the rates of venereal disease, and the terrible consequences faced by those infected, Sudibyo commented that one of the great dangers to society arose from the growing practice of late marriage which led males to take up with prostitutes. The practice, he argued, was particularly common among the intellectual classes that were seen not only to postpone their marriages, but also to live with women who were either active prostitutes, or part-time prostitutes. This meant that the reproduction of the intellectual classes was both delayed (through delayed marriage) and threatened by the spread of venereal diseases. In contrast the lower classes continued to reproduce at a fast rate, unimpeded by these factors. Of course there are no data presented to back up the speculations about the impact of rising age at marriage on differential fertility, nor are there any facts about the practice of cohabitation among the unmarried, but the key to Sudibyo's argument, and an idea which can be found in many other publications of the period, is that prostitution is a major threat to social coherence and stability.

His concerns were not isolated. In 1939 the PERTI Congress in Bukittinggi, representing national Muslim opinions considered and passed a motion calling for more effective civil laws to deal with the problems of prostitution, and particularly to pay greater attention to attacking the alleged increasing practice of prostitution as an important means of controlling venereal disease. In presenting one of the main speeches to the plenary of 2,000 representatives crammed into the local cinema, Dr Rasjidin detailed the terrible consequences of syphilis, gonorrhoea and the mental illnesses which he claimed to be an intrinsic aspect of the commercial sex industry (1939: 396). In looking for the cause of such a terrible turn of affairs, he pointed to the deleterious effects of westernisation, and particularly the practice of young members of the Indonesian intelligentsia to travel the world, partaking of forbidden pleasures and bringing sickness home as their souvenir, which they then share with their friends and family in Indonesia. However, this widely accepted stereotype dealt with a biased vision of the problem. It concentrated on the danger to the males, and painted a picture of women as being evil,

though vaguely depicted and likely distant from Indonesian society. With little thought given to the reasons women entered the industry, or the dangers they might encounter there, the range of proposed legal remedies seemed remarkably narrow and largely misguided.

The commercialisation of sex in Indonesia was further entrenched during the Japanese occupation between 1941 and 1945. Women who were already working as prostitutes were rounded up and, after health checks, some were allocated to brothels to serve the Japanese soldiers while others continued to operate as before. A story of this system is recounted in Sukarno's autobiography as told to Cindy Adams (Adams 1965: 163-164). There Sukarno recounts how he approached religious leaders in Bukittinggi to ask how to deal with the Japanese demands for sexual services. He suggested that prostitutes from the area be used, and the *ulama* agreed "under these circumstances". He goes on to describe the system:

> I gathered 120 [prostitutes] into a segregated district and penned them in a camp surrounded by high fences. Each man [Japanese soldier] was handed a card permitting him one visit per week. At each visit his card was punched. Possibly it isn't such a good story to tell. I mean, perhaps it doesn't seem right for a leader of a nation to be procuring girls. In fact, I am aware there's a word to describe this type of person. But this was a serious difficulty which could have created terrible unhappiness, so I healed it the best way I knew how. It worked out very well, too, I'm pleased to add. Everybody was very happy with the plan.

In the clarity of hindsight, Sukarno's simple recollections of the issue seem naive. The West Sumatran localisation of prostitutes was not the end of the matter, and over the ensuing four years women of a variety of situations were enticed or forced into providing "comfort" for the occupying military (see Hicks [1995] and Horton [2008] for comprehensive accounts of the period). The Japanese offered many Indonesian girls a good education and better life in Tokyo or in large Indonesian cities. Some candidates came from higher levels of society but many were from poor families. These adolescents and schoolgirls were deceived or forced into prostitution. The girls were brought from inland towns and villages, assembled in the harbour areas of Semarang (Semarang Club, Shoko Club, Hinomura, and Futabaso), Surabaya (Bangunrejo and surrounding area) and Batavia (Tanjung Priok) and were told to be ready to go abroad. In reality these girls never departed from the camps, but were instead forced to serve the Japanese soldiers and officers. They became virtual sex slaves, forbidden to leave the brothels and with little hope of escape (*Tempo* 1992). Similar events occurred in Solo, where more than 50 adolescent girls, mostly brought to Solo from other areas, were forced to become prostitutes (*Buana Minggu* 26 July 1992). Others were pressed by their parents to work in this way for the Japanese, in the hope of gaining some advantage.

Two former Japanese soldiers reported that during their duties in Southern Sulawesi in 1942 they knew at least 29 brothel houses with more than 280 prostitutes, including women from Toraja (111 persons), Java (67), Makassar (7), Mandar (4), and Bugis, Chinese and other girls of unknown origin (*Tempo* 1992: 17). The

locations of these brothels were in Makassar (renamed Ujung Pandang from 1971 through 1999), Pare-Pare, Bulukumba, Makale, and Singkang. In these brothels, the pimps received half of the income of the prostitute. While not slaves like the women in the camps, many of the women in the brothels were forced to work as prostitutes because they had no alternative means of survival, and because their activities were encouraged by the occupying forces.

As well as forcing the prostitution of local and Dutch women, the Japanese brought women to Java from Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong to serve the officers. According to a report by one such Chinese-Malaysian woman who was taken to a brothel in Morotai, between one and three o'clock the women had to work for lower-level officers for a payment equal to ten US cents; and from three to five o'clock in the afternoon for middle-level officers for fifteen US cents. From eight in the evening until morning, they were scheduled for higher-level officers who paid between one and five dollars. Usually, one imported woman worker in the sex industry was able to serve five to ten men per day (*Tempo* 1992: 18).

The condition of women in the sex industry under the Dutch and Japanese colonial regimes was thus quite different. One of the documents collected by the weekly newsmagazine *Tempo* (1992) mentioned that women who were prostitutes through both periods generally preferred their peacetime life under the Dutch, because a lot of kindly and rich "*Sinyo*" gave them dresses, money, and jewellery, and also provided them with a place to stay. By contrast, their memories of wartime occupation were bitter, and they accused the Japanese soldiers and officers of being both very rude and stingy. It must be remembered that these were the reactions of the "professionals" of two eras, and not the "sex slaves" confined in camps or forced to work in brothels during the Japanese occupation.

Social Structural Change and the Sex Industry in Independent Indonesia

In the late 1940s the population of newly independent Indonesia was concentrated in the island of Java, with the vast majority living in rural areas. The 1950s were characterised by underemployment and poverty. Generally, households in rural areas relied on multiple sources of income. Household survival strategies in rural areas, especially among the poorest groups, usually involved having members working outside the agriculture sector, at least on a part-time basis. Non-agricultural work was also very common among middle level households, to improve their social status and take advantage of available opportunities. Because of the limited employment opportunities and keen competition in rural areas, many young women from poorer households migrated to the nearest cities or towns. The social values of these migrants tended to change once they arrived in the cities. Village social values favouring community solidarity and in some cases dominated by religious beliefs were often replaced by more individualistic values.

Geertz (1963) described two distinct kinds of economy in urban areas. First, the economy of commercial firms where trading and industrial activities are carried out in a relatively impersonal way, with a range of specialised jobs relating to the production and distribution of goods and services. Second, the bazaar economy which consists of a wide variety of activities governed by institutionally specific customs and managed by groups of traders in tight competition, who communicate with each other through *ad hoc* transactions. Over the colonial period, commercialised sex followed other forms of commerce, and developed as a branch of the urban economy, reflecting dualistic structures represented by firms and bazaars. These organisational forms shaped the commercialisation of sexual relations in bazaar-like areas such as Jalan Braga, in the centre of Bandung, and the Matraman-Salemba area of Jakarta, in contrast to the more formally organised sex trade in brothels. Similar contrasts were found as workers left depressed estate complexes in North Sumatra (Kunto 1993), to pursue new lives in either the streets or the bawdy-houses of Medan.

By the late 1960s and 1970s, the flow of settlers from rural areas had an increasing component of women in search of paid employment in the formal sector, especially in and around the largest cities. At the same time many migrants participated in circular flows, spending periods in the city before returning to their permanent base in the villages. The increasing number of women migrants in the big cities led to increasing competition among women workers, and between women and men workers. As most female migrants were young and inexperienced, with low educational attainment and limited skills, their opportunities were restricted to low-status occupations with low remuneration. The most common activities for these women workers were in the informal sector—as traders, unpaid family workers, or domestic labour; others became prostitutes.

Since the early 1970s, the structural transformation of the Indonesian economy has been dramatic. The primary sector's share of total employment fell from 74 per cent in 1971 to 49 per cent in 1990, and the urban population rose from 17 per cent of the total in 1971 to 31 per cent in 1990. There has been considerable displacement of women from agricultural activities (although perhaps not as much as often argued: see Manning [1988]): many of them have moved to cities in search of work. Jobs have opened for women in manufacturing, clerical activities, sales, hotels and restaurants, and domestic service. However, wages in many of these activities have been very low, and the possibility of earning five or ten times as much in the sex industry is very tempting. The relative anonymity and freedom from familial and village surveillance while in the city facilitates entry into prostitution.

The most obvious and overt locations of work in the sex industry are brothel complexes, call-girl establishments, and massage parlours, but a range of occupations in the services sector represent a shadowy area in which many, but not necessarily all, of the workers engage in the sale of sexual services: bar-girls, waitresses in certain kinds of restaurants, and workers in some barber shops and beauty salons, escort services, etc. There are also many "free lancers" in the sex

industry, including street walkers, and women who seek out customers in hotel coffee shops, discos, or food stalls known to be sources of "pick-ups", as well as the group of *perek* discussed below.

Indonesia's sex industry is becoming increasingly complex, consistent with the increasing mobility of the Indonesian population, increasing pace of life, rising incomes and challenges to accepted mores. Mobile populations have more motivations and opportunities for infidelity, and the concentration of stalls where sex can be purchased near railway stations and roadside rest-stops for long-distance truck drivers is testimony to the demand from these sources. A survey of truck drivers on the Surabaya-Denpasar route found that 68 per cent paid for sex at rest-stops (Suarmiartha et al. 1992). Concentrations of sex workers are also found near military bases, timber and mining camps, and universities.

Government Policy And The Sex Sector

Legislation on the Sex Industry and its Regulation

The attitude of the Indonesian government to prostitution appears to have changed little between since colonial and New Order regime times: it was largely determined by health and public-order rather than moral considerations. Today, too, there is no law in Indonesia that prohibiting the sale of sexual services as such. The criminal law prohibited those who help and facilitate illegal sexual activities as defined in articles 296, 297 and 506 of the Criminal Code (*KUHP—Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana*) of 1917 and subsequent amendments. The *KUHP* also prohibits the trading of women and under-age boys. The relevant articles of the *KUHP* are as follows:

> Article 296:
> Those whose actions or attitudes intentionally lead to or facilitate illegal sexual activities with other people will be given a penalty of one year and four months imprisonment or a fine of Rp. 15,000.

> Article 297:
> Trade in women or in under-age males will incur a maximum penalty of six years imprisonment.

It should be noted that the definition of "under-age" for the purpose of the criminal code is under 21 years of age if single, but a woman is no longer "under-age" if she is under 21 but currently or ever-married (Soesilo 1960: 169). In other articles of the KUHP under-aged females are defined as being less than 15 years of age, and for other purposes the legal age is given as 17 or 18 years of age.

> Article 506:
> Whoever as a *mucikari* ("souteneur" [pimp]) derives profit from the prostitution of women, will incur a maximum penalty of one year imprisonment.

This article prohibits the intermediary who intentionally organises and facilitates sexual activities, such as pimps (the *germo* or *mucikari*), *mamasans*, owners of call-girl establishments, but does not classify the commercial sex act itself as criminal. Prostitution *per se* is not an illegal activity under the KUHP.

Frustrated by the difficulty of prosecuting pimps under articles 296, 297 and 506, a few years ago the State Prosecutor in Medan attempted to mount a prosecution under article 333, charging that the pimp had "deprived a woman of her freedom", but given the fact that women are seldom actually incarcerated in brothels, such prosecutions are also difficult to sustain. In the case of the Jakarta pimp noted above, the police had received a complaint from a woman who had escaped from his brothel by evading the security guards and climbing out a window, but while this resulted in one of the brothels being closed, there was no prosecution of the pimp or the brothel security staff under this provision (*Sinar* 1994: 16).

In theory, other articles of the KUHP could be applied to prostitutes who knowingly sell services to married men. Articles 284-288 specify a number of conditions under which *zinah* (adultery) is made illegal, and punishable by up to nine months in prison. In the criminal code the charge of *zinah* can only be made against a married person. Two elements make prosecution of cases of adultery difficult in relation to prostitution. First, it would have to be established that the prostitute knew that the client was married. This would be difficult to prove in a court of law, even with third parties as witnesses. Second, and more important, the charge of *zinah* must involve a formal complaint by the client's wife, and the complaint should include evidence of a breakdown of the marriage as a result of the adultery. Given the clandestine nature of many commercial sex transactions, and the tacit acceptance by many women of the perceived "misdemeanours" of their husbands, the adultery provisions of the criminal code are almost never invoked to prosecute prostitutes.

In Indonesian society "law" extends beyond the legislative determinations of government and includes both religious laws and customary regulations. While these generally are not open to prosecution in state courts, they do shape community norms and attitudes, and modify the way civil laws are carried out in practice. Because of this the analysis of Mu'thi (1965: 13-16) is instructive in pointing out the basic difference between the meaning of *zinah* (adultery) in the KUHP and in Islamic law. In the former, only a married person can commit adultery, because the purpose of the law was to support monogamous relationships rather than to pass judgments on premarital sexual behaviour. In Islamic law all sexual relations outside of a marital union are regarded as adulterous. This means that a polygamous man is not committing adultery by having sexual relations with more than one legal wife, but both men and women can only have sexual relations with their legal spouse. The implication, according to Mu'thi, is that a female sex worker cannot be prosecuted for adultery under the KUHP, so long as she is not married, but her actions would still be condemned as sin under religious law. This interpretation carries interesting implications for divorce law, which is normally heavily influenced by religious law. In 1947 the High Court of Jakarta refused a

request for divorce from a man who had accused his wife of *zinah*, because it was shown that he had requested part of the money she had earned in her "adultery".

Mu'thi's analysis leads him to question the moral basis for the KUHP, which he says is a Western product of limited relevance to Indonesian people, the majority of whom follow Islam. "What's strange", he says, "is the KUHP article 296" where the *germo* can be prosecuted, but the person who has sexual relations for money is free from restraint, except under the most unusual of conditions relating to sex with a mentally incompetent or under-aged client (Mu'thi 1965: 15). Mu'thi's conclusion, and that of many religious moralists, is that while the criminal law may not forbid the act, the religious law does, and this law provides a stronger basis for community attitudes and actions than does the criminal code, which is a legacy of colonialism.

Nonetheless, the criminal law remained the only consistent basis for regulation of the sex industry in a secular state such as New Order Indonesia. Since prohibitions of the direct commercial sale of sexual services did not exist in national law, the regulation of the industry tended to be based on provincial and subdistrict government regulations and the actions and pressures of various religious and social groups in support of or in opposition to the industry. The local government regulations (see appendix) varied from region to region. Streetwalkers wear prohibited under numerous and varied Regional Regulations (*Peraturan Daerah* abbreviated as *PERDA*). These regulations prohibit soliciting and loitering in the street because this hinders the creation and maintenance of "clean" cities, and streetwalkers are perceived as an affront to the community. When they are caught in a raid by the authorities, the streetwalkers might be sent to a "Rehabilitation Centre for Immoral Women" (*Panti Rehabilitasi Wanita Tuna Susila*) for specified periods depending on the region, to be rehabilitated to "normal" citizens. In most regions such rehabilitation programs take one year. The legal basis for their incarceration is the public-order provision of the law rather than a specific prohibition of sale of sexual services. The local government rehabilitation centres are often under-funded, and at times are essentially extensions of the *lokalisasi* system of official brothels. The central government Department of Social Affairs also runs 22 rehabilitation centres nationwide. Their structure and function are described in a later section.

The apparent acceptability of commercialised sex is belied by fairly general social condemnation of what is regarded as immorality, and named as such in the use of the term "*wanita tuna susila (WTS)*" or "woman without morals", to refer to prostitutes. A majority of Indonesian politicians consider the subject taboo and generally avoid public discussion of the issue. At the bureaucratic level the Ministry of Social Affairs has established a Directorate of Social Rehabilitation (*Rehabilitasi Tuna Sosial*) with a sub-directorate responsible for planning and implementing the rehabilitation of prostitutes. This sub-directorate is financed by the central government budget and is specifically charged with the task of dealing with the problem of prostitution as one of a constellation of social problems

tackled by the Ministry including street-begging, physical and mental handicap, and criminal rehabilitation.

The lower the level of government administration, the more regulations are set. After all, it is at the local level of administration that officials deal with the daily reality of prostitution. Existing regulations such as prohibition of soliciting, migration regulations, and the requirement for citizens to report changes of residence to local administration can be and are all used to control prostitutes. These local regulations can be considered a *de facto* reflection of the unstated central government policy. The regulations in a nutshell target streetwalkers for making the city 'unclean' but generally leave untouched both the clients and prostitutes working behind closed doors in approved areas. The pressure on streetwalkers thus drives lower-class women workers into brothel complexes, where they are controlled by pimps, procurers and the local government and police, but generally tolerated by the society.

Official Prostitution Complexes (*lokalisasi WTS*)

An important aspect of New Order government policy that highlighted the ambiguous legal status of prostitution in Indonesia was the establishment of official prostitution complexes (*lokalisasi WTS*). Though set against the background of government promotion of brothels in the last century and during the Second World War occupation by the Japanese, the modern *lokalisasi* were formed in the early 1960s as one element of promoting social discipline and control. In such complexes, a large number of brothels wear clustered together along one or a few streets and control over order and security was maintained by an integrated group of local government and military authorities. The official complexes were under the auspices of the *dinas sosial*, the municipal social welfare office, while unofficial complexes often spring up were established with the tacit approval of local officials, but no formal link to the rehabilitation efforts of the social welfare officers. *Lokalisasi* catered to an almost exclusively Indonesian clientele, who tended to be poor to middle-class in their background.

In 1961 the city of Surakarta in Central Java declared the *kampung* of Silir to be exempt from the 1953 regulation forbidding prostitution in the city. It was thought that by centralising prostitution in one small area, the city would prevent commercial sex activities from being transacted in main streets, residential areas or in the major hotel and tourist areas of the town. Moreover, by giving temporary and grudging recognition to the practice, the government was able to regulate the activities of the pimps and sex workers, and attempt to influence the behaviour of clients. The regulations for the administration of Silir, published in January 1967, provide that newly arrived prostitutes must register with the local government within one day of their arrival and must strictly follow the code of conduct covering the hours of work, health examinations, educational activities, and social conduct in the area. Interestingly, the government also called on clients to "remember that sex workers are normal human beings, the same as you, but

who find themselves in a weak social/economic/moral position" (Soedjono 1977: 191). The Silir complex set the pattern later followed by localised brothel areas in other cities of Indonesia.

Official *lokalisasi* in Jakarta were first set up in the early 1970s. One of the largest of these areas is near the port of Tanjung Priok, Jakarta, in an area called Kramat Tunggak. This area was set up under a decree from Governor Ali Sadikin in 1970 for the "localising and resocializing" of prostitutes (see listing of Government Regulations and Laws, in the appendix). The areas that were to be consolidated into the complex had 1668 women and 348 *germo* in 1969 when the first groups were moved to Kramat Tunggak. At the time of official implementation of the full rehabilitation functions of the *lokalisasi* in 1971 the complex housed 300 women and 76 *germo*, but the number grew rapidly so that by 1978 there were 1667 women and 231 *germo* (Amali 1978: 40). In the late 1980s and early 1990s there were more than 2,000 women working in the complex, along with around 230 pimps and about 250 security personnel, in about 265 brothel houses (Murray 1991: 106, Uwiyono et al. 1992: 15). The number of prostitutes working in the complex was up slightly from the figure of 1,767 in 1978.

Other well-known *lokalisasi* include the Dolly-Jarak area of Surabaya, dealt with as a case study later in this paper, and the Sunan Kuning complex in Semarang, set up around 1966, which in 1981 had 120 brothels housing around 470 prostitutes (Lerman 1983, see also Alam 1984: Ch. 4). The Kalisari complex in Malang was established by moving a previous unofficially sanctioned complex to *Kecamatan* Blimbing in 1976. At the outset there were 80 women with 26 *germo*, but by the end of 1982 these numbers had risen to 160 women and 30 *germo*. During that period the police had registered 684 women entering the complex (Idris 1982: 26). Much smaller towns also have their *lokalisasi*: for example, in Kupang, the *lokalisasi* of Karang Dempel had 132 prostitutes in 1988 (Panara et al. 1990: 22), and Tanjung outside Jayapura had perhaps 300 in 1994.

In Kramat Tunggak, the intention of "rehabilitating" the workers out of prostitution was to be achieved through compulsory education, skill training and mental and social guidance to be carried out by the *Panti Rehabilitasi*, to enable them to find work after leaving the complex; they are also supposed to save money in a government bank. Each prostitute in the complex has to pay Rp.3, 500 a month, and each *germo* has to pay Rp. 2,000 a month for each prostitute under his control, into a fund to cover costs of the rehabilitation program; those leaving the complex to re-enter normal life were entitled to receive a payment of Rp. 250,000 from this fund (Uwiyono et al. 1992: 16, 33-34; see also Nitimihardjo, Hikmat & Suradi 1994).

The theory was that sex workers were operating in the complex only temporarily while undergoing rehabilitation and resocialization; therefore they are only permitted to stay in the complex for a maximum of five years or until reaching the age of 35. The minimum age to enter the complex was 17 years. The reality has turned out to be rather different. The minimum-stay regulation was frequently overcome by re-registering under another name when the five-year limit had been reached (Uwiyono et al. 1992: 16). Official statements boasted of the number of

women who have left the complexes, supposedly also to leave prostitution: from 1972 to March 1993, the rehabilitation centre at Kramat Tunggak sent 11,624 prostitutes "back to normal life", 2,795 of them into marriages, 6,229 to their families, and another 1,420 to jobs. According to press reports an average of 600 prostitutes left the area each year (*Jakarta Post* 1993). However, it has been claimed that most of those who left the complex have simply moved to other complexes in other cities (Murray 1991: 106).

The regulators of the officially sanctioned brothel complexes were the MUSPIDA (*Musyawarah Pimpinan Daerah,* Regional Executive Council) consisting of regional administrators, local prosecutor, police chief and military commander. Under the structure of localisation, this group not only regulated but also participated in the management of prostitution, in areas such as Kramat Tunggak in Jakarta and Dolly-Jarak in Surabaya. This is why such areas operated relatively efficiently, with little trouble in the form of brawls, drug use or robbery. The local authority also controled the use of buildings for prostitution, requiring the renewal of the permit every four years. Such regulations by the local authority controlled the expansion of the brothel complexes.

The regulations in contemporary *lokalisasi* were very specific. From the field survey conducted for the Sulistyaningsih and Swasono (1993) study it was found that the subdistrict administration in Sawahan, Surabaya imposed local regulations concerning the practice of prostitution in the Dolly area. These included the following stipulations for the owner and manager of a brothel: the brothel complex may open daily for business from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m.; owners must report and register all prostitutes working for them to the regional authority; owners must maintain all of the "business" facilities including toilets and rooms; owners must encourage prostitutes to have medical check-ups and routine injections given by health personnel from the Local Authority; only prostitutes who have legal identity (residential cards) may be employed; it is prohibited to employ an under-age girl or a married woman as a prostitute; it is prohibited to sell alcoholic drinks, or accept overnight guests (unless they have a special permit).

There was also a regulation prohibiting the prostitute from changing her pimp or brothel without a special permit, or from staying outside the brothel complex. In addition, new prostitutes were required to report their presence to the local authority. This regulation promoted, but did not necessarily ensure, tight control over the movement of prostitutes, both between brothels and even interregionally. The data on numbers of prostitutes available in the Subdistrict Social Affairs Office are based in part on this compulsory reporting regulation.

In local authority regulations, many obligations are imposed on the prostitutes. In addition to legal citizenship, the prostitute is supposed to have regular injections of antibiotics as a preventive measure against venereal disease, and to avoid conflicts with the customers. The customers of the *lokalisasi* are also subject to special regulations; for example, they are not allowed to be drunk in the brothel complex, or to carry weapons, or to stay the night without authorisation from the local security officer. The setting and enforcement of special regulations for the

brothel areas are basically aimed to maintain order and protect both sex workers and customers from any violence or disruption.

The regulations governing the operation of *lokalisasi* such as Kramat Tunggak sit uneasily with other laws and with social realities on four counts. These can best be expressed as questions. Has the establishment of *lokalisasi* succeeded in reducing or eliminating prostitution in other areas? Have the programs succeeded in rehabilitating prostitutes? Is the official role given to *mucikari* in these complexes consistent with the article of the KUHP penalising *mucikari* who profit from the prostitution of women? And is there consistency in the role of the state as both the regulator and manager of brothels?

On the first question, the regulations of 1970 for Kramat Tunggak mentioned specific areas of North Jakarta from which prostitutes were to be moved and where the practice of prostitution was to be subsequently disallowed: Kelurahan Cilincing, Kalibaru, Koja Utara, Pejagalan, Pademangan, and Penjaringan. In 1972, more areas were added: Tugu, Semper, Legoa, and "closures" even reached West Jakarta (Angke and Jelambar) and East Jakarta (Rawabangke) (Uwiyono et al. 1992: 23-25). However, prostitution in a variety of forms continued to flourish in many of these areas of North Jakarta, including Cilincing and the large recreation area of Binaria-Ancol, developed by the Jakarta government not very far from Kramat Tunggak. Critics of *lokalisasi* charge that prostitution has spread rapidly in areas outside *lokalisasi*, and that police make only half-hearted attempts to confine the practice to the officially approved areas. In West Jakarta, the areas of Angke and Jelambar Baru, supposedly "closed" to prostitution in 1992, were still the centre of activities of about 500 sex workers operating in illegal huts along the Kali Jodoh (*Suara Karya*, 6 February, 1992: 12). The major wave of raids held in July-October 1994 involved numerous instances of brothels reopening the day after a raid. Eventually the authorities took to closing down complexes by bulldozer but even then shacks were re-erected within a week, or brothels shifted to other nearby areas.

On the second question, there appears to be general agreement that the programs have succeeded to only a very limited extent in "returning prostitutes to the community", in the sense that they leave the practice of prostitution. This is hardly surprising in view of the better earnings available from prostitution than in alternative occupations available to poorly educated women. Also, with a huge and varied sex industry beyond the bounds of the *lokalisasi*, there is ample opportunity for women to move out of the *lokalisasi*, but still maintain their incomes in another section of the industry such as massage parlours.

On the third question, the officially approved *mucikari* find it profitable to run a brothel in the *lokalisasi* with the prospect of making quite reasonable incomes from organising prostitution activities: a net income of Rp. 100,000 to 250,000 per night, both from the rental of rooms and from the sale of beer and non-alcoholic drinks (Uwiyono et al. 1992: 41). Pimps say that a major advantage of working in the *lokalisasi* is that the atmosphere is safe and they do not suffer threats or the exaction of heavy random payments from authorities as they would if operating

in the general community. Higher incomes could be found in non-official brothels, but these are subject to potential official harassment, and possible prosecution.

On the fourth question, local government authorities gain substantial revenue through operating the prostitution complexes. Although the stated aim is to rehabilitate the prostitutes, were this to be successfully achieved, the lucrative source of revenue would dry up. This at least provides an incentive to local government to ensure the continued existence of the large brothel complexes and to avoid the enforcement of regulations which would reduce the profits. The sociologist Hotman Siahaan notes that the profits derived from *lokalisasi* are not treated as official state income, because to do so would open the transactions to investigations by the legislative branch, and this would expose the contradictory nature of the arrangement (*Sinar* 1994: 23). He depicts this as the "rather than" approach to regulation. Localisation is accepted "rather than" having the community bothered by streetwalkers, but in doing so the government fails to remove the laws prohibiting pimping. Further, the concentration of economic power in the localisation areas run by government agencies is accepted "rather than" facing the emergence of very wealthy pimps in an unregulated industry. Ironically the "rather than" logic has turned the government into a pimp, while not eliminating the growth of a large unregulated section of the industry.

Though there are clearly elements of injustice in the system, the quasi-legalisation of prostitution in Indonesia was based on the reasonable presumption that prostitution cannot be stamped out, that it needs to be controlled in the interests of public safety and order. It is also argued that health and regulatory and rehabilitation services can be better supplied if prostitution is localised as much as possible. These principles, of course, have a long history in Indonesia, as was seen above in the discussion of colonial laws. There are, however, elements of hypocrisy in the system when many of the areas set aside for the localisation of prostitution are justified on the grounds that they are being set up for the "rehabilitation" of prostitutes, but where strong incentives exist for the continued growth of the activity. Further, there are serious concerns about the basic concept of "rehabilitating" the women and minor pimps, but ignoring the role of the local government officials and male clientele who benefited from the exploitative nature of commercial sex, but for whom rehabilitation or serious regulation is not suggested.

Even the terminology used to describe the women in the laws and regulations reveals much about official attitudes. Framers of the regulations avoided the term *pelacur* or prostitute, because it was considered to be pejorative. Instead they have promoted the term *WTS* or *wanita tuna susila*, which is literally translated as a "woman lacking in morals", in a concept parallel to other terms such as *tuna netra* for blind people (lacking sight) and *tuna wisma* for the homeless. This wording indicates an unfortunate lack rather than an overt behaviour for which they can be blamed as individuals. In this sense, the terminology used in Indonesia is non-condemnatory; but, on the other hand, a double standard is revealed by the lack of a term to indicate that the customers of *WTS* are also lacking in morals. A number of women's groups in Indonesia, like their Western counterparts, object

to the use of terms like *WTS* or *pelacur*, preferring to talk of "commercial sex workers" (*pekerja seks)*. This terminology is rejected by government officials, particularly those involved in the collection of labour force statistics, on the grounds that it implies the acceptance of prostitution as a valid category of employment, an option they would like to avoid. By 1998 as the New Order government toppled under the challenges of a "Reform" movement, the situation of prostitution in Indonesia appeared to be poised for reform reflecting the norms of progressive non-governmental organizations concerned with feminist and human rights values. Nearly two decades later that assumption has been totally upended. Five presidents, numerous political parties, and a groundswell of religious mobilization have transformed the commercial sex operations of the late 20th century.

Epilogue

The social turmoil surrounding the fall of Suharto in 1998 included numerous cases of spontaneous attacks on poor bordello areas in large cities and small towns in Java and Sumatra. Shacks were burned to the ground, prostitutes chased from the area, and pimps admonished and sometimes beaten. Generally, these attacks were resisted by police and officials' intent on keeping peace. Authorities negotiated between community concerns and the interests of businesses. After all, in some cases the businesses were owned by current or former policemen, and in most cases the police harvested bribes from pimps and *mucikari*. In the end it could have been suggested that the language best applied to discussions of prostitution in New Order Indonesia was less that of a "crime" or a "sex industry" to one of a "venerable cultural institution". In the Reform period the emergence of a more muscular political Islam gradually changed the language around public discussions of morality, particularly relating to behaviours with an international human rights implications, like abortion, extramarital and commercial sex, and immodest dressing. Indigenous cultures were increasingly displaced by the moralities codified in the imported religions and colonial laws. Prostitution became a central topic of such debates.

Moralistic attacks are understandable as reflections of contradictory norms in different Indonesian communities, and even within the contradictory thoughts and attitudes held be different individuals. Not only did the pre-colonial history of sexual behaviour and the colonial attempts at legal pragmatism form the foundation for such contradictions, but Indonesian sexual cultures are themselves inherently contradictory. This is not a situation most Indonesians would easily accept. The contradictions are not resolved by new governments or new "campaigns". In the free and democratic "Reform" period of presidents Habibie, Wahid, Sukarnoputri, Yudhoyono, and Widodo between 2000-2017 pressure has built for fundamentalist Islamic changes, including the fight against prostitution. At the same time the same moralists will argue that men's sexual needs justify polygamy, or even that women are responsible for men seeking sex outside marriage. Far from being a time of tolerance and secular human rights the nation has seen expansion

of religious intolerance and the emergence of moralising local governments. The huge localization area Kramat Tunggak in Jakarta was demolished in 2000 to create the Jakarta Islamic Centre. Similarly, the Dolly complex in Surabaya was closed down in 2014. In both cases though the workers moved away, and many maintained their business in scattered venues. The regulations introduced in the 1970s to protect the health of women working in officially sanctioned bordello areas have been undermined with the closure of facilities and scattering of the workers. Not all of the emerging health challenges can be attributed to religious pressures on the industry. The emergence of new cellular technologies facilitating more independent call-girl operations on Facebook, Twitter and other social media may reduce the influence of pimps, but they do not necessarily inhibit sexually transmitted diseases or enhance the safety of women selling sexual services.

The history of prostitution in Indonesia is fraught with complex social and political challenges. These persist in changing forms over centuries and in recent decades have become enmeshed in the rising influence of Islamic fundamentalism across the archipelago. Ihsan (2006) has recently challenged the motives and methods, as well as the philosophy of religious leaders complaints about prostitution. Using the language of philosophy and human rights he calls for organizations to support prostitute rights as a means of empowering sex workers and improving working conditions. At the same time he wants laws to prevent exploitation of children or conditions of sex slavery, all of which is too commonly fount across Indonesia. It is unlikely that the new moralism of politicians and religious zealots will easily translate into progressive new moralities of legal reform and human rights, but Ihsan sets a path in that direction. It will not be an easy struggle. The basic motivations pressing men to pay for sex and women to sell sexual services are deeply ingrained. Whether national values of religion, humanity, unity, democracy, and social justice will ever be interpreted to include tolerance of prostitution is an open, and vexatious question.

Acknowledgments

The research on which this paper benefited greatly from collaboration with Prof Gavin Jones, Adjunct Professor of the School of Demography of the Australian National University and Dr Endang Sulistyaningsih of the Indonesian Department of Manpower. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Indonesian National Library, the National Scientific Documentation Centre of the Indonesian Academy Institute of Sciences (LIPI), and the National Archives of Indonesia for access to historical materials, and substantive advice and assistance.

References

ADAMS, Cindy, 1965, *Sukarno: An Autobiography as told to Cindy Adams*, Jakarta: Gunung Agung.

ALAM, A.S., 1984, *Pelacuran dan Pemerasan: Studi Sosiologis tentang Eksploitasi Manusia oleh Manusia* [Prostitution and Violence: A Sociological Study of the Exploitation of Humans by Humans], Bandung: Penerbit Alumni.

AMALI, Ibrahim, 1978, *Wanita tuna Susila dan Germo: Penelitian tentang Kesejateraan WTS di Kramat Tunggak, Jakarta Utara* [Prostitutes and Pimps: Study of the Welfare of Prostitutes in Kramat Tunggak, North Jakarta], Jakarta: Pusat Latihan Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial, Fakultas Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial Universitas Indonesia.

Buana Minggu, 1992, "Nestapa wanita2 korban napsu birahi serdadu jepang 1942-1945", 26 November.

DICK, Howard, 1993, "The economic role of Surabaya", in *Balanced Development: East Java in the New Order*, H. Dick, J. J. Fox & J. Mackie, ed., Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indie (ENI), 1902, "Prostitutie [Prostitution]", The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch Oost-Indie (ENOI), 1919, "Prostitutie [Prostitution]", 3 : 511-515.

GEERTZ, Clifford, 1963, *Peddlers and Princes: Social Development and Economic Change in Two Indonesian Towns*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

HAGA, J., 1901, "De schaduwzijden van het reglement op de prostitutie in Nederlandsch-Indie" [The drawbacks of the prostitution regulations in the Dutch Indies], *Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indie*, 41: 531-538.

HESSELINK, Liesbeth, 1987, "Prostitution: A Necessary Evil, Particularly in the Colonies. Views on Prostitution in the Netherlands Indies", in *Indonesian Women in Focus*, E. Locher-Scholten & A. Niehof, ed., Dordrecht: Foris Publications.

HICKS, George, 1995, *The Comfort Women: Sex Slaves of the Japanese Imperial Forces*, Singapore: Heinemann Asia.

HORTON, William Bradley, 2008, "Comfort Women in Indonesia: A Consideration of the Prewar Socio-legal context in Indonesia and Japan", アジア太平洋討究 = *Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies*, 3: 141-154.

IDRIS, Mohamad, 1982, *Faktor-Faktor Penyebab Pelacuran dan Dampak Lokalisasi Terhadap Masyarakat Sekitarnya: Studi Lokalisasi Kalisari Kotamadya Malang* [Factors Leading to Prostitution and the Effect of Localized Brothel Complexes on Nearby Residents: A Study of the Kalisari Brothel Complex in the City of Malang], Malang: Faculty of Law, Brawidjaya University.

IHSAN, Soffa, 2006, *Now it's Time to Sex: Pelacuran, Legalisasi, dan Agama*, Jakarta: Panta Rei.

INGLESON, John, 1986, "Prostitution in Colonial Java", in *Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Indonesia: Essays in Honour of Prof. J.D. Legge*, D. P. Chandler & M.C. Ricklefs, ed., Melbourne: Monash University.

Jakarta Post, 1993, "Former Prostitutes often Encounter Prejudice: Councillor", 21 April.

KOENTJORO, 1989, "Melacur sebagai sebuah karya dan pengorbanan wanita pada keluarga ataukah penyakit sosial" [Is prostitution an occupation and woman's sacrifice for her family, or is it a social disease?], paper presented to the Second National Seminar on Indonesian Women, Facts and Characteristics, Faculty of Psychology, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta.

KUMAR, Ann, 1980, "Javanese Court Society and Politics in the Late Eighteenth Century: The Record of a Lady Soldier", *Indonesia*, 29: 1-46.

KUNTO, Haryoto, 1993, "Nyi dampi, de bloem van kebon kelapa", *MATRA Magazine*, May: 68-69.

LERMAN, Charles, 1983, "Sex-Differential Patterns of Circular Migration: A Case Study of Semarang, Indonesia", *Peasant Studies*, 10, 4: 251-269.

MANNING, Chris, 1988, "The Green Revolution, Employment and Economic Change in Rural Java: A Reassessment of Trends under the New Order", *Occasional Paper* No. 84, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

MISSET, I. H., 1917, "De politie en de prostitutie" [The police and prostitution], *De Nederlandsch-Indische Politiegids,* August: 1-3.

MOEDJANTO, Gregory, 1990, *The Concepts of Power in Javanese Culture*, Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press.

MURRAY, Alison J., 1991, *No Money, No Honey: A Study of Street Traders and Prostitutes in Jakarta*, Singapore: Oxford University Press.

MU'THI, Abdul, 1965, "Sedikit tentang hukum perzinaan" [A little about the laws on adultery], *Gema Islam,* 4, 79-80: 13-16.

NITIMIHARDJO, Carolina, Harry HIKMAT & SURADI, 1994, *Orientasi nilai Budaya yang melatarbelakangi Perilaku Sosial Klien Tuna Susila Sasana Rehabilitasi Wanita Silih Asih Palimanan Cirebon* [Cultural Value Orientation Underlying the Social Behaviour of Immoral Clients of the Silih Asih Women's Rehabilitation Centre, Cirebon] Bandung: Sekolah Tinggi Kesejahteraan Sosial (STKS).

PANARA, M. Arief et al., 1990, *Analisis Sistim Pengelolaan Prostitusi di Kota Kupang*, [Analysis of the system for managing prostitution in the town of Kupang], Kupang: Fakultas Ilmu Administrasi, Universitas Nusa Cendana.

RAJ, M. Sundara, 1993, *Prostitution in Madras: A Study in Historical Perspective,* Delhi: Konark Publishers.

RASJIDIN, 1939, "Bahaja pelatjoeran" [The danger of prostitution], *Panji Islam,* 6, 20: 395-396 and 6, 21: 413-414.

RUITENBACH, D.J, 1908, "De reglementeering van de prostitutie in Indie" [The regulation of prostitution in [Netherlands] India], *Indische Gids*: 33-47.

Sinar, 1994, "Merebaknya kerajaan Hartono", pp. 15-17; "Bermula dari sopir omprengan', pp. 18-19; "Kami terbaik di Asia", p. 19, "Banyak pasal menjerat germo"; p. 20, "Saya ini 'Kayak' orang sosial saja", p. 21; "Akan muncul Hartono-Hartono lain", pp. 22-23; "Yang disalahkan selalu pelacurnya", p. 25; "Saya tahu itu dosa", p. 26; "Kenapa cari yang exstra di luar?", p. 27, 25 July.

SOEDJONO, D., 1977, *Pelacuran: Ditinjau dari Segi hukum dan Kenyataan dalam Masyarakat* [Prostitution: Seen From the Viewpoint of Law and Social Realities], Bandung: Karya Nusantara.

SOESILO, R., 1960, *Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana* [Guide to the Criminal Law], Bogor: Politeia Publishers.

SUARMIARTHA, E. et al., 1992, 'Perilaku seksual berisiko terhadap penularan AIDS pengemudi truk Denpasar-Surabaya' [Risky sexual behaviour for the spread of AIDS among truck drivers from Denpasar to Surabaya], paper presented at annual JEN meeting, Jakarta, 29 Nov-4 Dec.

SUDIBYO, R.M. Slamet, 1937, "Bahaja pelatjoeran boeat pemoeda" [The danger to youth of prostitution], *Pemandangan,* 18 October.

SULISTYANINGSIH, Endang and Yudo SWASONO, 1993, "The Sex Industry: Prostitution and Development in Indonesia", report submitted to Mahidol University, Bangkok.

Tempo, 1992, Kelana, Pandir, "Kisah Kadarwati yang sebenarnya" [True story of Kadarwati], 25 July.

UWIYONO, A. et al., 1992, *Lokalisasi dan Hukum: Suatu Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Prektek Bertahannya Pelacuran di DKI Jakarta,* Jakarta: National Epidemiology Network, Health Research Centre, University of Indonesia.

WARREN, James Francis, 1993, *Ah Ku and Karayuki-San: Prostitution in Singapore 1870-1940,* Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Abstract: The history of sex work in Indonesia is filled with contradictions and conflicts. Women from poor families were recruited by nobles to take the position of concubines to serve the twin roles of domestic and sexual servants. Foreign traders, soldiers and officials also exploited the opportunity to recruit poor women to maintain temporary households, and petty officials took on the role of pimps to organize sex workers for increasingly commercialised operations. The complaints of religious leaders from both the Christian churches of the colonisers and the Islamic and Hindu believers among indigenous people put pressure on the state to regulate or forbid sex work, largely unsuccessfully. In a detailed review of the history of prostitution up to the end of the New Order this article traces the transformation of sex work from a largely socially acceptable practice into a widely condemned, but begrudgingly accepted social reality.

Des concubines aux prostituées.
Une histoire partielle du commerce des services sexuels en Indonésie

Résumé : *L'histoire du travail du sexe en Indonésie est pleine de contradictions et de conflits. Les femmes issues de familles pauvres ont été recrutées par les nobles pour occuper la place de concubines et jouer ainsi le double rôle de domestique et de servante sexuelle. Les commerçants étrangers, les soldats et les employés administratifs ont également exploité l'opportunité de recruter des femmes pauvres pour entretenir des ménages temporaires ; de petits fonctionnaires ont endossé le rôle de proxénètes pour organiser les travailleurs du sexe afin de mener des opérations de plus en plus commercialisées. Les*

plaintes des dirigeants religieux des églises chrétiennes des colonisateurs et des croyants islamiques et hindous parmi les populations autochtones firent pression sur l'État pour qu'il règle ou interdise le travail sexuel, mais en vain la plupart du temps. Au cours d'un examen détaillé de l'histoire de la prostitution jusqu'à la fin de l'Ordre Nouveau, cet article retrace le passage du travail du sexe d'une pratique généralement acceptable sur le plan social à une réalité sociale largement condamnée mais acceptée à contrecœur.

Keywords: Indonesia, Prostitution, Concubine, Public Health History, Java.

Mots-clés : *Indonésie, prostitution, concubine, histoire de la santé publique, Java.*

APPENDIX

Official Publications, Laws And Regulations

Colonial Laws and Regulations

- Besluit No. 1255. *Prostitutie, Reglement tot wering van de schadelijke gevolgen, welke wit de prostitutie voortvloeijen* (Prostitution, Regulation to avoid the harmful consequences resulting from prostitution), 15 July 1852.
- Missive No. 196. *Reglement op de prostitutie* (Regulation of prostitutes), 24 January 1857. Reprinted in Bijblad op het Staatsblad van nederlandsch Indie, 1858, 2, 347.
- Besluit No. 2741. *Prostitutie, Intrekking van het reglement tot wering van schadelijke gevolgen welke uit de prostitutie voortvloeijen* (Prostitution, Withdrawal of the regulations to avoid the harmful consequences of prostitution), 21 January 1874.
- Besluit No. 2854. *Prostitutie, Verstrekkingen ten behoeve van zieke prostituees* (Prostitution: provision for sick prostitutes), 31 December 1874.
- Besluit No. 46. *Batavia. Geneeskundige Dienst. Stadsgneesheeren. Reglement voor de stadsgeneesheeren te Batavia* (Batavia, Health Department, Physicians: regulations for the city physicians of Batavia), 4 February 1875.
- Besluit No. 127. *Prostitutie. Begrooting. Personeel in de Gestichten voor prostituees* (Prostitution, Budget, Personnel in the institutes for prostitutes), 2 May 1876.
- Besluit No. 340. *Handel in vrouwen en meisjes* (Trade in women and girls), 8 August 1907.
- Besluit No. 152. *Handel in vrouwen en meisjes* (Trade in women and girls), 4 February 1915. Establishment of a government office in Batavia to fight the trade in women and girls.
- Besluit No. 199. *Handel in vrouwen en meisjes* (Trade in women and girls), 18 February 1916. Extension of the provisions for the establishment of a government office in Batavia to fight the trade in women and girls.

Republic of Indonesia Laws, Regulations and Publications

- Central Bureau of Statistics, 1992, *Indikator Sosial Wanita Indonesia 1991* (Social Indicator of Women in Indonesia 1991), Jakarta.
- Minister of State for the Role of Women, 1989, *The Changing Role of Women with Special Emphasis on Their Economic Role*, Country Report, Jakarta.
- Republic of Indonesia, 1982, *Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Perdata/KUHP*, Indonesian Criminal Laws.

- Ministry of Social Affairs, 1983, *Petunjuk Pelaksanaan Rehabilitasi Tuna Susila* [Technical Guidance for Implementing the Rehabilitation of Prostitutes], Directorate General, Bina Rehabilitasi Sosial, Jakarta.
- Ministry of Social Affairs, 1985, *Petunjuk Pelaksanaan Penanganan Masalah Sosial Tuna Susila* [Technical Guidance for Overcoming the Problem of Prostitution], Directorate General, Bina Rehabilitasi Sosial, Jakarta.
- Ministry of Social Affairs, 1990, *Data on Registered Prostitutes in Indonesia by Province* (mimeo).
- Ministry of Social Affairs, 1991, *Petunjuk Teknis Penanganan Masalah Sosial Tuna Susila* [Technical Guidance for Overcoming the Problem of Prostitution], Directorate General, Bina Rehabilitasi Sosial, Jakarta.
- Ministry of Social Affairs, 1991, *Briefing outline,* Unpublished, Directorate General, Bina Rehabilitasi Sosial, Jakarta.
- Ministry of Social Affairs, 1994, *Buku Putih: Rehabilitasi Sosial Tuna Susila* [White Book: The Social Rehabilitation of the Immoral]. Directorate General, Bina Rehabilitasi Sosial, Jakarta.
- Ministry of Tourism, Post and Telecommunication, 1992, *Annual Report 1991*, Jakarta.
- Regional Regulations (*Peraturan Daerah* or Abbreviated as *PERDA*) and Decrees (*Surat Keputusan)* Referred to as SK, and Instructions (*Surat Instruksi)* or SI are arranged according to the date and the title of the official issuing the decision.
- Regulations for the establishment and regulation of Kramat Tunggak, North Jakarta.
- SK Gubernur Kepala Daerah Khusus Ibu Kota Jakarta (KDKI), No. Ca. 7./1/13/1970. 27 April, 1970.
- Surat Keputusan Walikota Jakarta Utara, No. 25/III/DU/1970. The legal basis for the lokalisasi at Kramat Tunggak.
- SK Gubernur KDKI No. Ca.7/1/32/71 set out the form of "Educational Centre" which aimed to fulfil the rehabilitational aims of the localization of prostitutes.
- SI Gubernur KDKI No. Ca.7/1/39/71 and SI Walikota Jakarta Utara No. 8/Intr/DU/72, SI Gubernur KDKI No. 299/Intr/k./BKD/72, and SI Gubernur KDKI No 7/2/3/1972. Made prostitution illegal in six local government areas, and provided the basis for moving prostitutes to the Kramat Tunggak *lokalisasi.*
- SK Walikota Jakarta Utara No. 27/SKPTS/II-4/DU/72 set aside 20 hectares of land in Kelurahan Tugu for the establishment of the Kramat Tunggak complex, and specified that the area would be divided and distributed to the *germo*, who would make the compensation payments to the original landowners.
- SK Gubernur KDKI No. Ca.7/1/54/1972; SK Walikota Jakarta Utara No. 64/SKPTS/JU/1972 and SK Walikota Jakarta Utara No. 104/SKPTS/SD.SOS.JU/73 set the administrative structure for running Kramat Tunggak, including a provision

recognizing the role of pimps in the daily administration, and making them responsible to the local authorities of North Jakarta.

- SI Gubernur No. Bd.13/3/7/1972 set the basis for co-ordinated regulatory action at the provincial level.
- SI Gubernur KDKI No. 1685/Intr./k/BKD/73, further directed the four *Walikota* and the head of the Social Affairs section to join in the effort to centralize and regulate the industry.
- Further restructuring of the organization of the complex was enacted in SK Walikota Jakarta Utara No. 15/SKPTS/JU/74 (Uwiyono et al. 1992: 21 ff.).
- The SK Ca.7/1/32/71 was rescinded and replaced by SK No. 1659/1989 on 5 December 1989, restructuring the *Panti Rehabilitasi Wanita Tuna Susila* including Kramat Tunggak, to give greater stress to the rehabilitation activities of the Social Affairs office.
- The Governor issued an Instruction (No. 142) on April 18, 1990, to deal with the problem of over-consumption of alcohol, and attendant disruptions, and called on local officials to prevent the uncontrolled expansion of the numbers of brothels in the complex.
- In 1991 an additional instruction was issued by the Governor (No. 195/1991) requiring all prostitutes who had either worked in the industry for more than five years, or had reached 35 years of age, to be sent back to their homes and families for reintegration. Further all prostitutes and pimps were required to participate in the programs of education and social guidance presented by the government, in an effort to increase the rate of rehabilitation.
- SI Nomor 1474/1.844 issued by the head of the Office of Social Affairs of Jakarta on August 1, 1991 specified that children, animals and roaming sellers were forbidden to enter the complex, and that newly arrived prostitutes (*anak asuh*) must register within two days of arrival. All prostitutes are required to pay Rp. 1,500 for health and welfare services, while pimps are to pay Rp. 1000 per prostitute under their management. The payments for educational services were set at Rp. 2000 and Rp. 1000 respectively.
- SK No. 1196 of 14 August 1991 set out revised responsibilities for the *dinas sosial* for control of "each person who carries out immoral activities on the street or in public places"; and persons or institutions who provide facilities for immoral activities.
- SI No. 1954/1.844 of 14 September 1991 from the Kepala Dinas Sosial setting out responsibilities and a schedule of punishments for breaking the rules or regulations of the Kramat Tunggak facility.

Other regional regulations

- SK Gubernur DKI, No. ca. 3/1/16/71. concerning "Steam baths in the Jakarta Region", 22 February 1971.
- PERDA No. 3 for Jakarta, 1972.
- Perda Kota Bandung, 25 November 1931, Passed by the College van Gedeputeerden van de Provincie West-Java on 18 January 1932, No. W.63/1/10. A regulation to forbid street-walking for commercial sex (Soedjono 1977: 172-173). This replaced previous regulations passed on 9 May and 2 October 1917, and 23 August 1922.
- Perda Kota Besar Surakarta No. 10 of 1953, 3 March 1953. KPTS Daerah Surakarta No. 36/I/Kep. of 10 May 1961. Peraturan Tata Tertib Kompleks WTS Surakarta (Administrative Rules for the Surakarta Prostitution Complex), dated 17 January 1967. Instruksi Bersama Panca Tunggal Kotamadya Surakarta, No. 24/Instr/C.2/67, dated 6 February 1967. These decisions and regulations provide the basis for the establishment of Kampung Silir, Kelurahan Semanggi as the exception to the otherwise complete ban on prostitution in Surakarta (see Soedjono 1977: 182-192 for copies of these regulations).
- Perda Kota Besar Semarang, 10 February 1956; as endorsed in SK U.163/1/5 of 24 April 1956. Perda Kota Besar Semarang, 4 June 1956. Regulations of the Localization area dated 12 September 1968 (see Soedjono 1977: 193-4 and 200).
- Perda Malang, no. 4 of 1958. Implemented through SK Walikotamadya Kepala Daerah Tingkat II Malang No. 31/U of April 16 1974, and SK Walikotamadya Kepala Daerah Tingkat II Malang No. 25/U of February 3 1979. Legal basis for the Kalisari Localization area (Source: Idris 1982: 80-81).
- Perda Banjarnegara no. 1 of 1959.
- Perda Blora no. 19 of 1962.
- Perda Sragen no. 5 and 6 of 1973.