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Sexual Attitudes and Behaviour of Middle-Class Young People in Jakarta

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Chapter 2

Sexuality and Relationships Between the Sexes in Indonesia: a Historical Perspective

...history is rooted in the narrative tradition. As much as it seeks to generalize from the past events, as do the sciences, it also remains dedicated to capturing the uniqueness of a situation...In piecing the individual stories together, we try to pause as an artisan might, and point out problems of evidence, historical perspective, or logical inference. Sometimes, we focus on problems that all historians must face, whatever their subjects. These include such matters as the selection of evidence, historical perspective, the analysis of a document, and the use of broader historical theory...The writing of history is one of the most familiar ways of organizing human knowledge. And yet, if familiarity has not always bred contempt, it has at least encouraged a good deal of misunderstanding. All of us meet history long before we have heard of any of the social science disciplines, at a tender age when tales of the past easily blend with heroic myths of the culture (Davidson and Lytle, 1992: xiv-xvii).

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a varied approach is used to study sexuality from a historical perspective. Besides research in the literature, personal communication was undertaken with historians with expertise in Indonesian and Javanese history. With this combined approach I gained a more holistic understanding of the history of sexuality and how values relating to sex have changed over time. The objective of this chapter came from my wondering about the origin of the notion of conservatism in regard to sexuality. Has it always been rooted in our cultural and social values? Or are there other forces either from religion or Westernisation that also have influenced our values towards sex?

...Southeast Asia was in many respects the complete antithesis of that chaste pattern, and it seemed to European observers of the time that its inhabitants were preoccupied with sex. The Portuguese liked to say that the Malays were ‘fond of music and given to love’ (Barbosa 1518II: 176; cf.Barros 1563 II, vi: 24; Eredia 1613: 31, 40), while Javanese, like Burmese, Thais, and Filipinos, were characterised as ‘very lasciviously given, both men and women’ (Scott 1606: 173). What this meant was that pre-marital sexual relations were regarded indulgently, and virginity at marriage was not expected of either party. If pregnancy resulted from these pre-marital activities, the couple were expected to marry, and failing that, resort might be had to abortion or (at least in the Philippines) to infanticide (Dasmarinas 1590A: 427) (cited in Reid, 1988: 153).

The above quotation indicates how in the ‘age of commerce’ (1450-1680 AD) sexual activity among the people of Southeast Asia was very open. From historical documents it is clear that this was the case among Indonesians, and women had more power than men over their sexual activity. Women initiated sexual intercourse and men sometimes underwent very painful penis surgery to insert tiny balls under their loose penis skin with the aim of pleasing women. This is in contradiction to
contemporary Indonesian attitudes on sex. Even though premarital sexual activity is increasingly evident people do not openly talk about sex. Virginity is regarded as crucial for marriage and sex outside marriage is regarded as immoral. Sexual activity is influenced by state regulation, the political environment, religious beliefs and traditional norms and values. Yet double standards exist, as shown by young men having sexual intercourse with prostitutes but wanting to find virgin wives. This chapter attempts to evaluate the source of conservative attitudes towards sexuality.

It is quite difficult to study sexual activity using historical accounts owing to their scarcity and because literature dating from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries was written in Javanese. This poses difficulties for scholars who do not read and understand Javanese, and who rely on translations. Nevertheless, sexual and other aspects of life can be studied through written literature. According to Barbara McDonald (personal communication, 11 February, 1996, Canberra):

To trace traditional Indonesian sexuality concepts, one can examine written literature such as ancient stories and legends passed through the community. Through these ancient stories and legends, social constructs and values regarding politics, economy, trade, food patterns, sexuality, roles and values of gender can be studied. Written evidence showed that during the tenth until the fourteenth century sexuality as written in literature was very open: for example, the description of a beautiful woman’s body with all her erotic organs, and the sexual relationship between the king and his wives and selirs. Even though by recent standards it can be categorised as promiscuous, during that era the notion of sensual sexuality was not regarded as promiscuous because it is written in poems using words that rhyme but are not obscene. From the fifteenth until the eighteenth century there was very little written literature, this period is often called the Dark Age. The Panjiisastro which was written in the eighteenth century evaluated values such as role of parents, role of children and roles of servants to their king.

On the other hand, Hull takes a more cautious view of using historical literature. In his article on ‘Indonesian fertility behaviour before the transition: searching for hints in the historical record’ he states:

Theoretically a long tradition of written history would offer the most stable foundation for such cultural identification, but among developing nations written histories are often sparse and suspect, since they were the product of colonial institutions rejected in the rise of nationalism. Instead reinterpretations of written histories are elaborated through reference to oral traditions and imagined ‘realities’, to produce visions of society more in consonance with modern conditions and political needs (Hull, Forthcoming: 1).

Hull used documents from the early part of the twentieth century for his paper to evaluate fertility behaviour including marriage, mating, premarital sex, morality, and controls on fertility. His acerbic view of Indonesian historical documentation is as follows:
Indonesia is an ‘oral culture’ not only in the difficulty many people have in reading and writing serious works, but also in the lack of interest in documentation of arguments or review of the literature (Hull, Forthcoming: 2).

I agree with the notion of an Indonesian ‘oral culture’, but not with the suggestion that there was a lack of interest in documenting ideas. Barbara McDonald is referring to the court literature that can be very useful and rich in information relating to sexuality for example. Moslem literature is also very rich and contains much information about life, social norms and values, history and religious teaching. Hull seems to ignore the existence of this court literature and religious literature which can be passed to the broader population through traditional means such as the wayang. To trace the notion of conservatism towards sexuality, and to provide an overview of this matter, this chapter uses Javanese literature that has been translated into either Indonesian or English, as well as other documentation from the early part of this century.

In the ensuing discussion I present a selection of Javanese literature called Arjunawijaya and Centini.¹⁹ Openness towards sexuality can be seen throughout both pieces of work. The verses written in Arjunawijaya a kakawin by MPU Tantular are as follows:

(Canto 32)
10 There was [another girl who was] like a sprite, her beauty, as if emerging from the sea, aroused poetic feelings; her hips, exposed as she put to rights her slipping kain, curved like a wave; her breasts, as beautiful and firm as coral reefs seemed to bring heart-break to the love-sick, and her whimpers, as she was frightened at the flash of the lightning, were like rumbling thunder.

... 12 ‘O you, who came to me in a dream and took me on your lap, and held me round the waist while untying the knot of my kain; who sought for my love, who was as discerning in gesture as a bumblebee approaching flowers drawn by their fragrance. It was not like a dream at all, when you carried me to the shore behind the elephant rock; but just as I was about to yield to your love, night was suddenly past, and when I woke, you had vanished.

(Canto 33)
7 her sweet-scented kain was seductively transparent as clouds after rain; [the curve of] her hips was like that of a tender young branch, matching beautifully with her slowly heaving breast.

¹⁹Arjunawijaya is a Javanese poem written in the middle of the Fourteenth Century by MPH Tantular. Centini is a milestone and great karya sastra in the new era of Javanese literature. Centini is reported to have been written in Surakarta palace in 1820. Pangeran Adipati Anom who was Pakubuana V chaired a panel of three distinguished authors: Raden Ngabei Ranggasutrasna, Raden Ngabei Yasadipura II, and Raden Ngabei Sastradipura. Centini consists of 12 volumes comprising over 6000 pages. The aim of this book was to accommodate all kinds of knowledge and Javanese culture (PN Balai Pustaka, cited in Sumahatmaka, 1981: 6).
She made an obeisance, and unloosed her hair, as she made to throw herself into the perilous sea, but the mist closed in over the scene once more, and she was hidden from the sight of the onlookers.
(Supomo, 1977: 229-231).

Clearly these verses of *Arjunawijaya* describe sexuality very openly, romantically and sensually.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Javanese sultan Pakubuana the Fifth wrote the twelve-volume masterpiece *Centini*. These books were written in a palace environment during the process of Islamisation but before the Islamic reformation. These two conditions influenced Pakubuana’s writings. As with the *Arjunawijaya*, the *Centini* openly discusses sexuality but also mentions the relationship with God (in the understanding of Islam). In this context, the relationship between man and God and man with many women is seen as identical. References to sexual relationships between a man and women are common and how they express their sexual feelings to each other is described in a straightforward manner. The idea of sexually transmitted diseases was also introduced. Marriage ceremonies at the mosque and the whole series of wedding celebrations combining Qur’anic readings were evident (M. Ricklefs, 22 February, 1996, personal communication, Canberra).

A story from *Centini* describes how three sisters shared information and experiences on sexuality and initiated intercourse with a male guest who was spending the night at their house. Sex in this story is described very explicitly. Even more interesting is that women have power over their sexual behaviour. The three sisters, Banem, Baniken and Baniyah frequently watched their parents have sexual relations and thus knew that their parents did so every second or third night. Not aware that their father was too old to be on top, the three sisters accepted that the woman was always on top during sexual intercourse. So when Jayengraga (the male guest) said he would do *walik dadah* to the youngest sister the two elder sisters did not understand what he meant.20

All three sisters were very open about sex, asking Jayengraga if he would make love to Banem without any embarrassment. Banem started to open her *kain* and place herself on top of Jayengraga. She asked Jayengraga very personal things, for example, how to deal with the pain and how to reach a climax. Jayengraga was surprised that she was still a virgin as she was already quite old. He taught Banem everything step by step.

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20 *Walik dadah* means having sexual intercourse where the man is on top.
step, which she passed on to Banikem and Baniyah. The three sisters watched alternately as each was having sex with Jayengraga. Baniyah was still quite young for her pubic hair had not grown yet. She could not stand the pain and ran away before the intercourse finished. Then Banem and Banikem requested Jayengraga to make love to both of them. Asking the two sisters to lie down naked side by side Jayengraga took turns in making love to both of them seven times. Banem and Banikem fought each other both physically and verbally for Jayengraga’s love and attention, so much so that when Jayengraga ejaculated he was in neither of them. Afterwards Jayengraga went to the nearby lake leaving Banem and Banikem behind to argue because they both failed to reach an orgasm (Sumahatmaka, 1981: 110-113).

It can be taken from the above example that sexuality was seen as something quite natural. Women had the power to ask for, initiate, and demand their preferred positions during sexual intercourse. They were not afraid to ask men how to achieve an orgasm. This is very different from the modern Indonesian concept of sexuality, where women are meant to suppress their sexuality and never ask for or initiate sexual intercourse. Were the above story written today it would no doubt be banned for discussing such immoral acts as group sex, women initiating sexual intercourse and their demands for sexual gratification. Moreover, sexuality was seen as normal despite strong religious practices being enforced: very deviant behaviour from the perspective of recent Islamic beliefs. The difference between Islamic beliefs in the recent era and in the past is in the attitudes to sex outside marriage. The former only recognises sex as being normal and not sinful if it occurs within marriage.

Supomo (personal communication, 6 March 1996, Canberra) stated that both Hindu and Buddhist thought had a strong influence on the Javanese, for despite the arrival of Islam they maintained liberal attitudes towards sex. This is clearly demonstrated in stories from the Centini where eroticism is openly expressed alongside Moslem teachings.

Furthermore, Supomo argued that besides the coming of Islam, Dutch colonialism helped shape Indonesian conservatism towards sexuality through its education system. In this case the Dutch may have been influenced by the English as the system in England was conservative through the predominant influence of the Victorian era. During the nineteenth century, Indonesian literature became increasingly conservative as writers went through the Dutch educational system. This
explains why sexual conservatism is quite strong among the Indonesian middle and upper class, but less so in the rural communities that were not touched by the Dutch colonial education system (Supomo, personal communication, 6 March 1996, Canberra). This assertion is also confirmed by Hull (Forthcoming: 2) as follows:

...it will be argued that the ‘traditional’ moralities condemning premarital sexual relations are very much imported moralities having more to do with Islam and Dutch colonialism than with traditional Malayo-Polynesian social patterns.

Reid’s statement (personal communication, 29 February 1996, Canberra) supported this idea as follows:

Before the sixteenth century, the Westerners had this sense of sexuality among the Indonesian-Southeast Asian people as more relaxed or loose compared to Westerners’ morality on sex. During 1550-1650 there was a crucial period of Islamisation and urbanisation in Indonesia. In the city more strict Islam was apparent so the urban bawo pattern (pattern of puritanism) was more conspicuous in the city whereas the rural area was more matter-of-fact. The peak of entry of orthodox Islam was in the seventeenth century.

In addition to the Dutch influence on the middle-class, Ricklefs argued that the reformation of Islam in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century brought about major social change in Indonesia. Sexual conservatism can also be linked with the starting point of the spread of Islam. For example, sexual conservatism is dominant in Sumatra where the Islamic reformation movement was the strongest, whereas in regions such as East Timor where the Islamic reformation movement is weak a liberal attitude towards sexuality prevails (M. Ricklefs, personal communication, 22 February 1996, Canberra). Ricklefs’s argument was supported by Hesselink (1987: 212) understanding that in areas of the archipelago with strong Islamic values there were fewer prostitutes and concubines. Hesselink (1987: 212) noted the importance of family upbringing besides religious values that can suppress woman’s wickedness, lack of moral values and the entry into prostitution.

2.2 The notion of traditional Indonesian sexuality

Attitudes to sexuality are different from era to era and from one society to another (Onghokham, 1991:15). It is also understood that sexuality is historically and culturally specific (Manderson, 1995: 2). This is why each society develops its own sexual norms and values. What is considered normal sexual behaviour in one society may not be regarded as normal in another. Hirschfeld, a pioneer in the scientific account of sexual problems, wrote:
The subject of the uninhibited worship of the genitals leads us to that of the phenomenon of shame. The portions of the body which we Europeans designate as private parts are by no means those of which people everywhere feel they need be ashamed. Even modesty concerning intercourse is not to be found everywhere. There are peoples who have a special modesty regarding the face, their hair, the legs, the function of nourishment or excretion. Nakedness in particular is not looked upon or looked down upon in the same manner everywhere.

On my world tour I travelled on the train from Assuan to Luxor with a British official who was returning from Sudan, where he had lived for fifteen years. He told me that sexual assaults, and especially rape, had not occurred among the natives until the British, a few years before, forbade them to go naked, as they had long been accustomed to do (Hirschfeld, 1935: xiv-xv).

From the above it is clear that the notions of sexual modesty differ in different parts of the world. The above-mentioned sexual assaults by the Sudanese in response to the British imposing their 'sense of modesty' is a case in point.

The notion of the promiscuous nature of Indonesian men and women was held by European colonists who saw the sexual mores of both men and women in the East Indies as more open. Various contemporary sources attribute Indonesians with a more relaxed approach to sexual relations both within and outside marriage owing to practices of child marriage, polygamy, and widespread divorce. The European colonists emphasised racial differences between European women and Indonesian women. European women were considered superior morally to Indonesian women who were seen as born prostitute owing to the practice of prostitution and concubinage. Even though there were a few European women who were prostitutes, European government in the Indies did not tolerate European prostitution (Hesselink, 1987: 211; Van Der Sterren, nd: 25).

When analysing the traditional Indonesian outlook on sexuality it is necessary to place the concept of sexuality before the arrival of Islam and colonialism (Ongkokham, 1991:21). With this definition of traditional Indonesian sexuality it is possible to understand what sexuality was in former times.

Southeast Asian literature from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century reveals that women took a very active role in courtship and lovemaking, and demanded as much as they gave in sexual and emotional gratification. Autonomous sexual power of women is clearly demonstrated by the sexual pleasure that they could demand. During the Age of Commerce, men were willing to go through painful surgery on their penis, in some instances the insertion of a metal pin, complemented by a variety of wheels, spurs, or studs in the central and southern Philippines and parts of Borneo. In northwest Borneo this practice continued until modern times. In Makassar, up to three tiny penis balls
made from ivory or solid fishbone were inserted under the loose skin of the penis through a delicate operation (van der Hagen 167: 82, cited in Reid, 1988: 150). These practices were quickly suppressed by Islam, but the Toraja in Sulawesi (non-Islamic) still wore penis balls up to the end of the last century (Adriani and Kruyt 1912-14 II: 392, cited in Reid, 1988: 150). From lingas found at Sukuhi and Cetu temples near Surakarta it appears that this practice existed in Java as well (Stutterheim, 1930: 31, cited in Reid, 1988:150). Through the strong efforts of Islam and Christianity this custom had disappeared from Java by the mid-seventeenth century (Reid, 1988: 150).

The freer sexuality in Indonesia is reflected by how people viewed premarital sexual activities and virginity. In Banjarmasin the women were ‘very constant when married, but loose when single’(Beeckman 1718: 41; cf. Valentijn 1726III: 312; Low 1848: 196; Finlayson 1826: 309-10, cited in Reid, 1988: 154). In South Sulawesi in the pre-Islamic period, adultery with an unmarried woman was allowed but with a married woman was punished with death (Schurhammer 1977:530, cited in Reid, 1988: 154).

In the early twentieth century evidence of naturalness of sexuality, women’s autonomy in sexual activity and ‘the king’s’ sexual power over women under his authority in different parts of Indonesia had also been observed by Hirschfeld (1935: 113):

Almost without exception the women and girls of Bali go naked down to their navels (the children go entirely naked), proudly displaying their beautifully formed breasts. After a short time, clothed bodies strike one as disagreeable. Dr. Kruse, a German doctor who for a long time had a large practice in Bali, states in his book that only the prostitutes there cover up their breasts in order to arouse men’s curiosity and allure them. I could not get confirmation to this report, but my informant seemed trustworthy enough for me to accept the correctness of this observation—at least as far as his particular part of the country and his period are concerned (113).

Among the Minangkabau peasants in the Padang highlands, woman is the sole ruler in the home, courtyard and family, just as she is in Formosa. Husband and children bear her name. The husband is maintained by the wife, but he lives outside the home and is only occasionally used by her for sexual intercourse. When this has been consummated, he goes away again. But recently, the men have begun to feel that their position is undignified and have migrated in flocks to Indo-China in search of work and better living conditions (127).

I visited the ‘kratons’ of Jogya and Solo—each of which consist of extensive parks with the palace (Kraton) at the centre (somewhat on the order of Vatican City). There, even to-day, the sultans hold sway as sole rulers over the bodies and lives of their subjects—but particularly over their bodies. Here the ius prima noctis still exists, and every family is proud if the Sultan has ‘slept’ with one of its members. ‘The Sultan slept nine times with our aunt,’ my host’s young servant-girl boasted, beaming with happiness over this mark of distinction (129).

The Susuhunan lives in his palace as sole lord over four hundred and fifty women, of whom only thirty-four are his wives. All the rest are dancers and servants, but, when their master desires it, they must also be ready to serve as concubines (132).
The quotation from Hirschfeld (1935) indicated that in different parts of Indonesia, different practices and norms regarding sexuality were being practised. But of course Hirschfeld wrote his book well after the influence of Islam and after the Dutch had settled in Indonesia, so to some extent differences in these ‘unifying’ forces have to be taken into account.

The notions of sexual freedom, premarital sexual activity, fidelity within marriage, temporary marriage or concubinage, and strong female autonomy in sex were much in conflict with Islamic law specifically and other religions which were increasingly coming to Southeast Asia during the thirteenth to fifteen century. Premarital sexual relations (or adultery called zina') were punished very severely under Islamic law. Islamic law was most practised among the wealthy urban mercantile elite, because parents in these circumstances wanted to control their children’s marriage for reasons of both property and status. In practice, Islamic law codes and local custom seem to be in conflict and the practice of Islamic law codes is not uniform from place to place. For example, in Aceh and Brunei, when a zina offence was between married people, death sentences appear to have been common, in at least one case by flogging to death as the Islamic law prescribes (Ito 1984:168-70; Dasmatinas 1590B: 9, cited in Reid, 1988: 157). But in other areas, the punishment was not as severe and largely dependent on local customs.

Wealthy parents controlled their children’s marriage arrangements in some parts of Southeast Asia where Islam was very influential:

In Southeast Asia, too, the elite were anxious to avoid unacceptable liaisons by their daughters or doubtful parentage for their grandchildren, and therefore sought betrothals with appropriate spouses at an early age. In the wealthy trading cities most firmly committed to Islam-Aceh, Banten, Brunei, and Patani-the habit of arranging marriages for daughters at the age of puberty appears to have spread through a wider sector of society, in reaction to the prevailing premarital sexual permissiveness. Aceh and Banten were notorious for exceptionally early female marriage in the nineteenth century (Reid, 1988: 159).

In contrast with the conservative notions of sex that Islam brought to some parts (mostly trading ports) of Indonesia, in North Borneo and eastern Indonesia before the spread of Islam and Christianity, premarital sexual relations were not prohibited. That is why the animist peoples in North Borneo in the 1930s (Muruts) and eastern Indonesia in the 1960s (Sumba) had a very high incidence of gonorrhoea, in 80 and 90 per cent, respectively, of the women examined. It is alarming that in these societies there was a widespread misconception that if a man wants to free himself from a
venereal disease, he should have sex with a healthy woman so he could return the ‘alien’ element to her (Mitchell 1982: Jordaan and de Josselin de Jong 1985: 256-57; Ia Bissachere 1812 I: 67, cited in Reid, 1988: 161). When and how sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) were introduced to the Indonesian archipelago is discussed in detail in Van Der Sterren et al. (1997). It is argued that STDs had been evident as early as 1500 before the arrival of Europeans in Indonesia (Coedes, 1964: 126). It was also indicated in other reports that ‘syphilis’ was probably introduced by European traders who arrived in Indonesia during that time. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, colonial records of STDs indicated that areas relatively untouched by European development had little or no incidence of STDs (Van Der Sterren et al., 1997: 203). Even though from examining various studies Van Der Sterren et al. (1997: 203-204) could not point to the origins of STDs in Indonesia, they clearly stated that the spread of STDs was and is facilitated by the movements of people, either foreigner or locals, to and from regions of economic growth for example, ports, urban centres, plantations and industries.

In Bali among the Hindus, there was also conservatism about sex. This was related to a death penalty for sexual intercourse between members of different castes. This custom was practised until the Dutch influenced the penalty as follows:

The Dutch Resident (a sort of governor) of Den Pasar (the capital of Southern Bali, really of all Bali), to whom I also owe the information about the burning of widows recorded above, told me that as late as 1906, according to native law, the death penalty was prescribed for sexual intercourse between a man or a woman and a member of a lower caste.

The Hollanders were anxious to be as judicious as possible in interfering with the customs of the natives, particularly with those having to do with religion and sex. So instead of the death penalty they first introduced a penalty of ten years’ imprisonment for this crime against the caste spirit. Gradually this was mitigated to the present penalty of two years in prison, and they hope to do away with it altogether in the near future (Hirschfeld 1935: 111-112).

The majority of sexual concepts in Indonesia came from India and the rest from the traditional ancient agricultural community. In the past in India, especially among the noble community, sex was not regarded as something that is related to ‘morality’ but as natural like the need for food and water. Evidence of openness towards sexuality can be seen in the carving of various intercourse positions in India’s temples (Onglokham, 1991: 22). In Hindu literature freedom of expression of sexuality is often described as Basham (1959: 170-71, cited in Supomo nd: 390) stated:

The literature of Hindu India, both religious and secular, is full of sexual allusion, sexual symbolism, and passages of frank eroticism ... The erotic preoccupation of ancient India made very evident in art and literature ... The Indian ideal [of feminine beauty], thick-thighed, broad hipped, but very slender waisted, and with very heavy breasts, seems evidently chosen for physical satisfaction.
The culture of Java is strongly affected by the Hindu influence. Twenty per cent of the Javanese literature of the kakawin contains 'sexual allusions, sexual symbolism, and passages of frank eroticism' and in other parts of the kakawin love making is described (Supomo nd: 390). In the Elephant Museum in Jakarta, many statues express open sexuality and in Suku and Ceto temples, human genitals of both sexes are carved on the temple walls (Onglokham, 1991: 22; Soepangat, 1991:59). In the Hindu-Buddhist period, sex symbolised the fertile status of the kingdom (Onglokham, 1991: 22).

In the noble society and the agricultural community, sexual intercourse and genitals are symbols of heredity. This ideology still existed even when Islam had entered Java. In Solo kingdom, the male genitals (the king) and the female genitals (the queen) were carved in the main entrance gate.

In the traditional Javanese concept, the sexual ability of the king is related to the well-being of the kingdom: the more sexual ability the king has, the more prosperous the kingdom. Susuhunan Paku Buwono X (1893-1939) was still potent in his old age and had many children, and hundreds of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Among the Javanese he is regarded as the greatest and last king (Onglokham, 1991: 22). Another myth related to the king is that he is the reincarnation of God. So a king or queen had the right to any women or men they desired: in the Javanese court it was common for a king to have tens or hundreds of selirs. The selirs often had sexual relationships with other members of the court or with other members of the family because their sexual needs were not being fulfilled (Permadi, 1991: 65).

There are also myths about the sacrifice of a girl to be killed or giving the virginity of a girl to a king or the leader of a group, and myths about promiscuity in which a husband or a wife can have sexual intercourse with another's wife or husband in a group; this kind of group sex happened in the area of Gunung Kemukus. It was believed that by this promiscuity, the people involved would have good fortune. Among the warok (great champions), who have the quality of mystical invulnerability, there was a belief that they could not have heterosexual relations if they wanted to keep their invulnerability; so they had relations with boys that they maintained (gemblak) (Permadi, 1991: 64-65).
2.3 The adaptation to the outside world: Westernisation in Indonesia

Andaya (1992, 345-401) described how European influences have changed the Southeast Asia inhabitants’ ideas and the way they live. The interaction between the foreigners and the local inhabitants of Southeast Asia have brought innovation and adaptation. According to Andaya,

The Southeast Asians received foreign groups with their new ideas, and they adopted and adapted those ideas which best suited their purposes. In the past such an approach had always been appropriate, and in this period there was little reason to believe that a selective response would not once again prove successful in strengthening and enriching Southeast Asian society (Andaya, 1992: 346).

The adoption and adaptation of Western ideas is consistent with the framework of idealised morality that I have discussed in Chapter 1. The idea is that Indonesians will adapt Western ideas and values as long as they are in accordance with the existing idealised morality and do not place the idealised morality in an insecure position. Indonesians adapted Western influences and assimilated them in such a way that the result is Western ideas and values with an Indonesian style.

The adaptation to the outside world or Westernisation in Southeast Asia started between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. This exposure to the new Western ideas brought innovation and adaptation in the local society. The Indians and the Chinese visited Southeast Asia regularly and during the seventeenth century the Japanese came to Southeast Asia to be involved in trade. In 1619 the Dutch entered Indonesia, invaded and controlled Jayakarta, rebuilt it as the main headquarters of the Dutch East India Company and changed the name to ‘Batavia’ after the ancient Roman name for what is now Holland. The establishment of the Dutch-controlled city influenced the physical structure, government, economic affairs, the people and even the idea of having sexual liaisons with foreigners. The last influence created half-caste or mixed race communities which became the intermediaries bridging the gaps between the Dutch and the Indonesians (Andaya, 1992).

The mixed-blood phenomenon became common in the city as the foreign men rarely brought their womenfolk to Southeast Asia. Thus during that period it seemed to be understood that blood ties entrenched trust and facilitated exchange.

The women provided their foreign husbands with an entree into local society which was essential to trade. Moreover, the women themselves often engaged in the negotiations for the purchase of desired products for their husbands (Andaya, 1992: 368).
At one stage in 1609, thirty-six white women were sent to Batavia, but these women were not the respectable women that the authorities had hoped for. So by 1652 the Dutch had established a policy which existed for the next 200 years to restrict the immigration of white women. Another policy that developed relating to intermarriage was the 1617 Heeren XVII decree that marriage for ‘freeburghers’ could only be legal with the Dutch East India Company’s agreement. These freeburghers could only marry Asian and Eurasian women if these women became Christian and would raise their children and their slaves as Christians. Places where freeburghers and their families could live were also limited; at first they could only live in Maluku but later also in Batavia, Melaka and a few other places. Then in 1639 to fulfil the objective of constituting a colony, the company forbade them to return to Europe while still married. This policy was enforced by another that forbade Asian or Eurasian women to go to Europe. Another complexity to these mixed marriages were the children who were socially located between the two cultures and not accepted by either. Usually the sons were prepared to become members of the Dutch society in Asia and Europe and the daughters were prepared for life as wives of officials in Asia. But important merchants and officials had the alternative of raising their children, mostly their sons, in their own communities. Mixed-blood children were good intermediaries in trade, diplomacy, and the transference of ideas between the two cultures (Andaya, 1992: 370-371).

Later, intermarriage especially by the Indonesian elite social class, in this case nobility and official regent families (pangreh praja/keluarga bupati), was restricted by the Dutch.\(^\text{21}\) Strong enforcement started between 1808 and 1811 when Daendles officially announced that Indonesian regency officials were Netherlands East Indies personnel. After 1870 and towards the twentieth century, the Dutch were more apprehensive about the sexual life of the regency officials. Mixed marriages between regency officials and non-natives like Chinese, Dutch-native mixed-bloods, and Dutch were strongly discouraged. Mixed marriage could also affect the careers of regency officials. The official Dutch reason for discouraging mixed marriage was that regency officials were also colonial officials and supposed to be the leaders of cultural and

\(^{21}\) The Dutch were mostly interested to control sexual morality among these two groups, and seem to have been less concerned about sex among the lower Indonesian class. The Dutch mainly left sexual matters of the latter group for them to solve. In this case the regency officials and the courts within each community were responsible to maintain the culture and religion in their areas (Onghokham, 1991: 19).
religious affairs who had to preserve cultural values in their community. If there were different races in the family, this would lower the status and authority of the regency officials. It seems that the Dutch wanted to control regency officials' marriages not just for their religious morality but more for their job status (Ongkokham, 1991: 20-21). Hence, strictness and repressive attitudes towards sex, and limitations on choosing a spouse began to be imposed by the colony.

On the other hand, concubinage (nyai-selir) was commonly practised among the Dutch East Indies Company officials. During J.P. Coen's reign as governor-general of Batavia (1619), concubinage among the company's officials was restricted, as was also the practice of homosexuality on the company's ships. Anyone found in a homosexual relationship would receive the death penalty. But after Coen's regime, concubinage between the Dutch officials and native women was encouraged. The status of the concubine was more like that of a slave because they were maintained by the Dutch officials or other rich Dutch entrepreneurs. Until the twentieth century, rich Dutchmen who were going to live permanently or assigned a new posting in the Dutch East Indies were encouraged to have a nyai so they could quickly learn the language, the culture and other 'mysteries of the East' (Ongkokham, 1991: 18-19).

The practice of temporary marriage or concubinage was also common among Javanese traders in Banda during the nutmeg season (Tweede Boek 1601:77, cited in Reid, 1988: 155). Concubinage among santri traders was also allowed in Islam. Concubinage in other parts of Southeast Asia was also common, in Patani for example, temporary marriage was described as follows:

When foreigners come there from other Islands to do their business...men come and ask them whether they do not desire a woman: these young women and girls themselves also come and present themselves, from whom they may choose the one most agreeable to them, provided they agree what he shall pay for certain months. Once they agree about the money (which does not amount to much for so great a convenience), she comes to his house, and serves him by day as his maidservant and by night as his wedded wife. He is then not able to consort with other women or he will be in grave trouble with his wife, while she is similarly wholly forbidden to converse with other men, but the marriage lasts as long as he keeps his residence there, in good peace and unity. When he wants to depart he gives her whatever is promised, and so they leave each other in friendship, and she may then look for another man as she wishes, in all propriety, without scandal (van Neck, 1604: 225, cited in Reid, 1988: 155).

Mixed marriages between Europeans and natives continued until World War I. This was possible because there was a relatively large population of single Dutch men.

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22 During this era until the middle of the nineteenth century slavery still existed in Dutch East Indies (Ongkokham, 1991: 18).
(Ingleson, 1986: 136) and because European women usually did not follow their husbands to the tropics.

Until thirty years ago a European very rarely came to the tropics with a woman of his own race. This was true of the East Indies as well as of other countries. The custom was that as soon as he engaged a native female servant, it became part of her duty to satisfy him sexually.

The native women were extremely pleasant, self-effacingly so, and often gave their masters unbelievable devotion and affection, particularly after they had borne them children. It frequently happened in Java that Europeans, touched by such great love and loyalty, married these women. In doing so they also intended to insure a happier future for the offspring.

Since the World War this custom has definitely changed. The number of European women who follow their husbands to the tropics has steadily increased (Hirschfeld 1935: 95).

In sum, it can be stated that despite the Dutch morally condemning sex outside marriage, relationships between single Dutch men and concubines or prostitutes were accepted as being understandable (Ingleson, 1986: 138). This can be explained as from the early days of colonisation, European men were legally banned from taking native wives. Only European military officers were allowed to come to the Indies with their wives. With a large population of single Dutch men, high earnings, and their need to satisfy their sexual urges, both prostitution and concubinage flourished (Ming, 1983). Other observers stated that in Indonesia the practice of concubinage still went on until Independence. Achdiyat, a famous writer now in his early eighties stated:

In the past even though there are mistresses and nyai, we know the owner of the mistresses or nyai and they only have sexual relationship with their master. This condition has been happening ever since before I was born till the Indonesian independence era. These nyai-nyai are not married by their masters who are Chinese or Dutch, but Arabic masters always married their nyai. This is what I wrote in my book Atheist, where Kartini was arranged by her mother to marry an old rich Arabic man so she can have land and a house.

In a certain way the Western influences have invaded us. But among the lower class engaging in prostitution or being a mistress or nyai is more because of economic conditions. The economic effect is greater than the globalisation of information, because television programs have reached villages. It is not that they want to have a luxurious life, but they prostitute themselves to have an additional income, that’s common (Jakarta, 24/8/1994, case no. w35mj).

Until recently, having sexual affairs and mistresses was still widely practised among government officials and well known leaders or professionals. But there is a difference between the practice of concubinage in the past and having mistresses in recent times. While in the olden days concubines were more understanding and did not ask for their rights, in the last two years a new phenomenon has emerged where mistresses of well known Indonesian government officials or informal leaders have gone to court, revealed their secrets and asked for recognition of their status and maintenance (Hasibuan and Kustiati, 1994: 104; Kartini, 1994: 35-38; Mattauch et al., 1994a: 15-17; Sinar, 1994: 22-23; Winarno et al., 1994; Suryakusuma, 1996).
2.4 Sexuality: evidence from folklore and Indonesian literature

Sexual myths occur repeatedly in the *Ramayana* about men who have a mystical sexual ability to be engaged in a sexual relationship with a woman or several women at the same time without really having physical contact.23 This gift can only be attained after someone has reached a high stage of mystical ability. In *Ramayana*, Satria Pandawa Arjuna has this gift. Arjuna has many wives but all of his wives love him intensely and feel that their sexual needs are satisfied even though they do not see Arjuna, who often is away on a journey and does a lot of meditation. Yudhistira, Arjuna's eldest brother, offered his wife Dewi Durpadi as a pledge when gambling with Kurawa; he lost the game so his wife was undressed in front of everybody. Dewi Durpadi was so ashamed that she made a vow never to tie her hair until she had washed it in Kurawa's blood (Permadi, 1991: 65).

A different fragment of *Ramayana* told how conception occurred. In a battle for inheritance with her siblings, Putri Anjani's face turned into that of a monkey, although her body was still beautiful. She regretted what had happened and decided to meditate naked. Siwa, who was flying past, saw how beautiful her body was; he was aroused and ejaculated. His sperm fell into Putri Anjani's mouth which was slightly open. Putri Anjani then became pregnant and gave birth to Hanuman who had the face of a monkey and a human body, but with a tail (Sedyawati, 1991: 30).

Another act of 'nude meditation' was performed by Queen Kalinyamat because her husband was killed by Aria Penangsang. Queen Kalinyamat made a vow that she would meditate naked until Aria Penangsang's head was chopped off and she could used it as a rug for her feet. She then gave her modesty to Jaka Tingsir who was willing to kill Aria Penangsang, chopped off his head and gave it to Kalinyamat for her to step on. Another famous Javanese myth is that of Ken Arok and Ken Dedes. Ken Dedes was Akuwu Tunggul Ametung's wife and was pregnant; Ken Arok was a soldier at the court. One time Ken Arok saw her vagina when she was stepping down from a carriage because her kain was lifted up. Ken Arok thought it was very strange because Ken Dedes's vagina was very shining, so he asked his spiritual teacher, Pendeta Lohgawe, what this meant. Pendeta Lohgawe told him that a woman with a

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23 *Ramayana* stories are very important folklore in Indonesia, especially among the Javanese and Balinese.
shining vagina will give birth to children who will become kings in the future. With this in mind, Ken Arok killed Ken Dedes’s husband and married her. What Pendeta Lohgawe said was right, the children of Ken Dedes by her previous husband and Ken Arok became kings in Java and Nusantara (Permadi, 1991: 65).

One ancient Javanese story, Babad Tanah Jawi (History of the land of Java), relates how the kings, princes and walis, for example Joko Tarub and Senopati had sexual intercourse in a natural way without any kind of formality. Sexual intercourse occurred when they met women without any kind of marriage tie. In that era, the community did not regard sex without any kind of formality as promiscuous (Onglokham, 1991: 22). Generally in Javanese literature, sexuality is a man’s domain: it is the man who plays an active role and the woman is passive. Another example is from Gatholoco which describes how active is a male genital entering a cave that is passive. In the Javanese philosophy which is mostly adopted from Hinduism, a woman with high sexual needs is described as being in the lowest rank of four categories and pictured as having bad features and body, she is categorised as hastini. The highest rank is given to women who are beautiful, calm and very patient, who are called padmini. The second rank is citrini who are beautiful and like to talk and dress well, and the third rank is sangkhini, who have thin and tall bodies or well-built bodies, are warm blooded, tactful and like to talk and eat (Sedyawati 1991: 31).

In Sudamala there is a story about Ni Towok who is hastini, and her partner Semar. Ni Towok and Semar are described as a couple who have very strong sexual desires. The belief that the best women are beautiful, calm, patient, sexually passive and obedient to their husbands is strongly held in Javanese society. There is a saying that a woman will be raised to heaven or dragged to hell by her husband (swarga nunut, neraka katut) (Sedyawati, 1991: 31).

Other ancient folklore from various provinces of Indonesia explained how taboos spread through the community, related the origin of certain ethnic groups or places, and of aspects of behaviour regarded as good or bad, and told stories about community structure. From these types of ancient stories, relationships between the sexes, sex roles expected by the society, sexual activity and cultural inheritance are often evaluated (Sedyawati, 1991: 24).

Ancient stories such as Rara Kidul and Panembahan Senapati from Java, and Cindur Mato from Minangkabau emphasised that sexuality in one’s life is not
important and how sexual desire can be transcendentally fulfilled. Before becoming
the king of Mataram, Senapati was taught by Rara Kidul (queen spirit of the Southern
sea) how to run a kingdom, how to govern people, fairies (peri), and evil spirits.
Senapati and Rara Kidul made love for three nights in her kingdom under the sea that
is run by women (jin, peri, and makhluk halus). After Senapati had enough knowledge
about being a king, he returned to land. The sexual relationship between Senapati and
Rara Kidul is a transcendental type of relationship, different from ordinary human
sexual relationships and that is why there were no children born from it (Sedyawati,

In Cidur Mato, the story told how Bundo Kandung (queen of Pagaruyung) ruled
her kingdom and had a son named Dang Tuanku who was conceived through a
transcendental relationship. When she conceived her baby she dreamt that God said
that her baby would have supernatural power. When Dang Tuanku grew up, his
marriage was arranged to Puti Bungsu, the daughter of Bundo Kandung’s brother,
Rajo Mudo. But Rajo Mudo heard rumours that Dang Tuanku had some kind of
disgraceful disease, so the marriage arrangement was called off and Puti Bungsu was
to be married to Imbang Joyo who had made a proposal. This had to be done so that
Puti Bungsu would not become an old maid. The story ends by telling how Puti
Bungsu was kidnapped and brought to Pagaruyung and the three of them, Bundo
Kandung, Dang Tuanku and Puti Bungsu left the kingdom to be ruled by Cindur
Mato, son of Kambang Bandahari (Bundo Kandung’s dayang who was conceived also
through a transcendent relationship), while the three of them went to live in heaven.
The two stories suggested that a physical, sexual relationship is not important and can
be replaced by a transcendent relationship. The concept of ‘old maid’ also emerged

Beliefs that marriages should not happen between family members started with
ancient stories from North Sulawesi about Toar and Lumimuut and from West Java
about Sangkuriang. In the story of Lumimuut and her son Toar who was conceived by
the west wind, it was emphasised that sexual intercourse between Toar and Lumimuut
was necessary for the origin of the Minahasa ethnic group. After making a promise
that they should separate and carry a length of stick and after the separation they
should marry someone who carried a different length of stick, they married not
knowing that they were related, because while they were separated Toar’s stick had
grown. In the story of Sangkuriang who was handsome and had supernatural powers, a marriage between Sangkuriang and his mother nearly happened but his mother identified his birthmark. After a long journey, Sangkuriang met his mother, not knowing that they were related and they fell deeply in love. In this story, because there was not any urgency to have children, the taboo on incest was not validated (Sedyawati, 1991: 26-28).

A legend from West Kalimantan (Pulangama and Buinasi) differentiates between sexual relationships among gods and human beings. Gods can have transcendental relationships while mortals can only have physical sexual relationships. This story also told about the origin of humans and other beings on earth and about the good manners that should be observed in relating to people and the environment. If people did not observe these manners then there would be penalties, for example, heavy rain that would never stop.

In the story of Pulangama and Buinasi, there are two couples involved: Bintang Muga and Ruai Mana, and Pulanggana and Dayan Rejan. The first couple were created by mystical forces and were the ancestors of all living creatures on earth. Pulanggana is one of the special beings with special mystical powers that was born to Bintang Muga and Ruai Mana. Dayan Rejan was created for Pulanggana and is also a special figure from the godly word (Sedyawati, 1991: 26-28).

It was not until the 1920s that Indonesian novels started to be written in Sumatra. Modern Indonesian literature is the starting point for young Indonesian authors to express feelings and ideas in a literary form which is very different from oral folklore or traditional literature written in Malay, Javanese and other languages (Teeuw, 1967: 1-2). In these Sumatran novels the setting is Mingkabau society, characterised by a matrilineal kinship structure and matrilocal marriage relationship. Matrilineal kinship can be defined thus:

.....kinship is reckoned along the maternal line, inheritance (especially of land, the most important family property) goes primarily from mother to daughter, the children of a marriage belong to the wife's family, and the husband comes to live in the family house of his wife, but to a large extent remains a stranger there. ...The initiative for a marriage often comes from the woman's family, which traditionally 'invites' a man (mendjemput). Polygamy is very frequent, a man has few social obligations to the family of the his wives, and it is considered an enhancement of status to be 'invited' by several people. As long as the adult young man is not married, there is nowhere for him to stay; he is too old to sleep in the family house of his mother, where his brothers-in-law stay and spend the night with his sisters, he would feel malu, lose face when being confronted with them at night; he customarily sleeps in the surau, the religious centre of the village, or he leaves his kampung, his village, temporarily, and goes abroad (merantau) as a trader or earns his living in some other way, to acquire experience. Then,
enriched with money and prestige, he returns as a popular candidate for marriage (Teeuw, 1967: 54-55).

Pre-war Indonesian literature is often about arrangement of marriage forced upon young people by tradition, the conflict between generations, the struggle between adat (tradition) and the personal wishes and desires of young individuals. Expression of love is often phrased by a long series of quatrains, in which the lovers give vent to their mutual feelings in a playful and disguised form. The main characters in these novels are usually very talkative; they discuss the pros and cons of certain problems in long dialogues, and not through musyawarat (discussion and consultation) or sepakat (a unanimous solution) which were common in the traditional Minangkabau society (Teeuw, 1967: 57). Because it is a tradition in Minangkabau that when a boy reaches manhood he has to travel (merantau) as a trader, stories about a Minangkabau man who falls in love with a girl not from his home village are common. The stories usually state the reality that their love has to end because the man has to marry his adat-fiancée, which is usually arranged by their parents back home.

The Sumatran novels often relate how relationships between the sexes are limited by parents and societal control. Arrangement of marriage where the bride and groom have never met before or where the bride or groom cannot refuse the parents' choice is still a common practice. Marriages between different ethnic groups or nationalities (Sumatran-Javanese, Sumatran-Sundanese, Indonesian-Dutch) are not socially accepted. Many of the novels of this time also tell romantic stories of how love between two people is frustrated by the pressure of traditional society; they often end with unhappiness because the lovers cannot be together, or tragically with most of the main characters dying. One novel describes how the married life of a young couple is spoilt by the husband's venereal disease (Teeuw, 1967: 67).

In the later development of the Sumatran novel, emerging themes about the will to choose one's own marriage partner are evident even though the characters have to face conflict with their own parents as well as with the family of the girl. As the Sumatran novels progress, themes emerge about modern youth who are free, and realising their responsibility as young, educated persons in an Indonesian society-in-the-making. During this period, the main themes of the novels are no longer about conflict between the individual and traditional society. The themes now are more on
universal problems, not just problems at the national or provincial level. This era is called the *Pudjangga Baru* era.

Ideas about individualism and freedom were pursued by the authors who have been exposed to Western values from the education they received. At that time they were educated in Dutch schools where they were exposed to modern social values such as freedom in choosing one’s marriage partner (Teeuw, 1967: 55).

Besides literature other forms of popular art that express sexuality very openly are traditional performances famous mostly among the middle and lower classes. There are many kinds of traditional performances: *ludruk* from East Java, *tayub* found in several parts of Java, *ronggeng* among the Betawi, *dombret* in north Karawang and Indramayu and *jaipongan* in West Java. These traditional performances are mostly erotic dances (except for *ludruk*) performed at traditional ceremonies; rites-of-passage celebrations (*slametan*) or public places. Erotic movements of the hips, breasts and also buttocks are performed by the dancers who usually wear a *kebaya* and are accompanied by traditional music. The dancers, called by different names in different parts of Java, receive money from the members of the audience who dance with them or others who enjoy their erotic movements. When the spectators give them money, some put the money directly in the dancer’s brassiere or in a special bowl-tray provided by the dancers’ group. Even more the audience can touch the dancers’ buttocks, hold their hands while handing them money or even take them to a nice quiet spot away from the group (Probonegoro, 1991; Hersilang, 1996: 5).

These dancers are often regarded as prostitutes by the society, which they often deny because there are rules for their protection which they are supposed to obey. Some of these rules are as follows: they cannot engage in a romantic relationship while they are performing, they cannot date while performing, and they must say no when a member of the audience wants to buy something for them while performing.

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24 *Ludruk* is performed by using east Javanese slang language and performed between 8.00 p.m and midnight. The actresses usually wear Javanese costume. These actresses are transvestites (Probonegoro, 1991: 38-39). *Tajaban* is a combination of drinking and dancing party usually given at rites-of-passage celebrations (Geertz: 1960: 299). In *tajaban* the dancers (women) dance accompanied by *gamelan* music. These dancers are also called *ledek, taledek* and *tandak*. Among the Betawi, these dancers are called *coek*. *Tajaban* is well-known in East Java, Central Java, D.I. Yogyakarta, and also among the Betawi community. *Ronggeng* is a type of traditional performance famous among the Betawi. Literarily it means dancer but it also can mean woman artist. Other well-known terms are *ronggeng topeng*, *ronggeng lenong*, and *ronggeng klinengan* (Probonegoro, 1991: 39-41). *Jaipongan* is performed by *sinden* (female dancers) accompanied by traditional Sundanese music. The *sinden* shows erotic movement and often dances involve movement of the buttocks facing the audiences. The *sinden* usually wears a striking costume and likes to show the erotic parts of the body (Probonegoro, 1991: 43).
(Probonegoro, 1991: 48). One of Geertz’s respondents in Modjokuto described a kledek performing in a tayuban as follows:

There is usually one kledek (almost always a prostitute), but at fancy tayubans there could be two or three. The kledek dances for a while at the beginning. When the tayuban itself is about to begin, the host appoints a man pramugari (‘leader’). Now it is the pramugari’s job to point out to the kledek whom she is to choose to dance with her. This man must be clever in gauging the status of people because the order in which people participate is very important and must be right. If the occasion is a wedding, the groom, if a circumcision, the host, must be first. (The women are out behind and don’t like the tajubans at all. Organizations like Perwari, the main prijaji women’s club, hate the tajuban and are dead set against it) (Geertz, 1960: 299).

Twentieth century romance novels are very popular among young people. They are often about two persons from very different social classes or religious backgrounds who become involved in a deep romance. Themes about premarital pregnancies and pregnancy as a consequence of rape also occur in the novels (In-depth interview with a Bahasa Indonesia teacher, Jakarta, 15 August 1994, case no. H31fj). 25 During the 1977 - 1980 period, there was a boom in the Indonesian film industry on themes of youth romance. There were at least ten films with themes on youth romance and romance among senior high school students. Dating between two teenagers who were deeply in love was expressed openly, even though parental control in these relationships was also demonstrated (In-depth interview with a film producer, Jakarta, 27 August 1994, case no. m3fj). 26 In recent times (tracing back to a starting point in 1993), Indonesian soap operas have become a new trend due to the growth of commercial television channels. The Indonesian soap opera themes are mostly romances again between two persons from different social backgrounds. The dramas with mostly middle and upper-class settings show how parents’ control over their children’s romances and dating relationships is still quite evident. Themes such as arrangement of marriage by parents also still emerge in several mini-series (Field observation-notes, Jakarta, 1994-1995).

In sum, from ancient stories and legends, values and norms on sexuality in Indonesia can be traced. Written evidence of ancient stories and legends has shown how sexuality is described very openly without any attempt to restrict sexual expressions. In the later development of the Sumatran novels, in contrast to the

25 Some of the famous novels among the young Indonesians are Badai pasti berlalu (The storm will pass), Karmila, Kabut sutra unggu (A purple silky mist), Romanen, and Pada sebuah kapal (A ship).

26 These films are Semau gue (Dare to be different), Musim bercinta (Season of romance), Gita cinta dari SMA (Love mode from high school), Puspa indah taman hati (Beautiful flowers-garden of love), Remaja idaman (Ideal figure of youth), Setetes kasih dipadang gersang (A drop of love in a deserted area), Melodi cinta (Love melody), Gadis maraton (The marathon girl), Buah terlarang (The forbidden fruit), Gadis penakluk (Girl’s power of subjection).
traditional literature, sexual expression was seen as taboo, expressions of love were often phrased in a disguised form. Another aspect which is in contrast is the marriage institution. In traditional literature, marriage as a formal institution for sexual activity was not important, but in the Sumatran novels, the importance of marriage as an institution and the arrangement of marriage were stressed. The ancient stories and legends record the phenomenon of transcendental sex, the concept of being an old maid and the discouragement of incestuous marriages.

2.5 The coming of Islam: a source of conservatism in sexuality

Islam is a religion. It is also, almost inseparably from this, a community, a civilization and a culture. It is true that many countries through which the Qur'anic faith spread already possessed ancient and important cultures. Islam absorbed these cultures, and assimilated itself to them in various ways, to a far greater extent than it attempted to supplant them. But in doing this, it provided them with attributes in common, with a common attitude to God, to men and to the world, and thus ensured, through the diversities of language, of history and of race, the complex unity of the dar al-Islam, the 'house' or 'world of Islam'.

The history of the Muslim peoples and countries is thus a unique example of a culture with a religious foundation, uniting the spiritual and temporal, sometimes existing side by side with 'secular' cultures, but most often absorbing them by becoming very closely interlinked with them (Gardet, 1970: 569).

When, why and how Islam came to Indonesia and the process of conversion of the Indonesians to Islam have been debated by several scholars. These scholars have not come to a definite conclusion because very few historical records of Islamisation have survived. Besides documented records, gravestones, Indonesian legends and travellers' accounts are also often used to link historical information on Islamisation (Ricklefs, 1981: 3-4). But the condition of the sources can make the study of religion difficult because they are unequally distributed, in region, period and social level (Tarling, 1992: 54).

In the study of Islam in Southeast Asia it is interesting that Islam is seen as integrated with the social and cultural life of its people, unlike in modern Western societies, where religion is seen more as a separate part (De Casparis and Mabbett, 1992: 276; Tarling 1992: 54). Gardet described how Islam blends with the existing culture but still gives a firm understanding of God, man and life. Islam mixes with

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27 Indonesian legends are documents how Indonesian themselves told the story of their conversion. These legends came in the eighteenth-and-nineteenth century, much later after the coming of Islam. Even though these legends are not reliable historical accounts, one has to consider their values on the information they provided, especially information regarding the process of conversion which began with the elite and worked downwards. These legends include Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai ('Story of the kings of Pasai'), Babad Tanah Jawi ('History of the land of Java'), and Sejarah Banten ('history of Banten'). From these legends, the original events of conversion can also be revealed.
spiritual and temporal beliefs and even with ‘secular’ culture (Gardet, 1970: 569). In this case religious practices among the Javanese is a good example, with Islam blending with the existing Hindu-Buddhist traditions.

Islam was communicated in Indonesia by several methods. Degraaf (1970: 123-124) related three common media for the propagation of Islam in South-East Asia: by Muslim traders; by preachers and holy men who set out from India and Arabia specifically to convert unbelievers and increase the knowledge of the faithful; and by war against irreligious states. Ricklefs (1981: 3) identified two other possible means by which Islam spread in Indonesia: indigenous Indonesians came into contact with Islam and chose conversion; and foreign Muslims (Arabs, Indians, Chinese) settled permanently in Indonesia, married local people, adopted the local life style and became Javanese or Malay. But the role of Muslim traders was very important as it is obvious that Islam is strongest along the routes where trade developed (Degraaf, 1970: 123-124; Watson Andaya, 1992: 514).

...Islam followed trade. North Sumatra, where the trade-route from India and the West reaches the Archipelago, was where Islam first obtained a firm footing. Malacca, the main trading center of the area in the ninth/fifteenth century, was the great stronghold of the faith, from which it was disseminated along the trade-routes, north-east to Brunei and Sulu, south-east to the north Java ports and the Moluccas (Degraaf, 1970:123-124).

Beliefs and values regarding sexuality and mixing between male and female are very clear and strict in Islam. Laws regulating mixing between male and female such as gazing, shaking hands, meeting alone with the opposite sex, talking, incidentally touching-bumping into someone, walking in a crowd can be found in Qur’an and hadist.28 The rationale of restricting gazing towards the opposite sex is because all relationships started with gazing, then talking and meeting alone. Women are restricted from going out alone without the company of someone who is their nearest kin. In Islam it is believed that as soon as a girl becomes a teenager, then her whole body is seen as naked (aurat), that is why she should cover her whole body except for her face and hands (see Section 1.2.2., Chalil, 1969: 220-231, Surah An-Nur no. 30-31 in Qur’an).

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28 Islam has two fundamental sources, the Qur’an and hadist. The Qur’an is the word of God (Kalam Allah), which was verbally revealed to Muhammad over the course of twenty-three years...The Hadists is a narrative giving information about Muhammad’s sayings, actions, and his approval or disproval of his companions’ acts...Hadists are accepted as the authoritative second source of the content of Islam in addition to the Qur’an...The Qur’anic verses are subjected to possible interpretations and analysis. There are two principles used for interpreting of the law; Qiyas (analogy) to be thought out by relevant reasoning or ijtihad and ijma’ or consensus (Makruf, forthcoming).
In pre-Islamic period, premarital sexuality, fidelity within marriage, temporary marriage or concubinage, women’s autonomy and sexuality were less restricted. With strong laws regulating mixing between the opposite sex, marriage, polygamy and divorce, Islam has influenced the notion of conservatism towards sexuality. This is indisputable when one observed the linkage between the starting point of the spread of Islam in Indonesia and sexual conservatism in that area. For example, sexual conservatism is dominant in Sumatra compared to East Timor, because in Sumatra Islamic reformation movement was strongest. Other examples are the practice of the insertion of tiny penis balls in some parts of Indonesia that was quickly suppressed by Islam and severe punishment for premarital or extramarital sexual relations under Islamic law that have been adapted to local customs (see Section 2.2).

To preserved Islamic values, in the first decade of the twentieth century, Muhammadijah made the reformation of Muslim education. During that time, Muhammadijah realised that education in Indonesia was already divided into two directions: the secular Dutch education which ignored the teaching of religion, and the pesantren education which taught only religion. To overcome this problem, Muhammadijah divided its educational reform program into two parts: giving religious education in the Dutch secular schools and establishing schools in which both religion and science are taught (Mukti, 1969: 39-40). At the present time, the government of Indonesia enforces religion as one of the compulsory subjects given from pre school to high school. Besides government schools, numerous religious schools that incorporate religion and science have been developed through out the region. Among the famous and elite are Muhammadijah and Al-Azhar. In Indonesia various channels are used to preserve Islamic values, the government political will through the education system, easy access to religious establishment throughout the regions, religious preachings, parents and family members through the upbringing of children, and religious clubs (see Section 1.2.2). Hence Islamic teaching and values are in this case towards the conservative notion on sexuality are strongly preserved and passed from generation to generation.

2.6 Conclusion

Indonesians have been influenced by many social and religious forces: Hinduism and Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. These influences were pioneered by
international traders from India, Portugal, China, and through the international trade routes of Sumatra, Java, Batavia (Jakarta) and Maluku. Then the Dutch colonised parts of Indonesia for three hundred years working their way through trade, politics and the administrative bureaucracy of the Indonesian urban areas. The Dutch made their starting point in Batavia and worked mostly with Indonesians in the urban areas. These social and religious forces have been influenced and assimilated with the existing culture of Indonesia and have influenced the notions of sex and marriage in Indonesia.

An explanation of Indonesian conservatism towards sex is not easy to find. It is hard to identify religion or other social forces as the cause and to explain the effect of assimilation of these forces by the existing culture. In the past, Islam and the Dutch may have influenced the notion of sexuality among the Indonesians in a conservative direction, but today Western influences are liberal. Where does this place religious beliefs which have generally tried to suppress sexuality and set up conservative values towards sex? Societal values and beliefs, religious values and beliefs, individual values and beliefs, individual behaviour and how these ideas interact are complex matters.

Sex in Indonesia was once seen as a natural phenomenon that could be engaged in without any kind of formality. This can be understood as traditional Indonesian sexuality because these stories were found in the Javanese literature, some before and some after the coming of Islam and colonialism.

The Indonesian traditional notion of sexuality seems to have been very open, permissive and quite surprising in that women have autonomous power over sexual pleasure. After the coming of Islam mostly, and partly through the Dutch influence, Indonesian sexual activity and to some extent arrangement of marriage became very conservative, especially among the middle-class: Islamic law codes were mostly strong among the middle-elite traders, and the Dutch regulations on marriage partners were mostly enforced among government officials.

Religious values and Western influences or the assimilation of these forces cannot be blamed as the single cause of the changes in behaviour and values in Indonesia. Indonesians have assimilated these values in accordance with the existing values and culture. It is possible that people can have conservative attitudes to sex and to practise religious beliefs and yet practise liberal sexual behaviour.
Are prostitution, premarital sex, premarital pregnancy, premarital abortion, *selirs* in the Javanese courts, and married men having mistresses regarded as values influenced by the West? In Chapter 4 the emerging trends of junior high school, high school and university students who have sex for pleasure and also in some cases for money are elaborated. Is this sexual behaviour specific to Indonesians? How do religion and Westernisation play their roles in these liberal sexual values and behaviour? One thing is clear: in general most religions teach conservative sexual attitudes except various orgiastic sects including Children of God who teach the opposite. While Westernisation in the past had more influence at the conservative end of sexuality, in recent development, the influence of Westernisation was more toward the liberal end of sexuality.