

THE GLITTERING WORLD: FEMALE YOUTH AND GENDERED NOCTURNAL SPACE IN YOGYAKARTA¹

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Dugem (nightclubs) represent one of the few nocturnal spaces where the pressures of the outside world are temporarily forgotten and non-normative genders and sexualities explored. In Indonesian cities with large student populations, clubs (and cafes selling alcohol) flourish, despite being viewed as immoral havens of hedonist depravity by conservative and religious fractions. Youth who resist societal norms by engaging in behaviours such as alcohol and drug consumption and sexual experimentation outside of marriage (behaviours depicted as condoned in *dugem*) are stigmatised as engaging in *pergaulan bebas* (free social relations).

The public discourse of *pergaulan bebas* acts as a moral gauge of acceptable social interactions (for youth, and especially girls). It represents both a comment on the changing values and behaviours of Indonesian youth and a backlash against what is

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constructed as the infiltration of an ‘immoral western (sexual) culture’ in Indonesian society. *Dugem* are seen as primary sites of *pergaulan bebas*. The ‘moral panic’ underscoring the relation between *dugem* and *pergaulan bebas* in part adds to the allure of and desire to participate in *dugem*.

This discussion of female participation in *dugem* and negotiation of *dugem* lifestyle is part of my dissertation on female youth gender and sexual subjectivities, which I analyse through a deconstruction of the discourse of *pergaulan bebas*.² Several of the behaviours that are implied in the discourse of *pergaulan bebas* and occur in *dugem* are typified as a rite of passage in the transition to adulthood for male youth. Engagement by female youth, on the other hand, is an issue of concern: one that signals public disquiet regarding shifting gender norms, new forms of femininity and the potential threat to the established gender regime.

This paper explores female youth in Yogya engaged in *dugem* and café³ culture. Initially I explore the negative perceptions of *dugem* among conservative youth to highlight the wider public discourse on *dugem* and youth morality. After sketching the ambience of *dugem*, I engage current theoretical perspectives on rave and club culture to locate *dugem* in Java in these debates. Similar to the interests of past researchers, in particular McRobbie and Pini (on the UK scene) and Beazley (on Indonesia), my focus is female subjects. I share their proposition that *dugem* are sites of playful experimentation and of female sexual and gendered rehearsal. However, my focus is on the nocturnal lifestyle choices of female youth as both clubbers and club staff negotiating access to nocturnal spaces. Through an overview of the local club scene, I distinguish two different ‘classes’ of *dugem*. These cater to two distinct patron groups – middle-lower class and middle-upper class groups: the majority of clubs cater to the latter.⁴ One club, catering predominantly to a high-school-aged crowd (under 17 years), bridges class divides through its exclusivity.

² It is based on 12 months fieldwork in Yogyakarta in 2007-08.

³ Cafes in this context refer to both licensed and unlicensed nighttime venues where bands, DJs and musicians are a regular feature.

⁴ I do not identify clubs by name and refer only to the general area of location.

My purpose here is to point out that while *dugem* offer space for playful experimentation with new subjectivities the gender norms of the outside world are not suspended once inside. In elite clubs, there is a tendency to greater non-normative sexual and gendered playfulness and experimentation among clubbers than there is in other clubs. In both the club catering to the younger age group and the only middle to lower class club, gender differences and inequalities are reinforced through various normatively gendered practices such as those involved in the maintenance of *prestasi*, which itself is gendered.⁵

Introduction

Of post-New Order Indonesia Barbara Hatley has recently commented,

Today the good wife and mother image has arguably been replaced by a plurality of female forms. Uncertainty about the direction of Indonesia as a nation and opposing visions of Indonesian identity are reflected in conflicting, contested images of women's bodies. Moreover, as democratisation facilitates the political involvement of a wide range of social and religious groups, women's bodies become not merely symbols of opposing positions in a discrete, elite-controlled domain of state politics. Instead sexual morality and propriety are real issues of contest at the societal level, with women's bodies as the terrain of struggle placed centre stage.⁶

In this context, it is not surprising that *dugem* are condemned as sites of immoral depravity by traditionalists and conservative (particularly Islamic) groups. *Dugem* operate however, as business enterprises of a market-based economy, though generally promoted on television as controversial. Also, as Thornton in her analysis of UK club cultures has noted, '...disapproving 'moral panic' stories in mass circulation tabloid newspapers often have the effect of certifying transgression and legitimizing youth cultures' (1995: 6).⁷ In the newspaper, apart from a small, daily

⁵ *Prestasi* is the sum of one's achievements or accomplishments through which individuals are identified socially and through which they lay claim status in Javanese social hierarchy and other more specific subcultural hierarchies. *Prestasi* are 'positive and foster social connectivity' (Boellstorff 2007: 67).

⁶ Hatley, B, 'Hearing Women's Voices, Contesting Women's Bodies in Post New Order Indonesia', in *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, issue 16, March 2008.

⁷ Thornton, S, 1995. *Club Cultures: Music and Subcultural Capital*, Polity Press: Cambridge. p. 6.

half-column of *dugem* event times, DJs and themes,⁸ articles on *dugem* are rare and often take the form of implicit advertising; for example of a national bar tender competition promoted as contributing significantly to tourism in the Sleman region.⁹ Letters of opinion by Moslem student leader's call for *dugem* closure, arguing that *dugem* undermine Yogya's reputation as the city of education. More visible however, are the advertisements at major traffic intersections promoting *dugem* as privatised special events. Through a multiplicity of discourses and media, *dugem* become part of the 'everyday' imaginary of urban youth.

Youth attitudes to *dugem* reflect the ambivalence and polarity of the discourse on *dugem* and range from exuberant enthusiasm to fear and disgust. Nancy Smith-Hefner's recent work presents the views of conservative Javanese Muslim youth who associate clubbing with sexual experimentation (2006: 164). Smith-Hefner's participants indicate a fear of clubs, and an association of clubbers with the decay of moral values, with middle class youth who come from *broken home*¹⁰ and with *pergaulan bebas*. Youth who do not frequent *dugem* often hold the perception that 'It is damaging to the self' (Eka 17, Christian senior high school). Another student from a *madrrasah*¹¹ commented,

I try to mix with many people, those who go to cafés/clubs differ from me. They have their own philosophies on why they go to places like that. Most of them go there just for fun (*berhura-hura*), and for most of them it's because they are from *broken home*, they are not supported by family, they have not been cared for (*diperhatikan*). Some think, 'I am not hurting anyone'. I had a friend like that but I ended the friendship. If I am not able to help them (*ajari*), they don't want help, I distance them'. (Huni, 16).¹²

⁸ In the respected Yogya newspaper *Kedaulatan Rakyat*.

⁹ The Yogyakarta Special Region is comprised of five regencies: Sleman to the north, Bantul to the south, Gunung Kidul to the east and Kulon Progo to the west. The city of Yogyakarta is central to these regencies, is smallest in area and most densely populated regency. Sleman is home to several highly prestigious universities, is closest to the city of Yogyakarta, has a high student population, and features most of the five star hotels of the Yogyakarta Special Region. All upmarket *dugem* are in Sleman.

¹⁰ *Broken home* is a term used to refer to situations of divorce, parental separation, or separation from family. An English language term with extensive negative connotations in Indonesia that implicate children from *broken home* as victims (*korban*).

¹¹ Islamic school.

¹² All translations are by the author.

There is a strong association between *dugem* and hedonism among conservative Islamic youth and commentators on youth issues. Achmad Charris Zupair (1998)¹³ argues that hedonism is linked to development and conceptions of modernity:

Material symbols such as architecturally designed homes, modern shopping malls, places of recreation, modern foods and way of life, must all imitate a modern nation, one that is identical to the west. Of course, on the other hand, anything that suggests (*berbau*) the “traditional”, not to mention that which we already possess must be considered out of date and therefore left behind. In truth, this perception has permeated almost every aspect of society...The criteria for success is no longer in the superiority of the spiritual, but is in nothing but the excess of the body.¹⁴

Hedonism is the personal pursuit of bodily and sensory pleasure, of *nafsu*, which Bennett suggests is ‘often thought to be the cause of infidelity, family break-ups and divorce’ (2001: 145) and more commonly used in reference to fulfillment of male sexual desire. Interviews and blogs overwhelmingly suggest that youth who are not interested in *dugem* see those who do frequent them as hedonistic (*hedonis*), materialistic and as succumbing to base passions in the pursuit of short-term goals, such as becoming *gaul*.¹⁵

Dugem Evolution

Before I begin I must clarify that *dugem* and rave (*parti*/party or *even*/event) are perceived similarly in Indonesia (Beazley 2008, forthcoming). The global phenomenon of rave or EDMC (electronic dance music culture) and dance parties evolved in the UK in the late 1980s. Originally, raves were spontaneous, all-night events involving a distinctive blend of electronically sampled, dubbed and mixed beats often coupled with the use of synthetic drugs such as ecstasy (MDMA). Raves were characterised by the PLUR (Peace, Love Unity and Respect)¹⁶ rave/clubbing

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¹⁴ Zubair, A. C. ‘Tinjauan Moral dan Kultural Terhadap Hedonisme di Kalangan Generasi Muda’, online publication, 1998. accessed 1.06.08. My translation. <http://filsafat.ugm.ac.id/downloads/artikel/hedonisme.pdf>.

¹⁵ Among youth, to be *gaul* is to be popular, socially mobile and up with current youth trends.

¹⁶ Beazley found clubbers in Bali to be ‘more in tune’ (2008) with the PLUR philosophy than those in Singapore, Melbourne, London and Jakarta.

philosophy, which enhances communality, cohesion, and inhibits (male) aggression, and class and ethnic distinctions. The Indonesian word *dugem* derives from the amalgam of the words *dunia* (world) and *gemerlap* (glittering or sparkling), a concept that has virtually replaced that of *disko* (discotheque). The word *dugem* arose through the everyday language of Indonesian youth (*bahasa gaul*). Through the frequent utterance of words in specific combinations or as short phrases, an expression such as *dunia gemerlap* becomes *dugem*. In everyday public usage, the new word symbolises club cultures.

Feeling the ambience of Dugem

Dugem describes an atmosphere, a venue and an event and is used for raves, clubs and cafés that feature alcohol, music and dance. In the discussion that follows, I refer to *dugem* as clubs and clubbing experiences. Music is the central element, enhanced through the hypnotic combination of laser and strobe lights and multiple big screen visual displays and effects: creating the illusion of momentary spaces of dark and light and of constant motion. The ambience of *dugem* stimulates the expression of emotions and of the self, through the body as a site of pleasure. The female body, elsewhere bound by rules and regulatory practices, can move freely, sensually and sexually, as desired, to the beat of the music.

Let's Dance Together

Let's dance together,
Get on the dance floor,
The party won't start,
If you stand still like that,
Let's dance together,
Let's party and
Turn off the lights,

Berdiri semua (Everyone is up)
Di ruang yang redup (In the dim room)
Bercahaya bagai kilat (Strobe light flashing)
Aku dan yg lain (Me and the others)
Menikmati semua (We're all enjoying)
Irama berderap kencang (The fast rhythmic beat)
Tak ada gundah (There is no depression)

Hilang semua penat di dada (All weariness is gone)
Lihat DJ memainkan musik (See the DJ play music)
Disco dimulai (The disco has begun)

In 2007, the catchy clubmix ‘Let’s Get Together’, written and performed by Melly Goeslow (2006) had become a clubbing anthem. In the clubs of Yogya, the beat still gets the crowd up and dancing, thigh to thumping thigh, legs astride, pelvis to pelvis (well almost!) and face to face: the intimacy intense and exhilarating. The invitation in the English language chorus gets people on their feet and the sentiment of the Indonesian words tells why they came. Most come simply to enjoy themselves (*enjoy aja*) and experience this sense of enjoyment through the body. Of course, interpretations of *enjoy* are very subjective. Whether pleasure is achieved through simply getting out for the night, through dancing, meeting new people, or the high that alcohol and drugs bring, the vibe of *dugem*, once the venue is filled, is euphoric, and the sense of community and humanity, unifying. Strangers quickly become friends (if only for a few hours), dancing together and sharing drinks and cigarettes. The room is filled with smoke. Shared shot glasses are passed around and they come thick and fast. Acceptance of the generosity of others generates a strong community feel through shared progressive inebriation and the pleasure it brings. Hence the expression ‘*parti abis*’ – party ‘til you can party no more.

The allure of the party atmosphere and desire to *dugem*¹⁷ is strongly linked to youth conceptions of sociability (*gaul*). Among clubbers, youth inexperienced in *dugem* are thought of as *kuper* (*kurang pergaulan*/lacking in social interactions and experiences) or as not getting out enough. For youth willing to brave the ‘risks’ of *dugem*, portrayed in the media as having the potential to lead one to fall from grace (*menjerumus*), *dugem* provide the opportunity to ‘*relak*’ (relax). *Relak* is by no means a passive or sedentary activity, rather, it is a sense of letting one’s hair down, having fun (*enjoy aja*) and not exerting mental effort (*hilangkan stress/buat*

¹⁷ Often *dugem* is used as a verb, as in the example ‘*aku mau dugem*’, I want to *dugem*.

refreshing). As one clubber put it, clubbing helps to ‘release stress... free oneself from the chaos/tumultuousness of everyday life’¹⁸.

Engaging rave literature in the analysis of dugem

There is scant critical literature on *dugem*, clubbing and raves in Indonesia to date.¹⁹ Although *dugem* are not a new phenomenon, this dearth of research is related to the tendency of Indonesian social science researchers in the past to shy away from the analysis of themes considered controversial by the state (Farid 2005: 168). Harriet Beazley is one of the few published researchers on female Indonesian youth engagement with raves and clubs. Beazley’s analysis draws on the works of Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS in Birmingham) scholars on youth subcultures in the UK.

From within the CCCS, Angela McRobbie (1991) criticised the work on youth rave subcultures in the UK for its tendency to emphasise the place of male youth and its failure to address issues of female youth involvement. In particular, McRobbie doubted raves reflected the ‘broader changing climate of sexual politics’ (1994: 168) due to the marginality of females in the cultural production of rave. Maria Pini, however, sees McRobbie’s emphasis on cultural and material production within the CCCS, as further marginalising female youth participation and experience in raves and foreclosing discussion of female youth engagement (Pini 1997: 153). Pini’s assertion that the emphasis on cultural production obscures the actual subjective involvement of female youth in rave needs to be unpacked in the context of Yogya, given that females are central to the construction of the phenomenon of *dugem*.

Cewek²⁰ and dugem production

¹⁸ <http://matajakarta.blogspot.com/2007/05/dugem-narkoba-dan-sex.html>.

¹⁹ Recently there have been a few final assessment pieces by undergraduate students in Indonesia on the topic of *dugem*.

²⁰ *Cewek*²⁰ is a colloquial Indonesian term for a female youth. For male youth the term is *cowok*.

There are distinct differences between the cultural production of raves in the UK and *dugem* in Indonesia. Firstly, unlike rave, *dugem* do not occur spontaneously. Rather, they are nightclub businesses subject to rigid regulatory practices. For example, they close during the Islamic holy month of Ramadhan. Secondly, females have a significant role in the cultural production of *dugem* and feature at *all* levels of *dugem* marketing, including daily newspaper advertisements (as *seksi dancers*), street banners, advertisements and articles within *dugem* zines.²¹ These representations often draw on the ‘moral panic’ surrounding *dugem* by playing on the metaphor of ‘sin’ (in English), and are replete with images contrasting good and evil/the angelic and the demonic. For example, one promotion article in a *dugem* zine featured two professional female DJs, one photographed wearing horns, the other angels wings, and both standing together over a flaming turntable. The commentary stressed their sexiness, their ‘stunning looks’ and their ‘sexier and dirtier’ mixing styles. The defiant female body and deviant femininity are commoditised by clubs to attract patrons. These advertisements undeniably cater to the heteronormative male gaze.

Dugem, cewek and nocturnal space

Pini has suggested that raves challenge ‘heterosexual masculinity’s traditional centrality’ and in her view the rave phenomenon ‘for this reason alone is worthy of attention’ (Pini 1997: 155). She sees the female experience of rave as ‘liberating’ (p. 154). Beazley (forthcoming 2008) also emphasizes the liberating aspects of *dugem* as ‘nightscapes’ where female youth express their ‘refusal of the conventional notions of femininity in dominant discourse’, for example going out late, drinking, drug taking and dressing to please themselves not others. However, it is my view that any ‘liberating’ aspects of *dugem* for female youth however are temporary and transient, but they do provide opportunity for the creative experimentation with ‘self-invention’ (Walkerdine 2001), the accumulation of

²¹ Zines are small circulation magazines. *Dugem* zines are produced by clubs or within the clubbing network.

‘subcultural capital’ (Thornton 1995)²² and employment within a diversifying labour market.

Importantly, in Indonesia, female clubbers and club staff are always aware of, and must constantly negotiate, the general societal impressions of them as ‘bad girls’ (*cewek nakal*) (see Beazley 2008), ‘loose women’ (*perek/perempuan eksperimen*), or worse, as prostitutes (*pelacur*) with no morals (*tuna susila*). This is evident in the following comment:

There is the perception that girls who go clubbing are bad girls (*cewek nakal*) but actually people who go to nightclubs only want to release stress (*melepas stress*), to have a good time (*senang-senang aja*), because its fun (*asyik*), but we only drink: our bodies feel light (*enteng*) and we dance ‘til dawn. Yeh, maybe it’s that girls leave home at night and come home in the morning that makes people think negatively. When I go clubbing I sleep at my friends place, a boarding house with no rules (*kos bebas*). (Ajeng 19, student at a tertiary academy)

People think that girls who go clubbing must be bad girls (*cewek nakal*), that’s not necessarily the case, it’s a misperception. Since I was a kid I liked all kinds of dancing, it was a hobby...I could forget about my problems for a while, make new friends, mix a lot. (Ari 18, shop assistant)

Ari’s position in the family as significant breadwinner has meant that her parents have reappropriated conventional gender norms in consenting to her going out until late at night. In line with dominant gendered conventions, she must be in the company of one particular, slightly older *cowok* from her *kampung* whom her parents had known since he was a child. That Ari works fulltime and contributes substantially to the family income and education of her younger siblings (her father is a bus conductor), suggests that she has significant agency in negotiating with her parents on what she can and cannot do. In interview, Ari indicated that her reputation had been tainted locally through her previous drug use and her boyfriend’s current prison sentence. As such, she is not particularly interested in

²² Thornton has elaborated on Bourdieu’s (1984) notions of ‘cultural capital’ and ‘social capital’ in her use of the term ‘subcultural capital’. She argues the term enables a view to those ‘subspecies of capital operating within other less privileged domains’ (1995: 10). Thornton stresses the media as a ‘primary factor governing the circulation’ of subcultural capital (ibid. 13).

maintaining her ‘good name’ (*nama baik*) as normatively perceived. More important than maintaining her good name is maintaining her wellbeing, her employment and her commitment (*saling percaya*) to her boyfriend. Her chaperoned nocturnal adventures, condoned by her parents, mean that she is both safe and faithful – her faithfulness is witnessed by her boyfriend’s peers.

Customarily, the act of going out at night unaccompanied by a male family member or *kak* (older male) in itself resists conventional gender norms for females in Indonesia. Among the parent generation, male chaperones accompanied couples on all outings. Nowadays, in many cases, boyfriends or male friends may act as lone chaperones. Outings that exceed the normative *jam malam* for girls of around 10pm are more resistant to convention, and for this reason, *cewek* must employ complex strategies to participate in *dugem*.

Most female clubbers lie about their plans in an attempt to maintaining their ‘good girl’ (*cewek baik*) reputations among family and local community (see also Beazley 2008). Those who live with family or in *kos* with strict *jam malam* (evening curfew) often head off for a night out wearing their sexier clubbing gear either underneath their clothes or concealed in their bag. Beazley found that female youth commonly tell their parents they are going shopping at the mall and then stay at a friend’s *kos*. As she suggests, parental consent in this case indicates ‘a refashioning of dominant constructions of femininity’. That is, ‘...shopping is regarded as a feminine practice...while going to clubs or raves is not’ (2008).²³ As Ajeng mentioned, her friend’s *kos* is a *kos bebas*,²⁴ where few restrictions are enforced and no-one (of significance to her) can observe her moves.²⁵

²³ I doubt however, that parents would consent to their daughters going shopping at the mall until after midnight. This is more an issue of feminised space and limitations on female access to nocturnal public spaces.

²⁴ Boarding house with no evening curfew and few rules and restrictions regarding visitors.

²⁵ I also had to request permission from the *Pak RT* (local leader) and the local women’s organisation to return home late after clubbing.

Prescriptions of correct conduct for females have a direct relation to the notion of harmony (*rukun*) in the urban *kampung* (village). Female youth not living with parents also face pressure from *ibu kos*²⁶ to conform to standards of femininity in maintaining their good reputations, the good name of the *kos*, that of the *ibu kos* and the position of the *kos* in relation to the *kampung*. Mimi, a tourism student from Sumatra had to take on evening work to subsidise completion of her studies and fund her costly application for overseas work. A group of her friends from Sumatra opened a café and she began working as a waitress from 7pm-1am each night.

Since I started working in the café the woman who runs the boarding house I live in has said I must move on in three months. She doesn't like me coming home late at night. She doesn't understand that I need the money to support myself (Mimi, 20).

As Mimi's comments show, being female and out late attracts social sanction in the local community by other females (in this case the *ibu kos*). In addition, Mimi experienced social isolation among her boarding house peers since starting her new night job. Rumours circulated that she was an *ayam dugem* (*dugem* chick), prostituting herself at night. The café Mimi worked in was newly established on the arterial road that traversed my *kampung* and as such, I was privy to neighbourhood gossip that suggested the café was a front for a prostitution syndicate.

As Teo (23), a university student and *dugem* guest relations officer (GRO) stated, 'I live in a *kos bebas* because both the *kos* residents and *bapak kos*²⁷ pay no attention really to what I do – they are *cuek*' (pay no mind). For most *cewek* who take on late night *dugem* work, living in a *kos bebas* where interactions between *kos* residents and within the *kampung* community is minimal and characterized by tolerance rather than disapproval, is prerequisite.

One of my neighbours, Ibu Sinah, has faced social sanction in the *kampung* regarding her daughter's sexy dancing work. Sinah's family is relatively poor and

²⁶*Ibu*/mother, *kos*/boarding house. *Ibu kos* is the term used to refer to women who manage female boarding houses.

²⁷ Male *kos* owner/manager.

does not own a motorcycle. At 20 years of age, her daughter is a skilled traditional dancer. Due to the competitiveness of the traditional dance ‘industry’, and limited scope for employment, her daughter has diversified into *seksi dancing* work primarily because it pays better. Ibu Sinah expressed that her *kampung* neighbours had questioned her daughter’s activities, asking her ‘what kind of girl is she?’ They consider her daughter ‘*nakal*’. Sinah did not agree with their comments and believed ‘it is a parent’s role to support their children’s choices’, especially when those choices are economic ones of benefit to the extended family.

Sinah’s daughter Rani has previously danced in a club known as a *dugem pagi* (morning *dugem*, read early evening *dugem*) catering to *remaja* (13-17 years). In Yogya, this club to the north is open most nights at 6.30pm and caters to this younger crowd. It closes at around 9pm (when malls close) so as not to be criticised for infringing upon homework time. Wednesday nights are especially popular for all clubs with this club the first port of call on a big midweek night out for younger clubbers. Upon entry fee of \$1.20, one receives a complementary voucher for a small, boxed drink of fruit tea! From my vantage point at the bar, few people bought alcohol. The entertainment that accompanies the mix of club beats is ‘Red Hot’, a group of local young female *seksi dancers*.²⁸ On my first visit to this club, I spoke with one of the dancers about her work. Similar to Rani, she said she did it to support her family.

In terms of traditional notions of femininity and the spatial restrictions placed on female bodies in Indonesia, *dugem* provide the temporary space for relatively unrestrained bodily and affective expression. In planning a night out clubbing, *cewek* employ myriad strategies that indicate negotiation with gendered class factors, status within the family, community values and access to subcultural capital. In this way, I concur with Beazley, McRobbie (1994) and Pini (1997) that raves and *dugem* are sites for what Pini refers to as the ‘undoing of traditional cultural associations’ (1997: 158). In this site of nocturnal gendered and sexual

²⁸ Italics are used to indicate a unique cultural phenomenon in Indonesia. The name Red Hot is a pseudonym.

experimentation, the undoing of traditional gendered cultural practices moreover exposes a new arena for the sexualised commoditisation of the feminine and the female body, that of *seksi dancing*.

Seksi dancing is seen as exciting and liberating among female youth, especially those from poorer families. The phenomenon of female *seksi dancers* has taken entertainment in Indonesia to a new level. *Seksi dancers* not only headline on a par with DJs but also feature prominently in the line-up at concerts and sporting events. Their dance costumes are skimpy and routines are a show of soft striptease, pole dancing and simulated (heterosexual/ised) sex between two or more women. Among Rani's younger neighbours (girls aged 8-20) in the *kampung*, the art of *seksi dancing* is associated with paid dancing, social prestige, fashion, glamour and modernity, that is, as a form of local celebrity.

Class and Dugem in Yogya

In Yogya, there are two 'classes' of *dugem*: those at the top and those at the bottom end of the market. Most are located at the top or exclusive end of the market (and northern part of town) and cater to the middle-upper classes. One of the few published Indonesian researchers of *dugem*, Hatib Sangaji, has analysed arguably the most exclusive club in Yogya, which is part of a nationwide franchise of six clubs linked to the Sheraton Hotel chain.²⁹ In Sangaji's view, 'it is only members of urban middle and elite classes who frequent 'nocturnal pleasure spaces' (2006: 55) such as this one, together with 'lonely married women' (ibid).³⁰ Urban middle class youth, he argues, choose to spend their spare/leisure time 'postponing sleep and drinking coffee or alcohol' (ibid: 56). He compares the extravagance of urban middle class youth to the lives of lower class youth who he suggests find it hard enough to meet even the most basic of needs. While *dugem* such as the one Sangaji

³⁰ Sangaji's research did not mention the phenomenon of *Om-om*, middle-upper class males often away from home seeking entertainment, sex and pleasure with what is referred to in Indonesia as *daun mudah* (lit. young leaves), a metaphor for youthful bodies.

examined may be relatively exclusive spaces for middle to elite class groups, youth across classes, including unemployed youth, do engage in *dugem*.

In exploring this class theme, Sangaji borrows from Sahlin's (1988) notion of the 'cosmologies of capitalism', identifying the club he studied as one 'culture area' of the city where admittance is 'socially...or economically bounded' according to income, class and social status (ibid). As he suggests, once the AUD\$6 (Rp50 000) entrance fee is paid, 'you will be a respected guest if you are able to buy a bottle costing at least Rp 900 000(AUD\$100)' (ibid). The guest (*bos*)³¹ who purchases a bottle of spirits has it brought through the crowd to their table by a *parti girl*³² in mini skirt. A lit sparkler announces the purchase and the celebration it marks. The bottle draws attention to the wealth of the guest and adds to their *prestasi* among friends and onlookers. Exclusive clubs such as this feature diverse roles for female *servers*,³³ as hosts, *parti girls*, waitresses, and GRO (guest relations officers),³⁴ and who may supplement their incomes through performing sexual favours to guests. Female *servers* are most often university students. The club exploits their already established and ongoing social affiliations in their everyday *kampus*/social circles: their *kampus* affiliations are central to their employment prospects. The subcultural capital they accrue through their work and study inclines them to wide interactions (*banyak pergaulan*). They are *gaul* as it is conceived as educated, socially competent, and educated in the practices of the clubbing industry.

Among clubbers, choice of club is largely dependent on access to subcultural capital. Subcultural capital is both expressed and gained and through expenditure, being seen at a *dugem*, talking about last night's clubbing experience, knowledge of

³¹ Term generally used for respected males in street and business interactions. Term often indicates street credibility.

³² University students with wide campus networks who are employed in a one night basis for a flat rate of Rp 25000 (AUD\$3) plus tips.

³³ *Servers* is the gloss used for club floor staff.

³⁴ Long-term employment position. Similar to hosts and waitresses, their role is to contact previous patrons (usually male) by phone and inform them of coming events. This means that they go to the club mid afternoon to access the guest database and make calls to guests informing them of the night's theme. They are responsible for guest numbers. Females in these roles are paid a flat nightly rate of AUD\$1.20 plus tips.

the DJ circuit and new mixes, youth parlance, fashion and style, among other more subtle, in-group subcultural factors. I observed that both university students in Yogya and local *kampung* youth (generally employed or partially employed) were very selective about their choice of club. The comments of both groups indicate the higher status of the upmarket clubs. University students and graduates told me that the club at the lower end of the market was ‘disgusting’ (*menjijikkan*) and of ‘poor quality’ (*jelek*). I was advised not to go to there. This ‘*jelek*’ club cost half the entry fee of the exclusive clubs and beer was the drink of choice (because it is cheapest). Employment roles in this club for females were minimal and instead of live *seksi dancers*, images of *seksi dancers* were projected onto the big screens. Among the youth who frequented this club, I got the distinct impression that they felt they did not belong at the more elite clubs, that those clubs did not cater to them, and that somehow they would be discovered as imposters: claiming a status that was not rightfully theirs. My point here is that the subcultural capital they had accrued to date did not equip them to *bergaul* (socialise) in certain social circles.

Gendered prestasi in dugem

There are distinct differences in the gendered behaviours of clubbers in the two classes of club. Sexuality and gender were more playfully experimented with in upmarket clubs. For example, many of these clubs put on weekly *g-nites* (*gay nights*), with drag diva shows and dancing boys in short shorts. Clubbers often climbed onto the stage to strut their stuff. The density of the crowd brought bodies into close contact and threesome kissing scenes were commonplace.

Overt expressions of gender and sexuality, however, differ according to context. In experimenting with the pleasures, sexuality and sensuality of the body, in both the *dugem pagi* catering to younger *remaja* and the inner-city-low-brow club, traditional gender norms prevail as a backdrop through which *prestasi* is maintained. With access to limited forms of subcultural capital, traditional forms of gendered *prestasi* are the mark of social hierarchy. In these clubs, I observed that as soon as a breach of gender etiquette is deemed to have occurred, the situation

quickly becomes aggressive. This is particularly the case when an incident occurs involving a female, who may choose to call attention to the incident, or not. If she does it is her '*kak(ak)*', her male escort/companion for the night, who is responsible for defending her honour through the use of fisticuffs. His failure to defend her honour can damage both his own *prestasi* and hers.

On one occasion, I accompanied Ira, a 20 year old single parent and two male friends to a club with no entry fee. After Ira and I entered the dance space, a *cowok* tried to kiss Ira. Roy (her escort) saw it, and stood up, asserting his protectiveness in defense of her honour. Ira immediately tried to calm him down, telling him that she was not offended by the kiss. In the case that she did not condone the kiss, she expected Roy to defend her honour. In this example, Ira's power to diffuse the situation was through her single status – Roy was not her boyfriend. On another occasion, in the inner city club, one young female was burnt with a cigarette while dancing. She protested and her male friends immediately set upon the culprit, beating him until he was unconscious. A similar thing happened at the *dugem pagi* when a male youth tipped up a table in protest of his girl getting attention from another male. Although there is an aspiration to the PLUR philosophy of ravers and *dugem*-ers in these latter clubs, it does not play fully out in reality. Poorer male youth draw on dominant constructions of competitive masculinity as symbolic of *prestasi*.

Conclusion

This paper has explored female youth engagement in nocturnal *dugem* and café culture in Yogyakarta. Female youth engagement involves negotiation of an array of ambivalent discourses surrounding *dugem*. In particular, the discourse of *pergaulan bebas* through which *dugem* are stigmatised as sites of sexual promiscuity and youth hedonism. Negative stereotypes associated with *dugem* do deter many female youth from engaging in *dugem*, because dominant constructions of femininity in Indonesia position female clubbers as *cewek nakal* through their refusal to conform to nocturnal restrictions imposed on female bodies. For those

who indulge, the desire to *dugem* is linked to a desire to *enjoy* themselves, release stress, and meet new friends. As I have shown, these youth creatively employ a variety of strategies to participate in *dugem* in observance of local gendered expectations, for example in relation to maintaining the harmony of the *kampung*. In this way, the experience of *dugem* offers new possibilities for gendered, sexual and sensual expression, albeit temporarily. Despite the universal rave/club philosophy of PLUR, distinct differences exist in how this manifests in practice within clubs, most significantly in relation to gendered behaviour. In upmarket clubs, dominant gender discourses, which also act to circumscribe non-normatively gendered behaviours, are left at the door. On the other hand, conventionally heteronormative stereotypes are used to attract patrons. In clubs that cater to a younger or less financially able crowd, the gender norms of their everyday social circles remain central to heteronormatively gendered interactions.

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