



Urban Studies Seminar 2018–2019

Annual Theme:

The Urban Spatialities of Religion in the Middle East, Africa and South-East Asia

Monday, 1 July 2019, 5 pm

Creating Spaces: Women's Mobility and the Emergence of Islamic Women Education in the Early Twentieth Century Indonesia

Lecture by **Tika Ramadhini** (ZMO)

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century were a period of increasing global mobility. The opening of new roads, train routes, and the advance of ship technology, opened up new possibilities for traveling or migrating, including for women. One of the channels for cross-border mobility was the Hajj pilgrimage to the Hijaz, which was and still is very popular among Indonesians. In the 1930s, the female pilgrims from Indonesia made up to 30% of the total number of pilgrims from the region. During this period, many of these pilgrims became a muqimmin (resident) in Mecca for studying Islam, ranging from a few months up to several years before they returned to Indonesia, while some of them even settled down permanently.

Some of these women who returned home became a teacher in Indonesia and introduced classes and schools for women. One of them was Nyai Chadijah, who initiated and managed classes for women pupils in 1927 at an Islamic boarding school in Jombang, Java. In the early twentieth century, the Dutch colonial government for the first time established schools for their colonial subjects that also allowed women to enroll, which enabled another kind of mobility for women that did not require travel, but rather socially-linked. This paper investigates the emergence of Islamic women education in Indonesia in the early twentieth century as a result of increased mobility among women, by examining how women created this alternate space in Indonesian colonial cities; the roles of mobility that enabled women creating their space; and how women actors went crossing formal and informal spheres and entangled different layers in political and social life.

Besides creating their spaces by opening classes and schools in many colonial cities, many women also wrote about education for women in both emerging secular and Islamic newspapers in Indonesia.

Tika Ramadhini is a PhD student at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin and a fellow at Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient. She is currently writing her PhD thesis on the circulation of knowledge among Jawah women in between Mecca and Southeast Asia in the early twentieth century.

Venue

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In cooperation with:

