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## Women and Work in the Third World: Indonesian Women's Oral Histories

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## DOCUMENTS

### *Women and Work in the Third World: Indonesian Women's Oral Histories*

Walter L. Williams

In Indonesia, as with many young Third World nations, local and foreign economists and government planners focus on creating jobs for men as the best means to promote development. Yet what the resulting policies often ignore is that women have always been integrally involved in the nondomestic economy. Though Indonesia is largely an Islamic country, with an ideology that sees men as providers for the family, the vast majority of Indonesian women have worked outside the home. This pattern of women's work has been a reality in both rural and urban contexts, during past eras as well as today.

Until fairly recently, women's voices have often been ignored in scholarship on nonwestern cultures.<sup>1</sup> This situation has partially been the result of a lack of attention to nontraditional sources, such as oral interviews with women themselves, a valuable means of understanding female perspectives.<sup>2</sup> Because of many women's lack of access to formal education, particularly for those of the nonelite classes, they have seldom produced written documents. Third World feminists have often criticized Euroamerican feminism for its ethnocentrism, and, thus, it is important to learn about the lives and concerns of nonwestern women. In Indonesian Studies, in particular, the voices of women have been silent, with few opportunities to hear their perceptions of their own lives. Oral histories are particularly useful in overcoming this deficiency since the open-ended nature of life-history interviewing allows the interviewee to structure the text according to the topics that are most important in her mind.

These life histories are part of a larger study of gender role variance in the island of Java, undertaken by the author in 1987-88. Life histories of both women and men were gathered, with a focus on lifestyle changes in the older generation. Interviews were conducted in an open-ended manner so as to allow the interviewee to emphasize the things about her life that she considered most important. The fact that the researcher is male might have influenced the female interviewees to talk about less intimate topics than they would have done with a female researcher. It is equally conceivable, however, that these women chose to emphasize their work role because they considered it to be such an important aspect of their lives.

These interviewees range in age from their 50s to their 70s and live near the classical Sultans' court cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta (Solo)

in central Java. Yet unlike the members of Java's governmental and court elites, who highly prize a leisurely lifestyle, the lives of these Javanese women are far different from those of the status-conscious nonlaboring upper class. The individuals quoted here are "ordinary women" whose lives have been dominated by the need to earn a living through their own labor. Especially because Javanese women were seldom admitted to Dutch schools, peasant women from the villages had little opportunity to engage in other lifestyles than the agricultural market economy in which they matured.

Born during the Dutch colonial era, these women remember their early lives as times of economic hardship. These memories, common to both women and men who grew up during that era, suggest the oppressiveness of the colonial system that the Dutch had established in the Netherlands East Indies three centuries before. Yet this generation lived to see the ancient regime overthrown. The past half-century has been a time of unprecedented change for Javanese people. In 1942, the Dutch abandoned the Indies as the advancing army of Japan proclaimed a new empire of the sun. For Java, however, hope turned to despair as the Asian imperialists turned out to be even more oppressive than the Europeans had been. When Japan was forced to surrender in 1945, Java still gained no relief. The Dutch returned, simply expecting to reestablish their colonial system as before.

In the late 1940s, these women witnessed the bloody fighting for the independence of the new nation of Indonesia. They survived the political and economic chaos of the years when Indonesia was led by the flamboyant revolutionary hero Soekarno. Then, in 1964-65, they lived through a year of extreme civil turmoil when the national army and Islamic militants slaughtered massive numbers of communists and leftists. Because the military government, under President Soeharto, is still in power today, this is an event that most Indonesians are fearful to discuss. None of these women expresses disaffection toward the government, but their support of the Indonesian independence movement—and their interest in politics generally—varies quite considerably. The extent to which they express gratitude toward the government centers on their immediate family concerns, such as improved schools and transportation and economic stability.

If political issues are not the central concern of these women's stories, economic and family matters are. These women are married, which is not surprising since marriage is virtually universal among Javanese. Yet they do not mention their husbands in these interviews nearly as much as they do their work or their children. None of them has had an expectation that her husband should support her. Their emphasis reflects the fact that Javanese marriage, traditionally arranged by the parents, is primarily a

means of having children rather than of establishing an intimate relationship with a spouse. Whether it is the village woman who works in the rice paddies or the female business owner administering her shop, all expect that her life is characterized by motherhood and work.

Like most Javanese, these women highly value children, yet today they recognize the need to support the government's Family Planning programs. As Indonesia has been economically revolutionized by industrialization and urbanization, they have seen their society change from one in which large numbers of children were the basis for a family's future (as laborers on the farm) to one in which overpopulation threatens the living standard of families. Indonesia's urban-industrial revolution has probably had an even sharper impact on this generation than the nation's two political revolutions.

These women experienced such extreme poverty in their youth, and such radical instability in their adulthood, that today they are grateful for even basic amenities. Yet one of them sees no hope that her family will be able to make any real economic progress in the future. In their variety, these women represent the realities facing many women today as they struggle to provide for their families and live out their lives with dignity and harmony. Though no attempt is made here to claim that these women are "typical," their stories do capture the reality of diversity and change that is so dramatic in Indonesia's recent history. If we are going to try to understand the experiences of women in all their diversity, it is necessary to see the world from their viewpoint. These life histories, in the following words of each woman herself, are an attempt to contribute toward this goal.

### A Market Woman

I don't know what year I was born, or how old I am. I just know it was a long time ago. I was born in this same village south of Surakarta where I have lived my entire life, into a traditional Javanese family with twelve children. Nine of them are still alive today. My mother sold coconut drinks in the marketplace, as well as buying wood in one market, and carrying it on her back to sell in another market. She also worked in the rice paddies, doing the work that was typical for women: planting the sprouts, spreading decayed leaves and animal wastes as fertilizer, weeding, harvesting the mature rice, and carrying the rice home. We would eat the rice, and what was left over we would sell in the market.

My father did the men's work: plowing with the cows, irrigating the fields, and building houses. At that time, all the houses in the village were made of bamboo, and they had to be rebuilt every five years. The men also did weeding, gathering wood and harvesting peanuts, cassava, and

vegetables, along with the women. But the men do not harvest rice. After harvest, the people ate the rice, they fed the stalks to the cows, and the men would burn the rest down to the roots, in order to fertilize the fields with the ashes. Nothing was wasted.

When I was a young girl, it was very difficult to get enough food, so we children would comb through the fields after the adults had harvested, to see if we could find any more grains of rice left. We would often walk far away from our village on these rice-gathering trips, sometimes more than five kilometers away. My parents were poor, so I never went to school. I needed to be working to help the family bring in food. Life at that time was just to get food. I never had time to think about school. Back then only a few went to school, not many people like today.

When I was a teenager I started going to the market with my mother to sell vegetables and fruit. Besides rice, we also raised and sold cassava, sweet potatoes, chili, peanuts, eggplant, cabbage, and beans. We had banana, rambutan, durian, and coconut trees around the houses, as well as bamboo groves to use for building the houses.

I got married when I was about twenty years old, because my mother told me I must get married in order to continue the family. So that when I die, they will continue my life through my descendants. I wanted to have children, but at first I could not. There is happiness in children, and I still wanted some, so I raised one of my sister's sons. He still lives with me today, and I consider him like my own son. Later, I became able to get pregnant, so I had two more children.

I was so busy in my work that I did not have time to have any more children after that. Since I am now too old to worry about having children anymore, I don't know much about the government's family planning program. But I think it is good not to have so many children. If someone has too many children, they are too busy to live. With small families, there is enough food and money to raise the children properly. But the bad thing about family planning is that there cannot be freedom in sex. Sex is a gift from God, which should be used whenever married people want to do it.

Marriage has really changed over the years. When I was young, children always had to follow the wishes of their parents. Not like nowadays, when children can follow their own desires about who they want to marry. My parents chose the man that I was to marry. I did not even know him beforehand. The wedding was the first time I ever saw him. For the first several days after we were married, I was so shy I did not even talk to him. We were married a few years, but later separated. I later got married two more times, and still live with my third husband.

Since I was a girl I have worked in the market. Later, I inherited some land from my parents, and so I and my husband and children have farmed

my own fields. When I was younger the economic situation was very bad. We were not like the rich Javanese people in the village. They had more land, and they could get more money by selling foods in bigger markets farther away from the village. They would hire other people to work for them, and sometimes have a store to sell things.

We never had that opportunity, and always had to do our own labor. For many years I worked in the market, buying vegetables and fruit from a market near the farming area and selling them in the city of Surakarta. I would carry that food in a basket on my back. There were no buses then, so I had to walk over twenty-five kilometers each day. I would leave home at one o'clock in the morning, in order to get to the market by 5:30 in the morning when it opened. I would leave the market between 8 to 9am, and arrive back home after noon. Then I would keep the food I had bought until that night, when I would begin the walk to the city market. So each day I would alternate, buying in the farming market one day and selling in the city the next.

When I got home in the afternoon I would do the cooking for the children and for my husband, who had been working in the fields every day. One day each week [the Javanese week has five days] I would stay home, to do the washing and to help in the fields. Depending on the need, we would often do some work in the fields in the afternoon. My husband and I could only take short rests. We both had to take care of the children, but some of our relatives would help in this. Later on, the older children would take care of the younger ones.

At least I am glad to be able to say that I always was able to make sure that my children went to the mosque and did their daily prayers. There are many followers of Islam in this village, but many of them do not do the prayers. I have been Islamic since I was a child, and I used to pray often. I could not do that when I was so busy every day going to the market, but since my children have been working I have more time and can do the daily prayers again. Islam is very important to me. I think the most important thing about it is the prayers; doing them five times a day gives me a relaxing little break and makes me feel happy. Praying got me through some bad times years ago.

Back in the old days it was the colonial time, but the Dutch never came into my village so they did not disturb us. I never knew anything about colonialism directly. Still, I was afraid of the Dutch. If I was in Solo and heard there was a Dutchman coming, I would run away. In our village, we dug holes in the ground to hide from them. I heard that the Dutch had taken some people from around Yogyakarta, and killed them. Sometimes the Dutch would go into neighboring areas and take the food products from the farmers. This made it very bad, because there was not enough food left for the people. In other villages, the Dutch would force a farmer

to plant only one kind of crop, like sugar cane, so the farmer had little left to eat. Many people were killed by the Dutch. Fortunately, the Dutch did not do any of this to our village.

Things got even worse for Java during the time the Japanese came here. They bombed Yogyakarta, which made us very frightened of them. There was even less food than before. During the hard times, like during the World War, when we did not have enough food to eat, we would mix bush and tree leaves with the rice. We had to eat roots, and whatever we could find. We could not afford to buy clothes, so we only had a little bit and it was poor quality cloth and it often got infested by bugs. It was very itchy. Still, we were lucky because the Japanese never came to this village. We have been fortunate that our village was always peaceful and undisturbed.

The big thing that happened to Indonesia in 1945 was the revolution, but I did not know anything about it. Nothing ever occurred here. The Dutch just fought the soldiers, not the villagers. People told stories about the fighting in other areas, and sometimes I heard airplanes in their bombing. The first thing I knew about it was when independence was proclaimed, after the Dutch left. I was glad to hear that, even though they had never bothered me.

After independence, everything became easier to get. We usually had enough food after that. The only bad thing to happen since then was in 1965, after the communist disturbance. There was not much food then, because everything was in such an uproar. I did not know anything about communism, but in 1965 there were many people in this village who were arrested by the government. Thankfully, within a year they were all released.

Since then, things have gotten much better. Formerly, almost everyone was so poor, but today people have more money compared to before. My grandson has even been able to afford to buy a motorcycle, so he can come visit me more often. Nowadays there is a public bus system, and I do not have to walk so far when I go to market. I only have to carry my things two kilometers to get to the main road, where the bus stop is located. I wear a big bamboo hat when it rains. Today, people can afford to live in better houses, with electricity, and some even have televisions. My husband and I enjoy listening to the wayang music on the radio. We now have a house with a cement floor instead of just dirt. And, most importantly, the young people can go to school to become educated. Things have definitely improved. Today, life is very peaceful and lovely.

## A Cake Seller

I don't know exactly how old I am. As far as I know, I am in my fifties. My parents were poor farm workers, working on our neighbors' lands. I

did not go to school because I was the oldest child and had to help my parents earn the living and take care of my four brothers and two sisters. This also happened to the other oldest children of poor farm families.

I got married in 1954, when I was about eighteen years old. A year later, I gave birth to my first child. My oldest daughter is an elementary school graduate. She lives in Klaten with her husband and her three children. In 1962 I gave birth to my second child. He is also an elementary graduate. After he had passed his elementary school, he took a carpentry course which was run by the government in the town. Now he works for a contractor in Klaten. He got married three months ago. My youngest son is fifteen years old and he still lives with us in the house.

My husband is a few years older than I am. He is from this village. He got some land from his parents, but it is not enough to support ourselves. Therefore, my husband also does many kinds of odd jobs, any kind of job so far as it gives him cash money. He works hard, yet what he earns is not enough to support the family. So, I also have to work. I decided to cook rice and corn cakes, to sell them. Formerly, there were many women of this village who used to sell cakes. Now there are only about four women who are still in this business.

I leave my house at 4:30 a.m. and walk ten kilometers to Klaten. There are no buses in this road. I get to the town at six o'clock. I go from house to house and sell my cakes. I take the same route every day. Each of the women of this village, who do the same business, have our own area and customers and we agree not to go into the other's area. At 1 p.m. I walk to the market and buy two kilograms of cassava, one kilogram of brown sugar, two kilograms corn, three kilograms of sticky rice, and two coconuts. I carry that home on my back, and arrive there two hours later. Then I go to the river to take a bath and wash the clothes. After that I cook for my family. After finish cooking, I peel the cassavas and prepare everything for the following day's business. I work in the kitchen until 8 o'clock in the evening, and then I go to bed.

At 2 a.m. I get up and continue my work until four o'clock. I have to work in the kitchen twice because I have to cook the sticky rice shortly before leaving. Otherwise, it will get too soft. On the other hand, I have to cook the corn twice, in the evening and early in the morning. After I finish everything, I go to the river and take a bath. Then I leave my house and walk to the town carrying another bamboo basket full of cakes on my back. I have done the same routine every day for twenty-eight years.

When I go home, after a day's work I bring about Rp. 5,500 [US \$3.30] with me. During the last week of the month, when people are running out of money, business does not run well. Then I let my customers take my cakes and pay for them later. This means I bring home less. My business



does not run as well as it did ten years ago. Today there are hundreds of kinds of factory-made cakes, in beautiful colors and attractive packages. With so many unemployed people, and with big business moving in, everything is very competitive today. I am lucky I can stand this for twenty-eight years.

Time goes by. The woman's hair grows grey. She looks older than her husband. Everything in society has changed, but the woman's work.

### A Seamstress

I have seven children, four daughters and three sons. I think I am not very successful in encouraging them to finish their education. Only one of them could finish the graduate degree, but four of them only got their BA degree. Two of my children have never seen a University. My first daughter was a student of high school for teacher training. When she finished her study, she taught in Kindergarten School for two years and then stopped because she got married. Unfortunately her husband died, and she got married again. My fifth son only finished his Secondary School because he was not too brilliant. Thank God he was a success in his business. He is an owner of a grocery shop and he lives happily with his loyal wife and adopted son. You know, he has no children.

My second son is a director of a sugar company while he is also an owner of five big ships. He has only two daughters and all of them are already students of a University level. His life is easy but . . . I don't think he is as generous as my other children. My third son is a teacher in High School. He has six children. His life seems happy although I know life is hard for him. I let him use one of my houses and I pay the electricity charge, the water tax and also the tax for the land he uses. My fourth daughter married a lecturer and an owner of a tailor shop. She has three children. I think she is the happiest among all my children. Her husband doesn't let her work although she has got her BA degree, but he is the most understanding man I have ever seen. My sixth daughter married a medical doctor and she is an ordinary housewife now. She has two children, boy and girl. My seventh daughter or the youngest is the only child who finished her University level. She is a lecturer now while her husband is an entrepreneur. She has only one son so I hope she has an intention to have more soon.

I started my business when I got married fifty-five years ago. My father gave me ten rupiahs to start my business and my father-in-law did the same too. We rented a little shop and began our business by selling cigarettes, sugar, tea and rice. I lived happily with my husband and our business grew bigger and bigger. When the war began I was pregnant with my fifth son.

The Japanese came to our town and I hated the Japanese real badly. My husband was a collector of ties and safety matches. He had many ties and matches from his Dutch friends. He also bought them from Chinese traders. The Japanese robbed them all!. My husband was disapointed and I felt a great pity for him.

We did not join the army when the war for independence happened but we helped the anti-Dutch guerillas by supplying them foodstuffs three times a week. You know, I have a nephew who joined the guerillas and he came to our house with his friends three times a week, usually at night, to bring the food to their camp. They pretended to be vendors who brought their selling home. Of course their customers were like country peasants. Well, God let them stay alive up till now. One of my nephew's friends is a general in the army now. He still remembers me. It is a kind of pride too for me that a general, twice a year, sends me holiday letters. My nephew did not want to join the army after the revolution. He worked in the government customs house. His life is a very successful one. He has seven children and five of them are already finished their University degree and got married. He has already retired now.

My business did not become a success because of my cleverness at school, no! I only finished my fourth year of Elementary School. My mother died and my father soon got married again and had a son. My step mother did not want me to continue my study. I just stayed at home helping her rearing my new brother and helping my father run his cigarette company. I was finally free from such a hard life after I got married. My step mother came to my house regularly after my father died because her son married a woman who never took care of my step mother well.

I am a Moslem but I believe in "karma" and I believe that God will create us again for our redemption if in our life we still have many sins that cannot be redeemed yet. I dare not do the bad things to others because God will know it and He will do the same to me through men's hands for my redemption. I witnessed such things many times although it happened to the others, not me. I tend to learn life from others' suffering and I hope such bad experiences never happen to me and my descendants.

I have seven houses now. I gave them to my children except two of them who live outside this town. One house is for rent and the other house is still being renovated now. People say I am successful in my business but they never know how hard my life was when my husband died and I was pregnant with my youngest daughter. Two of my children were students of the University, the first daughter was still in Kindergarten, the other three were in Elementary School and the youngest in my stomach. My business was ruined. I sold my house to pay the fees and to run my business but still I failed again and again.

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One day my fifth son, the one whom I thought was the most stupid, came home with his friend who told me to help him sell emblems, a kind of sign for a political party. I took pity on him and I did it. To my surprise, people bought them gladly. That was the first time that I realized another kind of business that people were never aware of before. I told my son's friend to make more emblems and at last people not only asked for them but uniforms for their parties as well. My children helped me greatly in my business. They kept the shop after class everyday and at night when finishing their study they helped me to sew clothes, to print them with the pictures of the parties etc. I love them all. I still run my business up till now because I love them and I want to give them all I have. I never think of asking them to help my life, instead I want to help them create a prosperous life. I want them to be successful entrepreneurs so that they do not need to ask the government to pay for them. Instead they help the government by paying taxes. Well, only three of my children are government officers, the rest are business people, except the one whose husband is a medical doctor. I am very proud of them although not all of them are rich.

During the occupation of the Dutch and Japanese I did not feel life was hard. My business was good but I preferred to be occupied by the Dutch rather than by the Japanese. Anyhow I like to be free from occupation best. Independence was our idealism, and every good citizen knew it.

I know nothing about political life, but I think President Suharto is a very successful president. He can give us a feeling of safety, no riots, no rebellion, and no difficulties in having food nowadays. Oh, I still remember how people should queue when they wanted to buy rice, oil and sugar. It was in the 1960's when Communism was still alive here. I like to watch television especially the program of 'Dunia Dalam Derita' (World News Program). I can see such situations happening in the other parts of our world where Communism is there. I do not know why, and I want to know why. I asked my sons and daughters about it, and most of them told me that Communism will grow bigger in a poor country.

I am proud of having the late president Soekarno. He is a real hero . . . but I don't like the way he treated women. He married many women without taking care of his reputation as a president. Well, maybe you think it is human but still, I don't like it. My late grand-father who was a leader of a Kampong [village] and admitted by the Sultan Mangkunegara VII to be a strong and wise man, told me long before the Independence that Indonesians will have their Independence if there would be a man who can make people hear him and he can hear what the people want. You know, Soekarno means "super ear." The Javanese translated the word to be someone who has a super ear to hear what the people say and want. Well, we wanted Independence . . . and president Soekarno was the

proclamator of Independence. My grand-father also told me that later we will have a leader who can make people full of "harta" or wealth. Now we have president Suharto—the word means someone who has a super wealth. Well, I am not a fortune teller, I believe my grand-father was not a fortune teller too, but once he told me that the third leader who will bring Indonesia into the real prosperous time is one who can love us and who has a super love. Well, well, we have General Tri Sutrisno, who is now the commander in chief in Indonesia. Will he be our third president?. We just wait and see, because you know, Tri means Three or Third and Sutrisno means Super Love or someone who can love people deeply. Precisely what my grand-father meant.

When the Japanese failed and the Dutch came here again [in 1945] the war began. This time we had to fight against the Dutch troops. I saw most of the Dutch army were young people and they were polite. It was different with the Japanese troops who came to Indonesia for the first time. They were wild. Oh, I hated Japanese although there were a few who were polite and sympathetic too, especially those who were in the high rank position. I know them because they frequently came and bought cigarettes in our shop. The wildest troops the Dutch had was the Green Berets—that is the Molucans [from another island] who felt that they were Dutch, and joined the Dutch army to kill Indonesians. More or less two kilometers from our shop there was a market that was always full of people selling and buying. When the Green Berets came and occupied this town, they showed their force for the first time by killing people in the market. Not only the adults killed, but the children as well. Today there is a monument in the middle of that market to commemorate the sad event. My husband was one who helped the Dutch soldiers to bury the bodies. You know, he did not want to eat anything until three days afterwards. My husband said that actually the Dutch soldiers did not want the Green Berets to do the cruel things to the people, but when they did it they were just silent and doing nothing to the murderers. It was not fair, and the people of this town were angry with the Dutch and the Green Berets. We wanted to drive away the Dutch from Indonesia. I totally agree with that idea. I wanted to be a citizen of an independent country but I was afraid of war. That was why I did not let my husband join the guerillas. I did not want to lose him in the battle. My children were still young. I think everybody can fight the Dutch with their own way, not always by fighting in an open war. I helped the guerillas by supplying them foodstuffs and that was the way I fought.

I do not like political parties. It doesn't mean that I do not vote for one of them when the election happens. I always vote every five years but I have no intention to be an active member of one of those. I am just an uneducated 76 year old woman. I am happy enough with my business and

that was all. I pay the tax diligently and honestly, and that was my way to show my obedience to my dear Indonesia. I encouraged my children to be entrepreneurs not government officers who are just waiting for their salaries from the government. What I did is solely because I love this country and I want to give this country something, not to ask for something. I am not boasting, but I donated my money each year to the orphanage and to the Moslem's hospital. I did my business not only for helping my children and grand children but for donating too. I always remember what the prophet Mohammed said:

"Find your wealth as if you will live for a thousand years more, but find your creed and faith to God as if you will die tomorrow."

I always said this saying to my children too, but my second son who is the richest seems not to obey what I told him. He finds his wealth seriously but he never thinks about his faith to God. He has a "dukun," [shaman] he believes in superstitions and he doesn't even pray to God as a good Moslem. Oh, I am very sad if I remember him. Actually I am not an extreme Moslem. I let my children find their own religions. You know, one of my daughters is a Catholic and one of my sons is a Protestant, but they are obedient devotees. I respect them more than those who admit to be Moslems but never pray to God and do nothing for their beliefs. I think I believe "dukun" is forbidden in Islam and Christianity.

I live with my two servants and four assistants now. On Saturdays my grandchildren come and sleep in my house. My first daughter helps me to run this shop, but thank God, I have loyal servants and assistants. I pay them enough money. They are very understanding youngsters. They never leave me alone even in the holidays. They arrange their days off in a certain way so that I can always be accompanied everyday, everynight by them. My children trust them too.

Life is always easy if we accept whatever happens to us by believing that it is God's will that comes to us and it is the best for us. Even in our hardest time, if we still believe that what happens to us is the best for us, we will be given our real strength by God, and life is felt easier. It is important for us to know this because it will make our extreme ambition, I mean individual ambition, be tamed. Every minute our lives are decreased, so every minute we have to think and to do good things. When God asked us to be with Him we will be accepted easily. Life is like a queue. We do not know who is the first to be called by Him, but everybody will be called at last. Many are afraid of that reality. You have to face this bravely, without forgetting what the prophet Mohammed said about working and faith.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Until the late 1970s, most of the scholarly attention that had been devoted to women in nonwestern cultures had been written by anthropologists. For overviews of this work, see Charlotte O'Kelly and Larry Carney, *Women and Men in Society*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, 1986); M. Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhies, *Female of the Species* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975); Peggy Sanday, *Female Power and Male Dominance: On the Origins of Sexual Inequality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Eleanor Leacock, ed., *Myths of Male Dominance: Collected Articles on Women Cross-Culturally* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1981); Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock, eds. *Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Bergin, 1980). For an economic focus, see Ester Boserup, *Women's Role in Economic Development* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970); Mina Davis Caulfield, "Equality, Sex and Mode of Production," in *Social Inequality: Comparative and Developmental Approaches*, ed. Gerald Berreman (New York: Academic Press, 1981), 201-19; and Mayra Buvinic and Margaret Lycette, eds., *Women and Poverty in the Third World* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983). For an analysis of women's economic status in a highly oppressive culture, see Kalpana Bardhan, "Women, Work and Welfare Status: Forces of Tradition and Change in India," *South Asia Bulletin* 6 (Spring 1986): 3-15.

<sup>2</sup> Examples of valuable life history collections of Third World women include Gita Sen and Caren Grown, *Development, Crisis and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1987); Daphne Patai, *Brazilian Women Speak: Contemporary Life Stories* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1988) and Mernissi, *Moroccan Women* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1989). The introductions of these books present useful ideas on the theory and technique of doing women's life histories.

Additional life histories of Javanese women and men are in Walter L. Williams, *Javanese Lives: Women and Men in Modern Indonesian Society* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, in press).

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