Most approaches to the understanding of the resurgence of Islamic piety attempt to either interrogate its underlying cultural logic, or carry out in broad empirical transregional surveys and self reports. Both approaches have limitations. In his lecture Prof. Kuipers investigates the striking rise of the use of Arabic names in the island of Java as a way of ethnographically bridging the gap between comparative surveys and in-depth interviews. The rise of Arabic names in Java does not signal the "collapse" of the abangan syncretic traditions so much as a repositioning of its medium of signification. Exuberantly hybridized names are increasingly popular, recalling the synthetic and creative traditions of sacred speech and recombinant identity for which Indonesia is justly renowned.

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