
A *KAMPUNG* CORNER: INFRASTRUCTURE, AFFECT, INFORMALITY

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Walking down the alley to the corner in the *kampung* where I used to lived, I feel the weight of twenty-four years of visits and the tenderness borne of managing that burden for these many years. This feeling begins the moment I pass the market near the entrance that remains remarkably unchanged. The broken-down remains of the PKK *warung* next to it are a reminder of a spat between neighbors.¹ Turning north, the open space used for badminton and other afternoon sports is still there, although the ruined house of minor *kraton* (royalty) is now an *asrama* (dormitory), and the next-door mosque has been much improved. From here, the alleyway extends through two neighborhood sections to reach my old house and the house next door that belongs to the family that now feels like my own kin.²

Any walk through what I call Kampung Rumah Putri is an opportunity for me to inventory what remains and what has changed. I have experienced Java through

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¹ Typically translated as the Family Welfare Movement, PKK (Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga) refers to the Indonesian government's organization of adult (married) women to deliver social welfare support in their own communities. In this case, government monies had supported a local section of PKK in opening a dry goods stall.

² *Kampung* means "village" in nearby Malaysia, but in Indonesia it refers to densely populated neighborhoods of the urban poor; *warung* is a small, often family-owned business; *kraton* means "royal" or royalty; and an *asrama* is a hostel or other lodge.

this *kampung* since 1992.³ The durability of Yogyakarta *kampung* neighborhoods is remarkable.⁴ As markers of family fortunes, once-humble houses become more elaborate and are rarely sold or torn down: bamboo is replaced with cement, dirt floors with tiles. In fact, the remains of a house destroyed by the 2006 earthquake are still there a decade later. On the larger alleyway to the south, one large undeveloped piece of land still tells the story of an absent property owner who refuses to drop his price. Like gold necklaces, these small *kampung* plots are enduringly useful financial instruments that move in and out of play but rarely leave the hands of the owners. The slow change in *kampung* neighborhoods is in contrast to other sections of Yogyakarta undergoing development. Although the building of hotels and the changes on Malioboro, Yogya's famous street, have had significant impacts on some *kampung*, changes in Kampung Rumah Putri tend to be characterized by slow accretion rather than dramatic redevelopment.

Looking at years of change in Indonesia from this corner has been instructive. There is a new convex mirror mounted at the *pertigaan* (a three-way intersection), near my old house. Drivers can now see what is coming toward them at this tight corner. The stream of *sepeda motor* (scooter, motorbike) remains unchanged, but the new mirror allows for a different kind of clarity on the comings and goings. On a March evening in 2016, I sat with the family and we commented on all the *motor* (vehicles) driving toward the bridge over the nearby river, which was flooding because of rain on Merapi. As people returned, we heard about a neighbor who had slipped and fallen while standing by the roadside—to much hilarity on the part of the other watchers. It was a *kampung* happening that prompted a whole set of stories about what electricity had done for the *kampung*. One middle-aged son described how afraid he was as a child to go from house to house because it had been so dark then. He said it had been an act of boyish bravery to walk to the big intersection by the *kraton* (palace), one that might mean you stayed the night with a friend rather than make your way home alone. I had long heard stories about little people and spooks in the empty spaces of the *kampung*, which tend to fill up with such spirits. While I would lament the loss of open spaces, my neighbors preferred to see dwellings and people instead.

This middling *kampung* now has little or no space between houses, and its location at the corner of the Yogyakarta *kraton* complex puts it close to the heart of the city. The conversation about electricity and mirrors took place on the verandah in the late evening. It was yet another illustration that *kampung* infrastructure includes the asphalt of alleyways and the shared lanes between humble houses, but also the structure of feeling produced on front steps as the *kampung* world comes out to watch itself. The persistence of the meaningful rhythm of *kampung* life in this court city belies the pace of social and political change in the nation as a whole. From what I could see, sitting again with my neighbors, these lower-class communities still offer up the material and immaterial infrastructure to support the reproduction of this class so unremarked but so central to Indonesia's stability: the *kampung* class.

³ My ethnographic research in Yogyakarta includes original fieldwork in 1992–93 and subsequent periods in 1996, 1998, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010. My thanks to Nita Kariani Purwanti who was my research colleague during 2004–10.

⁴ Jan Newberry, "‘Anything Can Be Used to Stimulate Development’: Early Childhood Education and Development in Indonesia as a Durable Assemblage," *Journal of Asian Studies* 76, 1 (2017): 25–45.

Here, I explore how the *kampung* is a form of infrastructure at once material and immaterial that draws on affective histories of community solidarity, even as it has been shaped by and continues to shape modes of governmentality that serve the interests of capital and the state. The following consideration includes three aspects of this infrastructural support. First, the idea of the spectacular city has proven a productive one for urban studies, but lower-class enclaves like *kampung* would not typically qualify. After all, these are not the spectacular developments targeted by global circuits of finance capitalism. Yet, the material form of the *kampung* and the intensities it registers are part of the spectacle of daily life for these urban neighbors. Here, I consider the *kampung* as affective infrastructure that shapes the kind of phatic exchanges, material and semiotic, considered in the recent infrastructure turn.⁵ The performative aspects of daily *kampung* life are simultaneously state routines of rule that are particularly productive of the informal economy that remains the base of Indonesia's economy. The role of *kampung* as key infrastructure for informality is the second aspect considered here. The forms of organization that are used to organize informal labor and *kampung* community are the products of years of state-inflected governmentality, from colonial to democratic regimes. In the third section, the reproduction of this organizational infrastructure and its relationship to the reproduction of the *kampung* as a social form is contemplated. These three threads are brought together in a conclusion that explores how these forms of *kampung* infrastructure are being called upon again in recent plans for playgrounds.

Spectacular Ordinary

In her 2012 book, *The Make-Believe Space*, Yael Navaro-Yashin contemplates how a divided Cyprus produces a haunting on either side of the line that divides the Turkish sector from the Greek side of the island. She elaborates Jacques Derrida's "hauntology" to argue for the affective agency of the material in shaping the social world of the Turkish Cypriots and for the ghost, or spectre, as that which is "retained in material objects and the physical environment."⁶ The vanished remains must be both ignored and managed simultaneously. While Navaro-Yashin attends to fantasy, the uncanny, and the enchanted in an urban landscape, here I follow her attention to Kathleen Stewart's description of the ordinary:

Ordinary affects are an animate circuit that conducts force and maps connections, routes, and disjunctures ... The ordinary registers intensities—regularly, intermittently, urgently, or as a slight shudder ... The ordinary is a circuit that's always tuned in to some little something somewhere. A mode of attending to the possible and the threatening, it amasses resonance in things.⁷

The ghosts of Kampung Rumah Putri are part of one such animate circuit that resonates with traces of the *kampung*'s past, but also exerts an agency in shaping current exchanges that reproduce life.

⁵ Julia Elyachar, "Phatic Labor, Infrastructure, and the Question of Empowerment in Cairo," *American Ethnologist* 37, 3 (2010): 452–64.

⁶ Yael Navaro-Yashin, *The Make-believe Space: Affective Geography in a Postwar Polity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 17.

⁷ Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 3, 10, 12.

The history of the royal house at the end of the alley provides one of the most enduring stories about how this *kampung* came to be. And the palace's distinction as a place that is unlike the rest of the neighborhood comes not only from this history but from its very different architecture and from the ghostly royal powers it still exerts. Although now renovated to provide a dormitory and slightly reduced to accommodate the renovated *masjid* (mosque), the open courtyard of the ruined royal house was the stage for many *kampung* events. Not only was it the location for early morning and late afternoon exercise, it served as a kind of public square. In the morning, it was the province of preschool children and their caretakers, students on their way to school, juveniles hanging out, and women relaxing or on their way to the adjacent *pasar*. After nightfall, it was ringed by the furtive activities of young males. Illicit dealings and manly misbehavior were the mainstays. Like any open space in a densely populated *kampung*, it had multiple uses. But all of these uses were colored by the local stories of its haunting. Indeed, the ghosts of the *kraton* continue to haunt this *kampung*. Any family that could make a connection to the *kraton* would do so, giving the *kampung* a recognizable Yogyakarta taste of mystical royalty.

The longstanding *wayang* (puppet theater) located deeper in the neighborhood shared this affect. Its daily performances continued twenty-four years after I first attended one, and its presence spoke to the role of tourism in shaping the infrastructure of Yogya. After years of downturn following the US terrorist attacks on 9/11/2001 and the Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005, and the major damage from the 2006 earthquake, all the talk in 2016 was of the new airport to be built west of town and the developments along the southern beaches and in nearby Wonosari, once a very poor backwater. *Becaks* (pedicab, rickshaw) still ply the streets of Yogya, even as giant, hulking bus stations represent failures in planning in the eyes of many residents. Tourism and the ghosts of tourists past remain powerful shapers of the environment. Yet, in contrast to these storied markers of Yogyakarta—royalty and tourism—Kampung Rumah Putri is also haunted by forms of unacknowledged difference.

The Catholic Church that stands guard outside the front gate is supported by a convent, a *susteran*, just down the alley from the corner where I sat with the family. Commonly overlooked, one only knew it was there if one were a local, but its presence was another anchor of this community. Muslims represented the *kampung's* numerical religious majority, but the history and practice of Catholicism in the neighborhood was a critical form of difference. One neighbor related a story about changes in the aftermath of 9/11 and the growing influence of conservative Islam. He said a young child had refused money from his hand and called him “*kafir*” (nonbeliever). He seemed befuddled by new forms of antagonism, although they were none too rare in the era that saw so many Christian churches burned in the Yogya region.⁸ Yet, for many *kampung* members, it was the history of the Catholic Church's protection of inhabitants during the Japanese occupation that produced an animate circuit that mapped both connection and disjunction in this *kampung*.

During my early fieldwork I did not fully comprehend how unusual this Catholic corner was. Nor did I fully understand how race and ethnicity were ghosts to be

⁸ In 2013, Human Rights Watch reported more than 430 churches burned in Indonesia since 2004 (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/03/25/indonesia-order-end-church-demolitions>, accessed December 10, 2016).

managed. While minority religious difference was actually interwoven with dominant Muslim practices, ethnic difference was the presence that must remain absent. It is important to remember here that some definitions of *kampung* have highlighted their historical development as the home of the *wong cilik* (Javanese, little people) in contrast to—at least in part—the street-side shop houses of Chinese merchants.⁹ I did not fully realize the depth of anti-Chinese sentiments in Kampung Rumah Putri until very late in my early fieldwork, 1992–93. In one case, a woman came to shop at the small dry goods shop at the market where I often sat with the women who ran it. One of the shopkeepers asked this woman, who appeared to be Chinese, “where are you from?” Her answer, “I forget,” is a poignant reminder of the troubling erasure of ethnicity during Suharto’s New Order.

Decay and failures of infrastructure were less an issue here than the power of the absent to shape the present. The durability of the *kampung* as social infrastructure is in some contrast to AbdouMaliq Simone’s description of the radical openness of African cities.¹⁰ Indeed, a *kampung* is a kind of enclosure that depends on a notion of the commons that denies difference. The reality of the Javanese village as an epitome of harmonious communality has sponsored a long debate, from Clifford Geertz to Jan Berman to more recent interrogations by Tania Li.¹¹ Crucially here, many of the *kampung*’s attributes are those imputed to this village imaginary: rotating leadership, wealth-leveling devices, a strong differentiation between insiders and outsiders, and the shared management of common lands. “*Kampung*,” as it happens, is an interesting word. In nearby Malaysia and Singapore, it is used to refer to rural villages, while in Indonesia it is used for the densely packed urban neighborhoods of the poor. This inversion of the rural and urban is not coincidental, even if typically overlooked. In both cases, “*kampung*” has the valence of deep social connection, social solidarity, and a sense of mutual cooperation. In Yogyakarta *kampung*, this communality is enclosed in a variety of ways: by urban streets, walls, named histories, governmental dictates, and sometimes all of the above. This enclosure requires not only the erasure of difference but also the creation of nostalgia for “shared poverty.” One oft-repeated story in our *kampung* in the 1990s actually dealt with the appearance of satellite technology. The man who did not share his satellite feed with his neighbors was the subject of much gossip. Such improvements in lifestyle were often discussed as a

⁹ Many Yogyakarta *kampung* started as named districts associated with ethnicity or occupation and administered as part of the sultanates’ relationship to the rural countryside. Many of the original names remain in use. See: John Sullivan, *Local Government and Community in Java: An Urban Case Study* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1992); and Jan Newberry, *Back Door Java: State Formation and the Domestic in Working Class Java* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1997).

¹⁰ AbdouMaliq Simone, “People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg,” *Public Culture* 16, 3 (Fall 2004): 407–29.

¹¹ See: Peter Boomgaard, “The Javanese Village as a Cheshire Cat: The Java Debate against a European and Latin American Background,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 18, 2 (1991): 288–304; Jan Breman, *The Village on Java and the Early Colonial State* (Rotterdam: CASP, Erasmus University, 1980); Jan Breman, *The Shattered Image: Construction and Deconstruction of the Village in Colonial Asia* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1988); Clifford Geertz, *Agricultural Involution: The Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963); Tania Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); and Jonathon Rigg, “Redefining the Village and Rural Life: Lessons from South East Asia,” *The Geographical Journal* 160, 2 (1994): 123–35.

common resource, and those who did not share were not considered sufficiently *kampung*.¹²

As I sat with my old neighbors reminiscing and watching the *kampung* go by, I was reminded again of how these relatively poor urbanites are a source of stability across Indonesia's political regimes. I have long argued for their centrality despite their invisibility, and my early work was shaped by the drive to understand state formation in terms of *kampung* economy and structures of feeling. At that time, my attention to women's work was meant to produce what Gregg Hetherington and Jeremy Campbell call a kind of infrastructural inversion through social analysis meant to bring out "that which has disappeared into routine." Indeed, *kampung* have long functioned as a significant form of unremarked urban infrastructure in Indonesia in that they both serve as "a crucial organizer of a given situation" and have become "routinized to the point of banality and invisibility."¹³ And this general invisibility in places like Yogyakarta is in some contrast to the highly marked *kampung* removals that take place in Jakarta, suggesting the need for finer divisions within the category of *kampung* and their spectacular uses.

In my experience, Yogya *kampung* produce a kind of spectacular ordinary. The mundane is the performance; the observers are your neighbors. *Kampung* life requires "a mode of attending to the possible and the threatening" and, indeed, it does illustrate how the ordinary is a circuit that "amasses resonance in things."¹⁴ From negotiating the shudder produced by royal ghosts to maintaining the aging infrastructure of tourism to managing the difference and its absence, the infrastructure that is the *kampung* provides for the critical exchanges that support the Indonesian economy and extend state rule. *Kampung* life denies any boundary between daily practices of life and the regulatory enunciations of the state.

The Infrastructure for Informality

Kampung are not built so much as grown. Like the houses of the Malagasy, dwellings begin with families, often enough through auto-construction in already densely populated receiving areas in cities like Jakarta and Surabaya.¹⁵ They grow and harden with time as tiles and cement are added and the family grows and flourishes, or they may be deserted as the family flounders and disappears. This kind of organic infrastructure, largely unplanned, still supports and shapes the life of the city and its inhabitants. What gives *kampung* both their durability and ephemerality derives from two interlinked functions. They serve as the spatial reserves for the poor and

¹² One recent example of the persistence of this ethic of sharing is Kampoeng Cyber (cyber village). See Nicola Jones, "The Birth of Indonesia's Cyber Village," *Sapiens*, July 21, 2016, <http://www.sapiens.org/technology/indonesia-cyber-village/>, accessed December 10, 2016.

¹³ Gregg Hetherington and Jeremy Campbell, "Nature, Infrastructure, and the State: Rethinking Development in Latin America," *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 19, 2 (2014): 191.

¹⁴ Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*, 3.

¹⁵ Maurice Bloch, "People into Places: Zafimaniry Concepts of Clarity," in *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space*, ed. Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon (London: Oxford University Press, 1995), 63–77.

underemployed that produce communities of relegation.¹⁶ Simultaneously, they serve as the rhetorical repository for powerful symbols of communal solidarity and scrappy self-reliance that combines an idyllic rural Java with metropolitan knowledge and urban *savoir faire*. The descriptions below are used to consider the role of these functions in producing the *kampung* as a form of infrastructure.

Kampung houses and households reproduce the precariat (vulnerable, precarious populations) that provides the labor for informal-sector businesses.¹⁷ The Indonesian economy depends on such low-cost surplus labor as a comparative advantage, and the reserve army of labor that is reproduced and supported in the *kampung* is crucial to this.¹⁸ In fact, familial networks are central to the reproduction of the precariat. The young, the half-employed, the unemployed, the aged, and the disabled are supported through the reproductive labor still very much linked to multi-family households. Single-family households remain a rarity in this *kampung*, and in many others. Even the middle class *kampung* dweller is likely to have a servant who is a relation of some sort. Poverty alleviation, care labor for infants and seniors, and labor in the informal sector were all managed through familial ties. The social reproduction at the heart of the *kampung* shapes and is shaped by the role the *kampung* serves in supporting informality.

Informal small enterprises flourish in the *kampung*'s narrow spaces. Although such informal-sector work also takes place on large streets and alongside formal commerce, the *kampung* has a particular advantage as the ideal infrastructure for informality. Any time spent in one reveals the hidden workings of the invisible economy. Social support for such informal enterprise is often offered by the state. Training, cooperative credit, and small amounts of capital may be extended, but these industries grow and thrive because of excess labor and dense social networks, often kin-based. I recall vividly discovering a kind of pop-up breakfast buffet on the porch of a near neighbor. Dreading the cooking of rice every morning (and assuming that full breakfasts were being cooked in all the houses around me), I was delighted to find out about this front-porch enterprise. It turned out many women were sending children to that porch to fetch their own breakfast before school or going themselves to collect something for the family. This house was connected to mine by a series of interlinked paths that threaded across the paved alleyway, under clotheslines, in front of doorsteps, and between houses. There, a woman and her family offered food for sale only in the morning; the house returned to its original form after the table was removed and the front window was closed. I would never have found this place if not led by the nose by a neighbor, and, indeed, I got lost several times retracing my steps—and all of this happened within two hundred meters of my own house.

¹⁶ Loic Wacquant, "Deadly Symbiosis: When Ghetto and Prison Meet and Mesh," *Punishment and Society* 3, 1 (2001): 95–134.

¹⁷ See: Albert Berry, Edgar Rodriguez, and Henry Sandee, "Small and Medium Enterprise Dynamics in Indonesia," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies* 37, 3 (2001): 363–84; and Peter Kellett, Wendy Bishop, Graham Tipple, and Justine Coulson, "Networks of Exchange and Co-operation: Reinforcing Traditional Values through Economic Activities in an Indonesian Kampung," in *Traditional Environments in a New Millennium: Defining Principles and Professional Practice*, ed. H. Turgut and P. Kellett (Istanbul: Istanbul Technical University, 2001), 163–68.

¹⁸ Jan Newberry, "Double Spaced: Abstract Labour in Urban Kampung," *Anthropologica* 50, 2 (2008): 241–54.

Precarious industries such as this one often bloom and die quickly; they tend to take advantage of existing spaces that are unoccupied. In my experience, these can be a back room, a hallway, an alley, or a front porch. The haphazard growth of *kampung* spaces is rarely driven by specific, identified needs. Rather, informal enterprises are opportunistic in all senses: they offer opportunity for employment and cash and they take advantage of whatever space, labor, and talent is readily available.

This form of labor and enterprise has been tremendously important for Indonesia. In contrast to the abstraction of labor in industrial manufacturing depicted by Marx, *kampung*-based small-scale enterprises depend on the specificity of the *kampung*, its familial ties, and its local culture of shared poverty that resembles the workshops of preindustrial England.¹⁹ They take advantage of the *kampung*'s scale and local networks to both provide and reproduce extremely low-cost labor that subsidizes Indonesia's comparative advantage as a surplus-labor economy.

This infrastructure of informality in turn depends on the conscripted work of local women connected through kinship and a network of paths and walkways around and behind houses. Like Elyachar's phatic labor, the work of these women is a conduit between households produced through gossip and the flow of other resources, material and immaterial.²⁰ While acknowledging the key semiotic and communicative value of this labor as Elyachar does, the connected and concerted labor of *kampung* women in their households and communities cannot be divorced from the production of surplus value for the larger economy and its appropriation by the state. Whether working together to share the labor of *lebaran* (the Idul-Fitri feast at the end of Ramadan) on a neighborhood scale or to deliver one of the many mandated programs for the production of healthy communities, families, and children, *kampung* women's labor on behalf of their community extends the reach of state rule. At the same time, it reproduces the *kampung* community as a community and its key infrastructural role in absorbing excess labor. This infrastructural support for the Indonesian economy cannot be separated from the "culture" of the *kampung*.

In *Panji, the Culture Hero*, Dutch ethnologist W. H. Rassers provides a graph of the ideal of a Javanese house that labels the open space between the main house and the *pendapa* (pavilion-like structure) as "*kampung*."²¹ The connotation of a mediating space between a private interior and a public space resonates with the continued role of urban *kampung* as a domestic community, halfway between the individual household and the public city streets. The word "*kampung*" has also been used to label a unit of civil administration (e.g., "ward"), although it has been superseded by other units now. The Indonesian state has relied for a very long time on local management of communities in order to thrive economically. The organization of local governance into sections headed by popularly selected, unpaid local leaders has been used as a form of successful community management by colonial and wartime administrations.²²

¹⁹ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990).

²⁰ Elyachar, "Phatic Labor, Infrastructure, and the Question of Empowerment in Cairo," 452–64.

²¹ W. H. Rassers, *Panji, the Culture Hero: A Structural Study of Religion in Java* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960 [1925]).

²² John Sullivan, "Kampung and State: The Role of Government in the Development of Urban Community in Yogyakarta," *Indonesia* 41 (April 1986): 63–88; and *Local Government and Community in Java: An Urban Case Study* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1992).

In fact, local levels of government administration have proved to be some of the most durable infrastructure in changing Indonesia. The smallest units include the RT (*Rukun Tetangga*, harmonious neighbors) and RW (*Rukun Warga*, harmonious citizens). Although the names differ somewhat in rural areas, the basic premise is consistent in both: unpaid or barely paid, popularly selected leaders are the first mediation between citizen and state and they are charged with dealing with the management of local community issues. These units are based on spatial proximity, so that an RT is a grouping of something like fifteen to twenty neighboring houses and the RW is a set of six contiguous RTs. The importance of this organization for underwriting long-term national stability is not often noted. Despite a reorganization of governance at most other levels after the end of Suharto's New Order, these local units remain and serve as the first and sometimes most important point of access to the government that many individuals experience. Although typically overlooked in considerations of Indonesian politics, these units continue to mediate between locals and the state.²³ Their durability is premised on a felt sense of local community solidarity that derives both from state administration but also local practices of being a neighbor.

Perhaps most fundamentally, this organization is tied up with the aesthetics and affect of *kampung* life as a structure of feeling. The moral valence of *kampung* life is often described in relation to its lack elsewhere, perhaps quintessentially in new suburban settlements that are devoid of a sense of community, of neighbor helping neighbor, of *gotong royong*. Whatever the definition of culture employed, the felt sense of neighborliness and mutual support at the center of *kampung* life endures. In fact, to say someone is *kampung* is both to mark their ability to get along with others in mutual solidarity and also their lower-class status and deep distrust of central authority. As I have said elsewhere:

Wong kampung (Jv.) or *kampung* person can suggest humbleness and community spirit, while the term *wong kampungan* (Jv.), that is, person with a characteristic *kampung* mentality, carries pejorative connotations of small-minded localism. Indeed, “*kampung*” serves as a class referent in common speech that has few class markers other than those associated with royalty and the hereditary occupational categories of Dutch colonialism.²⁴

Kampung and associated forms of neighborhood administration have been and continue to be a form of governmentality. Yet, structures of feeling are not just about rule. Siegel has described for the neighboring city of Solo the period known as *sore*, when the sun drops, the heat lessens, and the rhythms of the day change.²⁵ During this period between the workday and sunset, *kampung* neighbors come out to see and be seen. Public accountings are kept of those who remain in their houses and who do not come out to sweep the street and gossip. The activities of the *sore* are dependent on the kind of space it is. The narrowness of the shared streets and alleyways, the fact

²³ Nany Yulastuti, Joesron Alie Syahbana, and Sugiono Soetomo, “The Role of Community Institutions ‘*Rukun Tetangga*’ in Social Housing, Indonesia,” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 5, 10 (1) (2015): 44.

²⁴ Jan Newberry, “Class *Mobil*: Circulation of Children in the Making of Middle Indonesia,” in *In Search of Middle Indonesia*, ed. Gerry Van Klinken and Ward Berenschot (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

²⁵ James Siegel, *Solo in the New Order: Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

that doors are left open and neighbors can see in, and the front stoop or porch as viewing platform are all crucial. On walks to neighborhood *arisan* (rotating credit lottery) meetings, to the local mosque, or to mind children, community members build the affective infrastructure of the *kampung* as shared social life.

Gotong royong, or mutual self-help, is both a form of governmentality and a deeply felt sentiment.²⁶ Although typically associated with Suharto's New Order bureaucratic authoritarianism, the forms of corvee labor that were used by the Dutch to organize Javanese villages resonate with later Japanese forms of surveillance in the city. Suharto-era forms of governmentality merely extended the imbrication of local administration and a sense of common cause. The results of this are paradoxical. In this *kampung*, neighbors were hidden by the Catholic Church from the worst of Japanese wartime excess, but in many others, neighbors identified each other for killing in the genocide of 1965 and later during the Petrus killings (1983–85).

Kampung are imagined communities, and residence within them produces its own form of citizenship, one that combines a sense of shared class position with a particular disposition to both economy and state rule.²⁷ The infrastructure of *kampung* streets exemplifies this. Like *kampung* houses, the wider alleyways that allow for motor traffic tend to harden over time, with the addition of asphalt and speed bumps. Unlike the boulevards and throughways produced by the spectacular state, *kampung* streets instead reveal the great continuity in liberal governance Indonesia.²⁸ They are typically built with *kampung* funds that may be combined with some government monies, and the labor may be provided in part by local inhabitants. *Kampung* paving is accomplished by harnessing the traces of corvee labor through appeal to the imagined community that proved so central to New Order governmentality. As incomes rise, the labor may be purchased, but still membership in the community means a monetary contribution at least. And people note and gossip about those who fail on this important indicator of *kampung* membership. *Kampung* citizenship includes, then, both the self-help of the poor that is the basis for informality but the state's use of it as well. The roads that hardened over time in *kampung* spaces are "state"ments, or enunciations of state presence, but layered with local labor and the practices of imagined communities. This capacity to complete common tasks as a group is another important and overlooked form of infrastructure, one that follows from its role as an affective infrastructure supporting informality.

Organization as Infrastructure

When first doing fieldwork on the Family Welfare Movement, I attended innumerable neighborhood meetings at the RT and RW levels as well as at higher

²⁶ John Bowen, "On the Political Construction of Tradition: *Gotong Royong* in Indonesia," *Journal of Asian Studies* 45, 3 (1986): 545–61.

²⁷ Citizenship here is social and categorical. *Kampung* membership, in fact, is potently resistant to neoliberal citizenship forms based on the sovereignty of the individual (cf. Antina von Schnitzler, "Performing Dignity: Human Rights, Citizenship, and the Techno-politics of Law in South Africa," *American Ethnologist* 41, 2 [2014]: 336–50).

²⁸ Abidin Kusno, *The Appearance of Memory: Mnemonic Practices of Architecture and Urban Form in Indonesia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

levels of civil administration. I also interviewed *kampung* dwellers about these government social-welfare programs and their worth. Repeatedly I heard wistful reminiscences about the RK (*Rukun Kampung*), apparently a prior and larger administrative unit. People commented on how, in the evenings, you would see everyone in the neighborhood as they walked to RK meetings and there was a greater sense of the *kampung* as a whole. And as I talked to women in this Catholic corner of the neighborhood, I also heard repeatedly about WK, for *Wanita Katolik* (Catholic Women). Again, this older grouping of neighbors bound by gender and belief seemed to haunt the newer, ever-finer groupings. *Dasa Wisma*, the ten-household grouping, was introduced in 1992, and my neighbors lamented the loss of the older, more encompassing units, like the WK and RK.

This present absence can be read as the durability of modes of governmentality, and indeed this is true. But it was the sense of social solidarity and the nostalgia for *kampung* communality that was repeated to me. And it struck me as I starting think about *kampung* as infrastructure that these memories and the *potentia* for neighborhood organization serve as one of its critical forms.²⁹ This ever-ready, frequently called-upon ability to organize and deliver mutual social support that transcends political regime was recently used again in the service of the very young.

Since 2000, the emergence of early childhood education and care programs has highlighted the rise of middle-class desire alongside the durability of the infrastructures for informality that shape the *kampung*. Private preschool and daycare options have exploded in the context of World Bank initiatives on education in the early years, and the government has expanded such programming for poor families by making use of community-based labor organized through the RT/RW system and PKK. This growing interest in early childhood education before formal schooling arrived at a particular time in Indonesia: in the wake of massive natural disasters (the 2004 tsunami and the 2006 Java earthquake) and at the advent of neoliberal democratization. Aid workers noted how the devastation brought by the earthquake actually facilitated the development of new programs.

New policies and programs to produce early childhood programming traveled through several channels: the work of intergovernmental funding and programs; the entrepreneurship of a middle class that also desired improved status via education; vibrant activist networks developed during democratization; existing local and national nongovernmental organizations involved in poverty alleviation and other social service delivery; and, finally, the rollout of the government's own programs at the national, provincial, and local levels.

As part of a project on these new programs, my research colleague Nita Kariani Purwanti conducted a set of interviews with the staff at these programs. Many were community-based PAUD (*Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*), early childhood education programs, run through the local organization of the RT or RW as well as PKK. As part of this work, Nita asked about the health of the RT/RW system and other forms of community-focused mutual support. It was clear that these new PAUDs were working in and around these older forms of community organization, illustrating their infrastructural character.

²⁹ Elyachar, "Phatic Labor, Infrastructure, and the Question of Empowerment in Cairo," 452–64.

For example, one program that Nita visited was on the north side of Yogya. The population comprised mostly farmers and there were few newcomers in this strongly Muslim area. In addition to the new early childhood program, a *siskamling* (*sistem keamanan lingkungan*, neighborhood patrol) was running and a *jimpitan* (communal-fund contribution) was collected every night. Although the *jimpitan* used to be an offering of rice, in this area and many others it has been replaced with a payment of Rp 100 (less than ten US cents). During my work in the 1990s, I often heard about both of these programs, especially the *jimpitan*. My neighbors fondly recalled their contribution of a single *sendok* (spoon) of *beras* (rice) to this communal fund. I never saw this kind of donation happen, but the sentimental and affective power of these memories of communality was clear. This power was being harnessed in local development projects. In the early 2000s, I worked with a local NGO that was introducing bamboo banks to be hidden in the walls of houses of women who wanted to save small amounts of money for their own use. In this case, the affective power of old forms of saving actually became part of the infrastructural support beams of the house.

There was variety in the kinds of programs mentioned in the interviews Nita conducted. In some places, the *jimpitan* continued and the RT/RW system was functioning well. In others, revisions to old programs were clear. The very famous Posyandu integrated health post³⁰ is now complemented with Posdaya, a community empowerment post that covers health, education, and economy, according to one local leader.³¹ In fact, in this particular *dusun* (hamlet), there was a welter of programs that included new and newly reinvigorated programs and active sections of old programs that had ended elsewhere, as this exchange illustrates (YW, S, and DS are teachers in the PAUD program):

YW & S: Well, the women's gatherings also happen quite often. There're so many things to do. Started from the PKKs to ... etc.

Nita: How many times per month?

YW: Ten times, perhaps more.

Nita: Is the RT *arisan* included?

S: Yes. There's the *Apsari*, the *arisan* of three RTs. There's also the RT *arisan*, the RW *arisan*, and Dasa Wisma. Also the *dusun* PKKs. Furthermore, the *Posdayas* and also *pengajian* (study group). Then there's the *Kokesga*. There're a lot of gatherings.

Nita: What's the "Dasa Wisma"? A kind of *arisan*?

S: Yes, an *arisan* for the PKK's women, but only for about ten houses.

Nita: Is there also the RT *arisan*?

³⁰ S. L. Leimena, "Posyandu: A Community-based Vehicle to Improve Child Survival and Development," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health* 3, 4 (1989), http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/101053958900300402?url_ver=Z39.88-2003&rfr_id=ori:rid:crossref.org&rfr_dat=cr_pub%3dpubmed, accessed May 2, 2018.

³¹ Pos Pemberdayaan Keluarga (Posdaya, Family Empowerment Post) encourages family participation in (re)building a culture of cooperation to nurture and maximize the potential of human resources.

- S: Yes, the entire RT. There's also one for three RTs called *Apsari*.
- YW: There's also one for the RW. Also another one for the *dusun*.
- Nita: How many *arisan* in total?
- S: Many.
- DS: Let's trace it by the dates. Day 2, the Gotro (*gotong royong*) *arisan*, then day 4, the RT *arisan*. Day 5, the *Kokesga*.
- Nita: What's the "kokesga"?
- DS: It used to be the *Kesra* (*kesejahteraan rakyat*; people's welfare), it also manages the savings and credit system.
- S: Day 10, savings and credit gathering of "Dahlia" women.
- DS: Day 14, the *Posdaya*. Day 16, the *dusun* gathering.
- S: There's a *pengajian* every Saturday night. There's also a *pengajian* on Monday. There's also the one for men.
- Nita: Oh, for men? Which one has more gatherings, men or women?
- YW: Women.
- S: Comparing women and men, the ratio is 10:2 [laugh].
- N: But the gatherings are useful for socialization or to make announcements ... Is that right?
- DS: Iya, iya.

The standing joke that the *arisan* is the only reason people attend community meetings is based on a grain of truth. At each meeting, a name is drawn to see who gets the collected money. The element of surprise was one reason people enjoyed attending. But, all jokes aside, what these interviews showed repeatedly is the durability of the infrastructure of organization for running *kampung* affairs.

These forms of organization are not merely forms of governmentality, they are also crucial aspects of the infrastructure of informality. That is, this infrastructure of organization can be used for many ends, not all of them defined or endorsed by the state. Just as *preman* (gangsters, thugs) can tap the infrastructure of organization for vigilantism or to provide alternative community services, so, too, can the state recuperate the organization for its own ends.³² The re-embedding of the *jimpitan*, *siskamling*, and bamboo banks to aid in community empowerment illustrates the enduring flexibility of this infrastructure of organization. The line between formal and informal, licit and illicit, within and without the state runs through the *kampung*.

³² See: Joshua Barker, "State of Fear: Controlling the Criminal Contagion in Suharto's New Order," *Indonesia* 66 (October 1998): 6–43; Robbie Peters, *Surabaya, 1945–2010: Neighbourhood, State, and Economy in Indonesia's City of Struggle* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013).

Planning Playgrounds

Kampung are infrastructures coproduced by state and *kampung* citizens that underwrite the informality central to Indonesia's economy. Underwriting here implies securing risk, and the absorptive power of the *kampung* as a reserve for the poor reduces the brunt of economic booms and busts and the risk posed to the state and economy. The productive, mutually beneficial relationship between *kampung* citizenship and state governmentality has continued in the era of democratization, even as the rhetoric of the traditional *kampung* has been used as an affective resource in promoting contemporary urban dreams, such as playgrounds for children.

The early childhood programming that proliferated in the aftermath of the 2006 earthquake included specific attention to local culture and environment. Activities introduced by NGO workers and educational activists continually highlighted the importance of using local materials to produce appropriate activities, while World Bank programs promoted using items from the local environment to produce cheap, readily available educational materials. This interweaving of local culture in education harkens back to the Taman Siswa movement, even as it signaled the desire to reform the education system.³³ One outcome of this push to support the importance of child's play is the desire to produce playgrounds.

The lack of public play spaces in Indonesia is quite striking. Along with the growth in attention to early childhood education, there appears to have been a growth in so-called "*taman bermain*," or play gardens, which are often fee-based, private enterprises.³⁴ Yet public playgrounds remain scarce, perhaps particularly in densely packed *kampung*. Fieldwork in 2006 demonstrated the growth in playgrounds built along with new preschools. Nevertheless, public, government-sponsored early childhood programs that are appearing have few resources and any play areas must be inserted into the *kampung*'s existing, narrow spaces.

Making-do in the face of new programming sponsored by the national government as well as international aid organizations is nothing especially new in Indonesia. And here the role of the *kampung* as a kind of affective infrastructure for the organization of informality becomes clear. In Bandung, for example, Kampung Sesama is an initiative sponsored by architect Sarah Ginting, who has advocated for designs that make use of a *kampung*'s narrow spaces to provide play spaces for children.³⁵ Kampung Sesama is offered as a kind of prototype for how to make use of existing space to accommodate the need for play spaces. But it is worthwhile noting that it calls upon a certain nostalgia for the imagined community of *kampung* solidarity, even as these community-based programs for early childhood are being offered through the labor of neighborhood women yet again.

³³ See: K. H. Dewantara, *Karya Ki Hadjar Dewantara. Bagian Pertama: Pendidikan*, third ed. (Yogyakarta: Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa, 2004); and Newberry, "'Anything Can Be Used to Stimulate Development,'" 25–45. Taman Siswa is the Javanese, independence-era educational movement begun by Ki Hadjar Dewantara.

³⁴ Karen Strassler, "Children as Witnesses of History in Post-Suharto Indonesia," *Visual Anthropology* 22, 2 (2006): 53–70.

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRPxFVP9QbE>, accessed September 27, 2016.

Other urban dreams draw on this imaginary but erase its classed dimensions. Kusno identifies the post-1998 interest by planners to engage with *kampung* neighbors in the design of new housing developments. In the monetary crisis known as *krismon* at the end of Suharto's regime, Kusno suggests that middle-class Jakarta families had "gone *kampung*." He describes the design work of Adi "Mamo" Purnomo as an example of "post-Suharto architecture that use[s] the language of the *kampung* to address the urban life of the urban metropolis."³⁶ The award-winning Tanjung Duren House was built to turn away from the street toward an interior designed to look like an alleyway. Kusno argues that "there is nothing nostalgic about the *kampung*, which still is a dominant feature of the urban fabric of Jakarta,"³⁷ and yet the image of the *kampung* that is reproduced glorifies the advantages of an imagined community of shared poverty.

[Mamo] provided in the design a communal space for cooking and washing. Tenants are obligated to share responsibility for taking care of facilities and the surrounding green space. There is rule and regulation in the use and care of space. Yet, in Mamo's perspective, such disciplinary and pedagogical practices would, in any case, nurture a collective identity and identification of the inhabitants with the place. Mamo also argues that the new building blocks should follow the formal characteristics of the shanty town on the riverside since over time such an image has already constituted a sense of place and forms a cognitive memory for the inhabitants.³⁸

Mamo intended for this settlement to have a façade composed of used materials that would inevitably be changed with each new tenant to produce an ever-changing text, a practice that, as Kusno notes, draws on the famous practice of Romo Mangunwijaya in a downtown Yogyakarta *kampung* in the 1980s. Kusno describes Mamo's urban imaginary as embodying "collective memories, a sense of leftovers and scarcity."³⁹

It is hard to argue that this does not represent a continuation of a romance about the *kampung*'s urban poor that happens to serve other ends quite handily: the poor are housed but also stationed as the communal class that will make-do with very little. The use of the *sempit* (narrow) alleyway and the production of a sense of collectivity, indeed the palimpsest of changing façades, all play on the longtime romance of *kampung* as a rural village in the city, an old urban dream.⁴⁰ Successive state regimes—Dutch colonial, Japanese wartime, modernizing authoritarian, and now democratizing neoliberal—have all drawn on this romanticized notion of communal self-support, to the great benefit of capital accumulation, I argue. The *kampung* alleyway is a potent symbol of the persistent narrowing of expectations about *kampung* and the reproduction of informality that buoys the Indonesian economy.

³⁶ Kusno, *The Appearance of Memory*, 76.

³⁷ Kusno, *The Appearance of Memory*, 77.

³⁸ Kusno, *The Appearance of Memory*, 79.

³⁹ Kusno, *The Appearance of Memory*, 79.

⁴⁰ Herbert Gans, *Urban Villagers* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962).

Sempit: The Infrastructure of Permanent Precarity

Around the corner from my old house there is a small, rather rickety, playground set. It looks like the one from my own 1950s childhood backyard. It sits in the sizable front yard of a family that has been very active in the neighborhood's Catholic community. The homeowner, Pak Muji, was a beloved figure whose slow footsteps from his home, around the corner, and down the alley in front of my house towards the Catholic church always came long before the rapid clicks of his daughter's heels as she retraced the same path. Pak Muji had started a kindergarten years before in the front room of his house, and the playground equipment was part of that. Kindergartens are always private in Indonesia, and although located in the Catholic corner of this *kampung*, the play area drew all the children to it. Pak Muji's playground equipment and spacious front yard (as rare as the swings and slide) was used for many other things, because his active family played a role in local administration, too. The living room-cum-classroom was also the meeting place for Catholic prayer meetings and RT and RW gatherings. The front yard was used for the monthly weighing of the babies under age five for Posyandu's BALITA program (Babies Under Five; a government program to promote healthy development and identify children who are not thriving). Once a month the yard was filled with playing children as well as seniors taking part in the Usia Lanjut (Elderly) program, a similar initiative aimed at supporting seniors. Local PKK cadre handed out vitamin pills and plates of food to the children and took the blood pressure of the seniors.

These routine community meetings structure *kampung* life, its rhythms and sentiments, as effectively/affectively as does the marking of late-afternoon *sore*, when these meetings typically occur. These spectacular ordinary moments of *kampung* life are essential forms of infrastructure, weaving together state directives and local community values. For the permanent precariat that is the *kampung* class, the invisible, banal organizational weft is woven together with the warp of the informal economy to produce the always-ready labor for Indonesia's future.