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**Durable Assemblage:
Early Childhood Education in Indonesia**

Jan Newberry

Department of Anthropology,
University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
jan.newberry@uleth.ca

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Asia Research Institute

National University of Singapore

469A Tower Block #10-01,

Bukit Timah Road,

Singapore 259770

Tel: (65) 6516 3810

Fax: (65) 6779 1428

Website: www.ari.nus.edu.sg

Email: arisec@nus.edu.sg

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DURABLE ASSEMBLAGE: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

At the end of an interview with a young educational activist in his home just outside Yogyakarta, a central Javanese city, I watched as he drew a diagram to illustrate the network of connections that he worked within. As part of my research on emerging networks of expertise on early childhood in Indonesia, I had asked activists and educators to draw a Venn diagram to illustrate the people, agencies and organizations with which they worked.¹ In the past this young man had worked with a local NGO devoted to issues of street children, but now he was working for Save the Children in Surabaya, a large port city. His diagram, like others I collected, charted connections new and established, novel and known. And in doing so, he made visible to me the emerging network of actors involved in issues of childhood in Indonesia (Latour 2007).

I was conducting fieldwork in Yogyakarta in 2007, a decade after the end of Suharto's New Order regime (1966-98). Much had changed as the era of reform or *Reformasi* had arrived in Indonesia on the heels of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, leading to an explosion of non-governmental organizations, democratization initiatives, as well as the neoliberal restructuring of the economy. Along with them, a new attention to childhood, especially early childhood, had arrived as well. So, as this young man thoughtfully drew out the connections in his working life, he was considering a landscape considerably altered. And his optimism was catching. The Ministry of National Education was filled with radicals, in his view, and there was great potential for positive change.

It was a time when Indonesians generally were considering what was old, what was new, what was working and what was not. I felt this keenly as my own work on childhood had begun as a reconsideration of Hildred Geertz's work on the Javanese family (1963). She had considered family form and practises, including childrearing, in the decades after Independence in 1947, and now, I was looking at some of the same issues in the decades following democratization. I too was interested in what was old, what was new, what was working and what was not for families, communities, and children. And what were clearly new were local programs offered for *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* or Early Childhood Education (hereafter PAUD). These public programs were springing up everywhere in response to government mandates to deliver integrated programs for early childhood care, education and development, typically abbreviated as ECCD or ECED, a product of a push since 2000 by the World Bank for attention to the early years of a child's development.²

¹ Ethnographic research in Yogyakarta began with original fieldwork in 1992-93 and subsequent periods of field research in 1996, 1998, 2002, 2004, and 2006. More recent research in October of 2007 included site visits to six preschool programs in the city of Yogyakarta and two in surrounding rural areas. Interviews were conducted with NGO representatives working in early childhood education, with officers of the organisation for workers in early childhood care and education, with local childhood experts, and with government education officials. Observations were made of training for early childhood workers. This work was in addition to a series of interviews done since the 2006 earthquake with activists from four non-governmental organizations. Nita Kariani Purwanti conducted interviews at ten PAUD programs including interviews with teachers and administrators between 2008-10, along with interviews with local activists. My sincere thanks to Nita who served as interviewer, translator, and colleague for much of this work. My thanks as well to Ridzki Samsulhadi who served as translator for some of the interviews used here. Thanks as well to Michelle Miller Bunnell for her encouragement and the anonymous reviewer of the manuscript for helpful comments. And as always, thanks to my boon companion and first reader, Steve Ferzacca.

² These programs have been variously termed early childhood care and development (ECCD), early childhood care, education and development (ECED), or ECE for early childhood education. ECCD will be used here, and the local abbreviation PAUD will be used here specifically for the public, government-organized programs.

Attention to empowering the child is also reflected in the global emphasis on early childhood care and development, an initiative associated with the United Nations and the World Bank (Dahlberg and Moss 2005). The Consultative Group on ECCD, an inter-agency consortium that includes PLAN International, references both 2006 UN documents on child rights in early childhood (United Nations 2006) and Education for All, another global inter-governmental initiative associated with the 2000 UNESCO Dakar Framework. The use of the terms care and development in addition to education describes the comprehensive approach to child development advocated in these initiatives. As the Consultative Group on ECCD describes it:

Framed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ECCD field is interdisciplinary in its focus. It includes health, nutrition, education, social science, economics, child protection and social welfare. The ECCD field strives to ensure young children's overall well-being during the early years, providing also the foundation for the development of adults who are healthy, socially and environmentally responsible, intellectually competent, and economically productive (Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development 2011).

The child to be produced through the ECCD and PAUD programs was an active, self-directed learner, a fitting model for the new age of democratic empowerment. And the integrated, child-centred programs being advocated were an example of the flexible delivery of social services associated with neoliberal reform.

The young child had become the site for intense development work in its double senses: development initiatives aimed at the global South and programs to aid the physical and psychological development of healthy children (Burman 2008). While this kind of attention to the very young child from 0-8 years old was new, the programmatic responses that emerged drew on elements old and well-known: the use of "standard" metrics developed elsewhere, the anchoring of social welfare programs in the community form and the return to a romantic notion of Javanese culture as the most appropriate basis for education. The new networks drawn for me by various actors in these programs for the young child illustrated the relations assembled to care for children that cut across old modes of delivery even as they reinforced longstanding forms.

The rapid emergence of early childhood programming in the context of democratization, neoliberal restructuring, and emergency seemed to be just the kind of phenomenon described by assemblage, the term that has received much attention since the edited volume on global assemblages by Ong and Collier (2005). Still not fully fleshed out, the term assemblage is a post-structuralist concept meant to grasp the effects of globalization and the new contexts in which "the forms and values of individual and collective existence are problematized or at stake" (Collier and Ong 2005:4). The concept is meant to refer to global forms as they are articulated in specific situations, "or territorialized in assemblages" which "define new material, collective and discursive relationships" (ibid.).

Assemblage implies "abstractable, mobile, and dynamic" elements and the extension across space of connections between heterogeneous, unstable regimes of ideas, values, people, and so forth. Like the Venn diagram produced by the young activist, these network-like links are emergent, startling even to those involved, and they are taken to represent something new, fresh and innovative. Early childhood programs have this flavour, and yet, their delivery simultaneously intensifies longstanding modes of social welfare as the "community" is reproduced in post-authoritarian, neoliberal, democratizing Indonesia. So then, does the durability of community as a technology of rule and as a social form challenge assemblage as a conceptual tool? The analysis presented here also questions the limits of governmentality alone as an explanation for modes of community governance by

suggesting the continuing importance of state formation as a means to understand how contingent programmatic reform drives the reproduction of durable forms.

In the following, the linkages in flexible assemblages of early childhood care are considered first. The circulation of a specific meme – center and circle time – illustrates connections between subcontracted expertise, intergovernmental dictates, franchised education enterprise, and newly democratic Indonesia. It also asserts a new subjectivity with its particular vision of the child as empowered and at the center of a play-based approach to education. This approach to empowerment lights up other linkages between optimal brain development and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as the relationship between development and the child is deepened and intensified. And yet, this new subjectivity assembled as the empowered, democratic child relies on durable social forms and a retrenchment of community and culture as local resources as described in a subsequent section. Ultimately, this analysis moves to show the empowered child to be the re-circulation of an interrelated set of romantic ideas about the child, community, and culture and their relationship to government. The question becomes whether assemblage – and governmentality alone – offer the best frame for understanding this.

ASSEMBLING A NEW CHILD

The florescence of early childhood programs in Yogyakarta and Indonesia in recent years has been remarkable. In 2007, a variety of programs, private and public, was available. One type of program was the expensive private preschool and daycare option advertised in the city.³ Glossy brochures circulated of programs offering to help brain development, to use the Montessori Method, to offer instruction in English, to work on relationship building, and so forth. Many of these private programs were clearly aimed at an expanding middle class with the money to afford these educational resources for their children. The English word “playgroup” was used locally for these programs, which were understood to be markers of the achievement of a particular class standing.

Yet, even for the elites, childcare has typically been done inside the home, whether by servants or relatives. And indeed, it was a much rarer thing in Yogyakarta to use these programs to provide what is meant by daycare in the developed world; that is, as support for two-income, neo-local families who need childcare while the parents worked. Instead, many of these programs ran for short periods of time and were located in areas of the city that necessitated car travel, which was beyond the reach of most. One young director of a program reported that some parents in fact were making longer use of the programs, but this had brought its own problems. There was a need to provide disposable diapers, not a common local practise, if a young infant was left at a playgroup. The novelty of this was reinforced in an interview with a local clinical child psychologist who noted an uptick in the occurrence of problems with toilet-training. Clearly, these new programs were changing established patterns of childrearing and childcare.

One example of an extremely high-end, private daycare and preschool boasted a double-gated entrance, an enclosed play area with a pool, beautifully finished and fully furnished classrooms, and even a computer lab. At the time of my visit, this operation only had children below kindergarten age (4 and under) enrolled. It was owned and operated by a young woman whose parents were dentists. This explained the fully equipped dental office and the medical exam room. It did not explain the need for a shop selling snacks or the presence of an Australian intern. This very surprising

³ Although TK or kindergarten has always been private, these programs are for younger children and they include as well what would be glossed as preschool and daycare in the developed world.

program suggested the desire for the consumption of early childhood programming that was far outside the local experience. Still, its programs like most others were promoting the integrated development of the whole child through child-centered, play-based approaches. I was asked at the interview to return so that I could explain to the parents why their preschool children did not already know how to read. The staff was frustrated that this new integrated approach to encouraging child development was not understood by parents, who seemingly wanted only instant academic achievement.

The other type of private early child education was organized by local and national NGOs. The organizational energy that still existed from democratization and the age of *Reformasi* was clear in the programs I visited. Young activists, not necessarily with a background in education but with a desire to offer a different approach to schooling, were putting together programs. One particularly pointed example was the playgroup offered by a group of self-described artists and activists. The program was located at the southern edge of Yogya city in an area bordering rice fields. There were two classrooms for this program, one of them in a small, elevated bamboo farmer's hut in a rice field. The curriculum for this program was meant to be driven by local knowledge, and so for example, woven winnowing trays held peanuts at varying stages of harvest. I was told the curriculum at the moment was based on learning about the peanut, from planting to harvest to cooking and consumption. Like many of these programs there was an emphasis on local culture and environment as well as environmental awareness. The program was offered on a sliding scale so that locals who were poor could attend as well the children of the middle class. Still, the principles and values on which it was established were most inviting to an educated clientele, one that could read the intent to reform the national education system with its rote learning and standardized tests.

Like the first program described, the goals and desires of the organizers referenced a global discourse on early childhood education, care and development that was finding its way into local programming, fueled by a growing middle class consumption and the optimism from the democratization movement but in advance of a local articulation of values around early childhood. This would soon be matched by the public rollout of government-organized PAUD programs throughout the city. In this case, the structure and goals were much more obvious to locals as they made use of longstanding forms of governmentality aimed at the lower classes in the city and countryside that made reference to community support and welfare, as will be detailed in later sections.

In this time of intense programmatic development, apparently novel and unexpected linkages developed between New Order era programs, private daycare franchises, efforts by local NGO activists, and ultimately government-organized PAUD programs. An assemblage of care emerged that hopped and skipped across organizations and countries and mandates in a seemingly idiosyncratic meshing of globalized education regimes, Indonesian democratization, and middle class desire. One meme circulated across these connections, illustrating their links: center and circle time. Often associated with the Montessori Method, circle time is used in many educational settings in the developed world. Children are encouraged to sit on the floor in a circle to share experiences and feelings. This spatial rearrangement of the traditional classroom setting in the developed world is meant, among other things, to unseat authority and to encourage a child-centered approach to education. The center in this case refers to activity centers that are used to organize play-based inquiry around specific issues and tasks.

There is a long historical tradition of such approaches in the West, from Friedrich Froebel, who coined the word kindergarten, to Maria Montessori. The BCCT approach is only the most recent incarnation of a child-centered philosophy of education that draws on Froebel's "gifts" for learning and Maria Montessori's emphasis on self-directed learning and the use of developmentally

appropriate toys. The child so figured appeared to be a new one in interviews conducted with Indonesian educators and activists. Even so, the idea that children should be encouraged to sit on the floor in groups to learn poses some interesting contradictions in Java. One need look no further than Clifford Geertz's *Religion in Java* (1960) to find a description of men (and now women too) sitting on the floor in a circle on mats to share food the *slametan* ritual dinner. Surely circle time could be no great change to local habits. And yet, this idea and its spread reveal much about the current assemblage of care around early childhood in Indonesia.

The use of center and circle time can be found across early childhood programs in the Yogya area, and its use is mandated by Indonesian national education materials. The origin of this spread appears to be the American program known as Beyond Center and Circle Times or BCCT, an approach to early childhood associated with the Center for Childhood Research and Training (CCCRT) in Tallahassee, Florida, described as "Home of the Creative Preschool Model Program Curriculum: *Beyond Centers & Circle Time: Scaffolding & Assessing the Play of Young Children*®" (www.cccrt.org). As their website describes: "CCCRT offers educational resources, professional services, scholarly publications and state-of-the-art training to adults working within the field of early childhood education and care" (CCCRT 2007).

The uptake of the BCCT approach in Indonesia is illustrated by a local program devoted to early childhood. The ECCD Research Center (ECCD-RC) was begun in Yogyakarta by a local non-governmental organization LSPPA (*Lembaga Studi dan Perkembangan Perempuan dan Anak*, or Institute for the Study and Development of Women and Children) in conjunction with the Australian Agency for International Development and Plan International, one of the oldest international child charities. In an interview, a young trainer with the research center described how the BCCT approach had entered Yogya.

Here's the story. Now the government [Education Directorate] has bought a teaching approach from Florida, America. It's called BCCT, that is, an approach to the education of the young child. Then the Directorate held a workshop to produce several master trainers. The central team [in Jakarta] also went to Florida. When they returned, they brought the "training" to each province. Now, I took the training in Yogyakarta. For the ECCD-RC, we took from the government's PAUD program especially what was fitting, for example how to give support when children play, including organizing playgrounds. But for the curriculum, we gathered [the materials] ourselves from various sources which means...yes, you can say that we made our own curriculum that's appropriate here (interview conducted by Nita KarianiPurwanti, July 2007).

She went further when asked whether PAUD is a government program that has its own curriculum. "Maybe not a curriculum like at a school. Maybe closer to 'guidelines.' These are called generic learning menu. It's hoped that the application will be more 'flexible'" (ibid.).⁴ This reference to a flexible curriculum, reflected in the generic menu, is a characteristic of programming in the era of democratization. Flexibility and integration are emphasized in program delivery so that local conditions can be taken into account even as programs deliver a wider variety of resources. Government pamphlets on PAUD outline a range of activities and approaches, all in support of a child-centred approach to ECCD, and programs are meant to use the generic menu to design locally appropriate curriculum in individual programs. As described by the World Bank (2006:20), the emphasis is now on "a more integrated or thematic curriculum with active learning approaches."

⁴ Single quotes here indicate the use of the English term in the original interview.

Dr. Pam Phelps who works with the CCCRT in Tallahassee, Florida, helped design the BCCT program. In a personal communication (February 8, 2008), she reported training at least 150 Indonesians in the BCCT approach. Elements of this program have proliferated in the Yogya area, not only in private programs, but also in those being implemented by the government. National education guides specifically reference Beyond Center and Circle Time (Department of National Education 2002, 2006). And this approach has spread along several channels in the Yogya area. The ECCD-RC explicitly incorporates this approach in its work. Moreover, its trainers, like the one cited above, are asked to deliver workshops on ECCD and PAUD approaches throughout the area. This approach to training and dissemination has, in effect, spread this meme along older channels used for community development that will be described below.

This extension of a global development directive from a non-governmental organization, backed by an international NGO, through to local, provincial and national government initiatives is not surprising in Indonesia. What does seem novel is how this network of relations crosses over to the private enterprise of education and the packaged subcontracting of educational materials and training. Connections between for-profit educational services and the non-governmental push for early childhood programming were clear in Venn diagrams produced by Yogyakarta early childhood workers and activists who drew links between publishers, franchised preschool programs and the BCCT approach. In part, this was because the rapid development of preschools and playgroups in Indonesia did not draw on any ready instruction materials. In interviews, it was clear that franchised curricula have found a ready purchase in the new comprehensive early childhood programs that are emerging. In some cases, the franchised material was taken from regional models, such as Singapore and Malaysia, but for center and circle time, the American model was used.

This bleed into franchised corporate education reflects an unfolding assemblage of global education enterprise like that identified by Ong (2005) and Olds and Thrift (2005) for Singapore. The connection between the ecologies of expertise set up at the National University of Singapore and reaching to Yale, Harvard, and other international schools in its Global School House initiative, may seem a far cry from early childhood programs in Yogyakarta, and yet the dynamic is the same. While early childhood programs owe much to the inter-governmental early childhood initiatives and the state organization of social welfare, they also rely on a global discourse of educational enterprise, the franchising of curricula, publishing, and the subcontracting of educational upgrading. Like corporate daycare in the developed world (Sumison 2006), this development suggests a growing circuit of global educational entrepreneurialism. The corporatization of early childhood has had important corollaries in the developed world. The growth in franchised after-school tutoring, for example, has been linked to the development of early childhood programs as another profit-making venture that makes use of the resources already established for older ages (Aurini and Davies 2004). BCCT materials are available through Kaplan, one the largest and oldest tutoring and test preparation companies. Kaplan's own development from tutoring service to international, franchised educational service, including professional education, is an apt illustration of this global educational enterprise.

I was attracted initially to the idea of assemblage as a way to make sense of what seemed to me to be an odd and quixotic use of center and circle time in very different settings influenced by a number of sources. Assemblage seemed to capture how new programs for the care, education and development of the very young child in Indonesia knit together a disparate set of goals and actors who draw on a global discourse regarding early childhood. These programs depend on packaged and subcontracted international expertise, but also local middle class desire and consumption. Their organization on the ground owes much to the neoliberal reform of social welfare in Indonesia that privileges non-governmental solutions to social problems, and they fuel and are fueled by a corporate education enterprise culture of achievement that is perhaps particularly salient in Asia.

Yet, the network of care so assembled also references other constellations that combine brain science with democratic empowerment even as they draw on older organization and the use local resources of culture, community, and environment for child-centred, play-based education.

EMPOWERED BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The intense global push for attention to the young child marks an interesting synergy between democratic empowerment and brain science, extending the longstanding isomorphism of the development of the child with the development of the state and the nation (Burman 2008; Nandy 1983; Stoler 2002); so that development of the child is taken as the mirror for the development more generally. Contemporary ECCD programs, like many other recent development initiatives, have been influenced by the work of Amartya Sen. For example, the MDGs established in 2000 in conjunction with the UN Millennium Declaration represent an attempt to reconfigure measures of development in keeping with Sen's (1999) human capability approach (Hulme 2007). That is to say, new more comprehensive measures of development should include attention to a bigger basket of indicators as illustrated in the Human Development Index. A further elaboration of this new indexing is UNESCO's Education for All Index which includes expanding early childhood care and education following on the goals of the 2000 Dakar Framework for action. This link between the MDGs and the ECCD programs in Yogyakarta was made in interviews; for example, a local child psychologist noted that her discussions with the central PAUD offices always included attention to them.

These more comprehensive measures of development include an attention to early brain development that is a central part of the ECCD/PAUD approach being implemented in Yogyakarta. This interest in brain development has received new impetus from the growth of brain science and the so-called century of the brain (Farah and Wolpe 2004). And it is congruent with the push to consider the very young child, as attention is given to optimal brain development in children from birth as well as in utero. The Guidelines for the Generic Learning Menu published by the Indonesia Department for National Education in 2002 note:

The idea that education begins only at the age of formal schooling (7 years) isn't really true. In fact, education that begins at kindergarten age (4-6 years) is already too late. According to research results in neurology (Osborn, White, and Bloom), by the age of 4 half of human capacity for intelligence is already formed. This means that at the age mentioned a child's brain cannot receive maximal stimulus, so that the potential of the child's brain cannot be developed in an optimal manner (Department of National Education 2002; author's translation).

This emphasis on brain development and early childhood represents a reorganization of childhood as a category of intervention in Indonesia. While the very young child on Java has been the object of much love and attention (H. Geertz 1963), health alone had long been the focus of government programming. The integrated health post, or Posyandu, was a justifiably famous program in New Order Indonesia aimed specifically at measuring the growth in height and weight of children under five. The ECCD/PAUD programs appearing in Yogyakarta have intensified this attention by expanding the definition of healthy development as well as extending it to younger ages. Now, the simple tri-fold health card that had been used to record the height and weight of babies under five has been replaced by a thick manual that draws attention to early stimulation for brain development and prenatal care.

There is a further congruence between developing children and democratic empowerment evident in the links currently being made between community and early childhood in Indonesia. One aspect of this twinning has been the emphasis on local knowledge and local community empowerment (often linked to environmental awareness), which also derives in some measure from Sen's capability approach (1999). For Indonesia, there has been a fortuitous conflation of new programming aimed specifically at early childhood with the reorganization of governance post-Suharto. What resonated throughout a series of interviews and discussions with local educators, activists and reformers was a potent vision of culture, community and education as the key to democratic reform. By redesigning curricula to reflect local values and local culture, the child, like the community, would be empowered. And in this educational activism, the goals of the World Bank to improve child development in the years 0-8 met on the ground empowerment approaches to democratization, approaches that share a trajectory with neoliberal accountability and self-management (Shore 2008).

The human capability approach to development promotes the self-conscious accounting of local resources as the basis for empowerment. That is to say, rather than starting from a deficit model of what communities lack, empowerment approaches begin with what capabilities and resources already exist as the basis for development. Empowerment approaches resonated strongly in Indonesia in the era of democratization post-Suharto. Young activists in Yogya working in the field of early childhood education, care and development drew upon images of community, local culture, and the natural environment as capabilities to be used in the education of the whole child. One young activist waxed eloquent about how the banana (like the example of peanuts above) can be basis of multiple lessons, all of them grounded in local resources and local community. The importance of drawing on local community resources was reiterated frequently. As this young activist noted: "*Dan yang penting, mengenal potensi lingkungan sekitar*" (And what's important is to know the local community potential; interview November 2007). He described at length how although children in poor communities say there is not enough for toys, useful toys can be made from used things found in their own communities. "Finally, [the child] will campaign to his/her friends that [if they want to] buy her/him an airplane, don't immediately buy him/her a toy plane, s/he will say, give me things that [we] already have in the area, come on, let's make an airplane together."

The idea of assemblage is relevant again here. Old European notions of child-centred and play-based pedagogy are linked to the extension and intensification of the development of the young child in Indonesia via franchised education in the U.S. The development of the brain is linked to the MDGs, and the reform of development indices. An emphasis on the empowered, self-directed learner links to the self-conscious inventory of community resources but also a neoliberal audit of assets (Shore 2008). These linkages highlight the definition of assemblage as implying inherent tensions: "global implies broadly encompassing, seamless, and mobile; assemblage implies heterogeneous, contingent, unstable, partial, and situated" (Ong and Collier 2005:12). In this case, the flexible assemblage that is early childhood in Indonesia registers the seamlessly mobile but contingent connects between brain science, education enterprise and empowerment. Yet, this programming continues to work through a community-based delivery model, one that simultaneously reproduces older linkages between the romantic embrace of culture and community even as it reproduces durable local social forms not captured by the notion of assemblage.

AN OLDER ASSEMBLAGE?

For Indonesia, democratization and the era of *Reformasi* arrived with a neoliberal restructuring of the economy in the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis. As in other places, there has been a fortuitous mesh between new forms of citizen responsibility for democracy and the rollback of state power and programming (Nagar and Raju 2003). The generic learning menu (*menu generik*) referenced in government pamphlets is a fitting symbol of program design and implementation in Indonesia after the New Order. Flexible, integrated services are to be offered, like those for early childhood. Yet, the modality for delivering these services to lower class Indonesians was a longstanding one: the community.

Suharto's New Order state had made significant use of community and the "volunteered" labour of lower class women to deliver community-based social welfare through the national housewives organization, or PKK, as it will now be called.⁵ These were the women who organized the monthly meeting of the integrated health post mentioned above that has long delivered health support in villages and urban neighbourhoods through the work of women working as voluntary cadres in their own communities. The Posyandu is a hybrid program itself whose origins reflect international aid and its delivery in the 1980s (Leimena 1989; Köllmann and Van Veggel 1996) with its emphasis on reducing child and maternal mortality and its incorporation within the modernizing governmentality of Suharto's New Order Indonesia. In essence, the Posyandu reflects an older global assemblage of concepts and programs that reference earlier women in development initiatives, health promotion, and community self-reliance (Razavi and Miller 1995).

This community-based model has not been abandoned in the post-Suharto era of democratization and decentralization. Rather there has been intensification in its use in the push towards social service delivery that is comprehensive, flexible and integrated but also significantly non-governmental (Newberry 2010). And although the word integrated is reflected in the original formulation of this work (Posyandu comes from *pos* meaning post and *terpadu* meaning integrated), it has come to include services far beyond its original bio-medical mandate. Now the Posyandu, called Posyandu *Plus* in some areas, may include counselling, raising awareness about domestic abuse and of course programming for early childhood education.⁶ In fact, as was evident in fieldwork immediately after the 2006 earthquake, social service delivery now seems to favour a kind of one-stop shopping approach that deals with all the aspects of social, psychological and physical health. This flexible, non-governmental approach to social service delivery is yet another indicator of the neoliberal restructuring of Indonesia post-Suharto, although it is unclear whether this is innovation or retrenchment.

The social welfare programs that were central to New Order modernization relied on the connection made between the romantic idea of the cooperative community (Breman 1980; 1988; Boomgaard 1991; Goh 1988; Kemp 1988; Newberry 2006, 2007; Rigg 1994; Wolf 1957) and forms of domesticity that valorized the stay-at-home mother in a nuclear family (Jones 2010; Newberry 2006; N. Sullivan

⁵ *Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* is typically translated as the Family Welfare Movement. I have described this quasi-governmental organization of women as the national housewives association to capture its cooptation of adult (i.e., married) neighbor women to deliver health and welfare measures in their own communities (Newberry 2006, 2010).

⁶ Posyandu Plus, according to one active community worker, now includes not only educational programs for children but also for parents of children and for parents of teenagers. Other programs now include the Pos PAUD or PAUD post held in conjunction with Posyandu, as well as the Posdaya, or empowerment post. Changes in the early 1990s had included health checks for seniors in addition to children under five, a change that reflected the changing demographic profile of Indonesia.

1983, 1994; Suryakusuma 1991; Weiringa 1993). Women were effectively stationed as volunteered social welfare workers managing the health of their communities; all while encouraged to earn supplementary income to support the husband's income. Or at least, that was the discourse of the government. Women in the lower class urban enclaves known as *kampung* decried these as make-work programs. Even so, these women who had traditionally been economically active did indeed add the burden of community work to their daily activities (Newberry 2006; N. Sullivan 1994). And so the success of the programs depended on this doubled burden for lower class women. The presumption that they are willing and able to do this community work was founded on the New Order's endorsement of a particular form of domesticity but also on a presumption that near neighbours are in deep relationships of care and consensus.

In the early days of democratization, there had been many calls for the end of Suharto's New Order programs, including some of the programs associated with neighbourhood and village governance. Yet, it is through the offices of PKK and the Posyandu that many of the new PAUD programs are being offered, although the work of PKK typically goes unremarked (e.g., World Bank 2006). In fact, this organization of social welfare has been expanded further because of the compound approach implied in ECCD/PAUD programs; that is, it is not only directed to the healthy growth of infants and optimal brain development. ECCD/PAUD programs are also aimed at education in these very early years. Consequently, local education boards, *Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar* (learning activity centers) and *Pendidikan Luar Sekolah* (non-school or informal education) are part of the delivery of these programs. Yet strikingly, these new enhanced child development programs were to be offered through the same administrative structure associated with the community and women's "volunteered" labor. As one activist noted in 2007 when describing the rapid development of PAUD programming,

Since 2000 the PAUD program has experienced very significant progress, especially since it was proclaimed by the Directorate of PAUD in Jakarta. Articles concerning the young child were made official in that year. Now, the development of it is very fast, in the city of Yogya alone (not including the province) there are around 1000 PAUD programs. On July 21 of this year, there was a launching of 1000 PAUD programs in Yogya [province]. This doesn't even include all the districts. Then on July 22 there was also a launching of PAUD in each sub-district. In fact the central PAUD Directorate (under the Department of Education) in Jakarta is in the process of accelerating the campaign for the PAUD program to the level of RW [see below], working together with the Posyandu and PKK. In this way, it is hoped the needs of children will be met (29 October 2007 interview; author's interview and translation).

These public PAUD programs, with their composite approach to health and education, may reflect changes and continuities in development discourse, but they also reflect the larger social concern with preschool and daycare reflected in the private programs described earlier as well. Although these PAUD programs are aimed at the poor and lower classes, the materials reflect the larger assemblage of child-directed, play-based learning evident in the private preschools, which are in turn responsive to government programming and policies. The key difference is that these public programs are meant to be community-based, returning us to a durable argument if not a durable social form.

THE ZOMBIE COMMUNITY: IT EATS BRAINS!

The community is an anthropological zombie: killed and brought back to life over and over; its durability mirrored in the “state” with its equally tenacious grasp on the anthropological imagination (Hansen and Stepputat 2001; Nugent 2004; Sharma and Gupta 2006; Steinmetz 1999). The scholarship on the reality and relevance of the community has been deeply influenced by Southeast Asian materials (Bremar 1980, 1988; Boomgaard 1991; Day 2002; Geertz 1963; Goh 1988; Kemp 1988; Li 2007; Rigg 1994; Scott 1987; Wolf 1957). Its debt to colonial nostalgia, its elision of difference, its structuring of morality and exchange, its spatial ambiguity, have made it a fruitful object of inquiry and critique (Dumont 1996; Chatterjee 1997; Joseph 2002; Mamdani 1996). In my own work (Newberry 2006, 2007, 2010) I have argued that the reality of any primordial community matters less than its persistent reproduction through processes of state formation (Corrigan and Sayer 1985; Joseph and Nugent 1994) as well as its use as a mode of governmentality (Foucault 1991; Rose 1996; and see Warouw 2006). In the case of ECCD/PAUD programming in the post-Suharto era of decentralized democratic government reform, the community is being reasserted and reproduced yet again.

Local administration in Indonesia has long been accomplished through a system predicated on cooperating neighbours. In cities, the neighbourhood section system organizes contiguous houses into a small group of approximately 20-25 houses as *Rukun Tetangga* (Harmonious Neighbours) that is nested within a *Rukun Warga* (Harmonious Citizens) unit that comprises some 5-6 RT. This neighbourhood section system (Guinness 1986, 2009; Kurasawa 2009; Newberry 2006, 2007; J. Sullivan 1980, 1986, 1992; Milone 1966) has been described as deriving from the Japanese *tonarigumi* system (Kurasawa 2009: Bestor 1989; Garon 1997), although Dutch administration was based on a village model as colonial organization of the countryside insisted on the importance of close neighbors in the management of common issues (Bremar 1980, 1988; Boomgaard 1991; Goh 1988; Kemp 1988). Despite the thorough-going decentralization and reorganization of governance to achieve regional autonomy after Suharto (Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Schulte-Nordholdt and Van Klinken 2007), these small, very most local levels of government administration remain in place. Their persistence after democratic reform is often unmentioned (but see Kurasawa 2009; Newberry 2006, 2007).⁷ Yet, it is these local level units that are presumed to function within and because of a sense of “community.”

In interviews with local community leaders associated with the new PAUD programs, it was clear that the section system continues to function as do many of the programs that have been associated with it. Now, however, this community-led development has assumed the aura of grassroots empowerment, despite years of the New Order using community as a mode of governmentality. This capture and redirection of a structure of delivery has been accomplished before. PKK and many of the programs aimed at domestic welfare were New Order adaptations of earlier Independence-era grassroots organizing by and for women (Wieringa 1993).⁸ Now, after the end of the New Order, we see the reframing of these programs as again grassroots organization.

⁷ Presidential Decree #49 in 2001 reasserted the basic structure of this local administration with room for flexible application by area (Newberry 2007).

⁸ The reassertion of the LKMD (*Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa* or Institute for Village Social Resilience) as a grassroots organization after its long use by the New Order illustrates the continued non-governmental governance of Indonesia (Newberry 2010). The LKMD was modeled on Independence era grassroots organizing to aid women and the poor in rural areas. It was then “institutionalized” by the New Order and subsequently reframed as a local initiative in 2001 legislation post-Suharto in the era of democratization.

Tania Li, for example, has considered the use of traditional community in rural Kalimantan as a form of neoliberal governmentality. She has described its shared lineage with “village restoration and the perfection of tradition” in the late colonial period (2007: 230). As she notes, from 1998-2003 the World Bank introduced programming and millions of dollars of aid under the idea that self-managing capabilities of communities had been damaged by the New Order. Empowerment approaches based on grassroots organization would reform the state from below (*ibid.*). The development and proliferation of early childhood programs share much of this dynamic, and World Bank documents on ECCD explicitly reference community as the framework for delivery as well. One policy recommendation for the delivery of ECCD in Indonesia reads:

Coordination can be achieved at the community level by building on what already exists, that is, by starting with existing familiar services such as Posyandu and BKB [Support for Families with Babies] and adding the “missing piece” – the early education component (World Bank 2006: 42).

Indeed, there has been a resurgence of interest in community-based programming like the Posyandu, with the post-Suharto government explicitly seeking to revitalize it through public outreach programs.

The current revitalization of community as part of development discourse reiterates the empowerment approaches associated with Sen mentioned earlier, and importantly, they foreground the idea of culture. Li notes that the community-based empowerment approaches in Kalimantan included a focus on social relations and on “getting them right” (2007:231), as articulated by anthropologists working within the World Bank who were promoting a particularly ethnographic take on community-state relations. In Li’s analysis, we move from ethnographies of the state (Gupta 1995; Gupta and Sharma 2006; Hansen and Stepputat 2001; Nugent 2004) to the ethnographic state, as culture becomes a resource for development. That is to say, communities are meant to articulate their own social relations as the basis for their own forms of governance. The self-conscious articulation of resources associated with democratic empowerment approaches has synergistic overlaps with neoliberal accountability, as noted above (and see Ferguson 2006, Sharma 2006; Leve 2001; Nagar and Raju 2003). In other words, local culture has become part of a necessary inventory of community resources for empowerment; and as such, local communities became ethnographers of their own social relations.

Arguments about the nature and origins of community were at the center of emerging post-colonial arguments about state rule in the 1990s (Chatterjee 1997; Joseph and Nugent 1994; Mamdani 1996), but this earlier work has been eclipsed to some degree by the recent emphasis on governmentality in analyses of the state that follow Rose (1996; Miller and Rose 2008) and Foucault (1991). The distinction between the state formation literature (Corrigan and Sayers 1985; Nugent 2007) with its attention to everyday forms of popular culture and the governmentality literature (Foucault 1991; Miller and Rose 2008) with its emphasis on technologies of rule may appear to be a narrow one, but in fact, the state formation approach is a powerful way to understand the return of the romance of

community, culture and the child.⁹ For whatever the academic debates, the village modality persists in Indonesia as a means to deliver aid, information and support. And what the state formation approach offers here is a way to see that although culture has been and continues as a modality of governance, the meaningful, everyday practises of people in reproducing the community are crucial as well.

In a series of interviews conducted at a range of ECCD/PAUD programs in the area of Yogyakarta, the proliferation of programming in and around community structures was evident.¹⁰ Interviews with local section heads and teachers in PAUD programs illustrated a variety of paths to opening an ECCD/PAUD program, but they also consistently demonstrate a reliance on a working idea of community cooperation and self-help. Again, origins matter less than reproduction through social practises that rely upon or take for granted the form of community. From interviews, it seems the desire for these early childhood programs stems from several sources: desire for middle class status, a general view that it will be helpful for children, the government's promulgation of early childhood programming, or a local person's personal interest. Yet in each case, the programming works in and through the old structures of community administration that have been used from at least the Dutch era onward.

For example, in the neighborhood that has been at the center of my research for many years, the same women who have long hosted the monthly Posyandu meetings and managed PKK in the neighborhood are now hosting ECCD/PAUD programs. This ready structure has been used to quickly and rapidly scale up these programs, along with the proliferation of a number of other programs including new support for parents of babies and parents of teenagers and new programs for providing micro-credit to women among other things. And this work is taken up in part because women feel that they must do this. Even so, this informal labour can create challenges for working women. In more than one case, a professional kindergarten teacher described feeling the pressure of community to volunteer time at a local PAUD program. In fieldnotes written by my research colleague, she describes how a kindergarten teacher was asked to teach the ECCD/PAUD program in her area.

Because of her active role within a local PKK, she was chosen to teach the local PAUD. When she was first chosen, she's unwilling to take the role due to her busy activities as a teacher, but she couldn't decline being elected by other mothers of the PKK. She wants someone to take her role, but no one is available so far (notes from interview July 4, 2009).

⁹ The state formation approach draws on a different scholarly tradition than that associated with governmentality, including historical sociology (Corrigan and Sayer 1985) and literary criticism, perhaps especially Raymond Williams' notion of the long revolution, structures of feeling, and the everyday culture of the popular classes. Gramscian hegemony, structural Marxism and subaltern studies were other influences (Smith 2007). While the governmentality literature shares some important overlaps, its lineage appears to derive more directly from the work of Rose and Miller (2008; Burchell, Gordon and Miller 1991) and others who draw their inspiration from Foucault. The two approaches are by no means mutually exclusive, yet their differences are of particular interest here.

¹⁰ Elsewhere I have noted the coincidence of this programmatic growth with the aftermath of natural disasters, including the 2004 tsunami and the 2006 earthquake centered just south of Yogyakarta. Activists and organizers suggested that these disasters literally cleared the way for the proliferation of child-centered programs by not only creating the need for intervention to heal trauma in children, but also by taking advantage of the sweeping away of bureaucratic and ideological obstacles to their growth (Newberry 2010).

In another interview, a local women leader of a section listed some of her activities (translated by RidzkiSamsulhadi):

When there's a sick person in her RW, she'll ask people to visit the sick one. She'll hit a phone pole in front of her house repeatedly until people, mostly women, gather around her. Then each person will need to contribute Rp. 2.000...The money, added with some health funds, will be donated to the sick person.¹¹

Many women used to visit residents who give birth too, although nowadays they only visit, and donate to, those who use caesarean birth. [She had] once expressed the difficulty of poor families to donate money too often whenever someone gives birth. That's when the decision to only donate for the ones use caesarean birth was made....

When there are Muslim people to do a pilgrimage to Mecca, [she] usually will also get involved with activities around it even though she is a Christian (interview August 4, 2009).

What is striking in this list is not the cooperation of community members through programs such as PKK and Posyandu. What is striking is how the felt sense of community provides a powerful practical ideology for local cooperation that goes far beyond state mandates in everyday practice in the urban kampung neighborhood on which my fieldwork has been centered.¹² Indeed, the embodied practice of community on Java has been shaped by state formation processes as well as modes of governmentality aimed at the health and social welfare of the poor. In this frame, the state formation's approach to a long arch of shaping of quotidian Javanese cultural life moves us beyond seeing community as either strictly a form of government instrumentality or as a positive sense-making of patterns of local exchange.

Programming for early childhood care, education and development is making use of the ready structure available, one taken to be based on a model of village-like cooperation and consensus. Social welfare programs in Indonesia depend on the idea of a community living in spatial proximity, sharing burdens, and spreading wealth. Yet, this government through community (Rose 1996) does not just seek to create something new (Li 2007) nor does it serve only as a technique of governance; it also lays claims to particular histories and particular ideas of culture, at once nostalgic and directive. While there has been a welcome enhancement of social welfare services, their delivery depends once again on an ideal of community. Just as is evident in the foregoing list of women's community activities, the living flesh of community is reconstituted not only through forms of governmentality that persist in the era of democratic empowerment and grassroots organizing, but also through felt forms of community cooperation and attention to common problems in the daily practise of social welfare. The community lives on.

¹¹ The exchange rate in 2012 puts the U.S. dollar as roughly equivalent to 10,000 Indonesian rupiah.

¹² In most of the neighbourhoods covered here, the traditional *jimpitan* has been revived or continued. Related to the nightly patrol of a neighborhood or local area, the *jimpitan* is the collection of rice from every household of support for this work, although now it is just as often money. While the origins of the nightly patrol may lie with the Japanese occupational government's security patrols (Kurasawa 2009), it is more significant here that this "tradition" is being carried forward.

And so we return to the questions with which we began: what's old here and what's new? Is this innovation or retrenchment? The global assemblage around early childhood education, care and development certainly appears to represent something novel in Yogyakarta. The rapid pace of expansion of these programs demonstrates energy for innovation that surely derives from democratization and the era of reform. Yet at the end of this unstable global constellation of concepts, practises, policies, and people, we find the community, with its reference to tradition, historical continuity, and common cause – not to mention women's work. The embrace of child and community empowerment through local culture and education in Yogyakarta ECCD/PAUD programs suggests that global assemblages require durable social forms now – as well as in the past.

A DURABLE ROMANCE OF COMMUNITY, CULTURE, CHILD

The persistence of community, whether through global development initiatives, government programming or local practise, derives in part from the romance of the idea of the ideal, cooperative community. The persistence of the community is being reinforced again through grassroots organizing by local non-governmental organizations that call upon "traditions" of community and local culture to support government PAUD programs. The recuperation of Javanese culture felt to be on the verge of disappearing but used as a mode of governmentality has been considered before. Pemberton (1997) has argued that the New Order consistently used culture to de-politicize its very power, leading to an order called new but drawing its power from nostalgic, colonial – and ethnographic – ideas of Javanese culture.

In this concluding section, the romance of community evident in the desire for an ethnographic recuperation and restoration of traditional culture is used to link back to childhood -- in this case, romantic ideas about the relationship between education of the child, the folk community and government. This linkage shares a trajectory with a set of ideas central to the emergence of professional anthropology under Boas (Stocking 1998). Although this sketch is preliminary, there is sufficient evidence to suggest a rich conversation between advocates of German notions of folk culture as the source of education and empowerment and Indonesian nationalist-era organizing for educational reform, a conversation that seems to have been reopened now, perhaps unwittingly. The romance of the child, like the romance of the Javanese culture and community, continues.

Scholars of Indonesian nationalist organizing recognize the contribution of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, a noble from the court of Paku Alaman in Yogyakarta who was born Soewardi Soerjaningrat in 1889. His early work as a journalist led to his exile to the Netherlands from 1913-18 after publishing a pamphlet, "If I were a Dutchman." He returned to the Indies to begin the Taman Siswa school system based on the principles of strengthening local education for Javanese people to deal with the problems of colonialism. His reaction against a Dutch school system that discriminated against locals and his organization of schools based on Javanese culture are typically credited with aiding the nationalist cause for independence (McVey 1967; Shiraishi 1995, 1996; Tsuchiya 1987).

In his own prolific writing, Dewantara (2004) identifies his influences as Friedrich Froebel, Maria Montessori, and Rabindranath Tagore. Taman Siswa is a direct translation as student garden of Froebel's own term kindergarten. Froebel, like his teacher the Swiss reformer Johann Pestalozzi, was influenced by the German Romanticism of the first half of the 19th century that drew both on Goethe's romanticism and celebration of subjective experience and on Herder's attention to language and folk culture.¹³ The elevation of folk culture associated with the German Romantic

¹³ See Carolyn Steedman's 1994 for an analysis of Goethe's role in the emergence of the interior self, an idea deeply connected to conceptions of the child in the West.

period would also have a deep effect on Boas and his ethnographic method (Bunzl 1998; Stocking 1998). The crucial linkage between specific histories, the *kultur* of a people, the spirit of a particular folk, and the celebration of the natural world were all influences on Dewantara, as is evident in his prescriptions for education in the Indies in the years leading to Independence.

In fact, Dewantara explicitly makes the connection to romanticism when he describes Froebel as being “influenced by the romantic ideology that sees young children as heroes in a story that draws the heart and emotions” (2004: 253; and see Shiraishi 1996). Dewantara makes the argument that the education of the young child must be done in terms of local culture and community. As suggested earlier, the PAUD programs in contemporary Yogyakarta are all drawing on child-centered models of education that emphasize play. The promotion of *alat permainan edukatif* or educational toys is one consistent theme. Here is Dewantara writing in 1928:

Really, it is not necessary that we copy things if we already have them ourselves. Because copied things cannot be the same as what's pure like what we already have.... Look for things that benefit us, that can add to our riches from the body and spirit of our culture! Even more, don't copy completely, but new things that we wish to use must be harmonized first, made appropriate for our feelings and with the circumstances of our lives. This we can call nationalization (2004:242-3).

The resemblance to the words of the young education activists above is obvious, and the resonance with Froebel and Dewantara was made clearer when he added later in the interview: “*Anak menjadi hero, selalu begitu*” (The child becomes a hero, it's always like that).

Although at least one of the current Taman Siswa teachers has been involved in the development of PAUD, little mention is made of this early work by Dewantara. Even so, Dewantara's caution to pay attention to local culture in the education of the young child could easily have come from the lips of local activists and World Bank operatives. The endorsement of a recuperative culture to stay the excesses of globalization reminds of the Independence-era urge to do the same in the face of Dutch colonialism. Just as the self-conscious articulation of community resources to aid and extend neoliberal development regimes reminds of the Dutch colonial state's own ethnographic urgings.

The early years of the 20th century, when Dewantara was in the Netherlands, were a time of tremendous activity in regards to education in Europe and North America. The first decades of the 21st century likewise have been characterized by a spirit of reform in education. In Indonesia particularly, this attention to the child comes on the heels of democratization and neoliberal reform after the end of Suharto's regime. What we must be attentive to is the continuity in linking culture, community and child in larger political projects. The counting and weighing of babies by local neighbourhood women has been extended in a variety of community-based social welfare and health programs, including the incorporation of new programs for early childhood education, care and development. The community modality as the presumptive traditional model of cooperation and care is simultaneously reproduced and offered as both cause and effect of local culture by educational reformers and NGO activists working for democratic empowerment.

One might say that a new child is being assembled in Indonesia. But does the reference to contingency and seamless mobility in this global regime of ideas about optimal brain development and empowered, self-directed and play-based learning distract us from the durability of forms of exchange and social welfare that are more than technologies of rule but also local patterns of everyday cultural practise? Surely, Indonesian commitments to community are crucial here too. Rather than lament this as the capture of culture for administration (cf. Adorno 1990) and a form of governmentality in orders new and old, one might just as easily marvel at the durability of these

ideas and these patterns of social relations. The new romance of childhood may be reconfiguring categories of the young in Indonesia, but the continued reference to modes of care and consensus through communities as part of the long arch of state formation that stretches across regimes from at least the Dutch onward reproduces a durable form that invites us to balance contingent global assemblages with enduring patterns of social relations.

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