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Panel 3

Accepting Death

(Fri 26/03/2010; 11.30am-1.00pm)

Death and the City: Mortuary Rituals and Urban Renewal in Surabaya

***Robbie Peters
University of Sydney***

***'We are each of us celebrating some funeral'
Baudelaire***

Abstract

Death ceremonies have long constituted a rich vein of analysis for ethnographers of Indonesia. During my recent fieldwork I observed the continued centrality of these ceremonies, as well as a strong philosophical orientation towards death and the end of life among poor Javanese city dwellers. Keeping in mind the centrality of the politics of commemoration in Southeast Asian state building and citizenship formation, my paper focuses on funerals in a poor inner urban neighbourhood of Surabaya, Indonesia. Through this focus, the paper attempts to understand how commemoration for the city's poor and often partial citizens provides them with recognition in a city increasingly configured by the destructive forces of urban renewal – forces that offer little more than controlled public simulations of already destroyed social practices.

In more conceptual terms, this paper seeks to understand how an enduring and very localised social institution that consolidates and validates the social relationships that bind poor neighbourhoods can be reconciled with a view of the city as fuelled by a logic similar to Baudrillard's notion of perpetual death, redundancy and simulation, and Marx's vision in which all social relations melt into air before they can ossify. Seen in the context of a city that destroys and a municipal government that increasingly intervenes in the commemoration of death, this paper poses the notion that the control of the city hinges on the control of death.

Introduction

Death ceremonies have been a rich vein of analysis for ethnographers of Indonesia. During my recent return to a poor inner urban neighbourhood (*kampung*) in the large port city of Surabaya, I noticed the continued centrality of death ceremonies as well as a constant philosophical orientation towards death and the end of life. Keeping in mind the importance of the politics of commemoration in Southeast Asian state building and citizenship formation, this paper shows that death commemoration ceremonies provide a powerful form of territorial sovereignty for poor kampung dwellers, helping them combat the often destructive forces of urban renewal: forces that offer little more than controlled public simulations of already destroyed social practices.

In conceptual terms, this paper seeks to understand how an enduring and very localised social institution that consolidates and validates the social relationships that bind poor neighbourhoods, can be reconciled with a view of the city as fuelled by a logic similar to Baudrillard's notion of perpetual death, redundancy and simulation and Marx's vision of all social relations melting into air before they can ossify. Seen in the context of a city that destroys and a municipal government that increasingly intervenes in the commemoration of death, this paper poses the notion that the control of the city hinges on the control of death.

The acceptance of death

A constant orientation towards death permeates life in the low income kampungs of Surabaya. On the morning before I was leaving the inner city kampung of Dinoyo, my close friend of many years, a woman of my age (40) with whose family I have lived for several years while staying in the kampung, stated: 'Robbie, there is one thing I want to tell you. You are older now; we are both older and not getting any younger. Don't think of this world'. I knew that this concise piece of advice made sense according to a Javanese philosophy of fate that finds parallels in Islam's notion of the futility of pride, greed and status: things gained through the corporeal world. My friend's advice made me reflect on the comments made by a Javanese *Kiai* (religious scholar) over twelve years before, when he gave a talk on life to an audience of kampung residents who had crowded into the main alley to hear some of his wisdom. In coarse Surabaya accent, the *kiai* began by telling the audience: 'you all want what is nice, nice, nice; but can you take it into the afterlife? You don't need money there'. Curious about this notion that gains made in the corporeal world cannot be taken into the afterlife, I asked my friend what she meant by her comment 'don't think of this world'. She explained:

'In the teaching of all religions, we as humans must be responsible to god for what we do in this world. Therefore, what we do must be balanced between this world and the afterlife. As humans, we don't know how old we will live because what controls how long a person will be on earth is God. Whether we hope for a long life or not, life's path belongs with God. Therefore, we now must be

ready for that day when God takes our life and we leave this world. There is no need to regret coming closer to death.

Within what I have been taught of religion lies one hidden adage: 'Work as hard as you can because you'll possibly live for a very long time and also you might die tomorrow'. This adage holds a meaning: we have to work with diligence to fulfil our material needs because we might live a long time. And, also, we must worship with diligence to fulfil our spiritual needs because we could die tomorrow.'

There is no sense here of what Ernest Becker (1973) calls a 'denial of death'. Instead, death's inevitability is accepted and embraced to give life its meaning. According to Becker, the denial of death is inherent in most cultures and needs to be overcome because it is the basis of so much violence through exclusionary forms of citizenship like nationalism. This paper suggests that such violence is at least combated in Dinoyo through the acceptance of death.

Mortality

The acceptance of death as something looming makes sense in terms of poor people's proximity to death: a proximity typically associated with the street. Kampung mothers, for example, continually warn their children that illness caused by exposure to the elements, or *masuk angin* (wind entering the body), awaits them if they spend too long out on the street rather than inside the home or the kampung. For mothers in the small alley of ten households in which I lived, there was enough evidence to justify their concerns since each household had experienced a death due to causes other than old age over the past five years – deaths brought about through exposure to the street.

The street's dangers were conveyed through stories of death and misfortune, particularly those associated with the adjacent Mas River (*Kali Mas*). Dinoyo residents called this river the River of Blood (*Sungai darah*) to signify those periods – such as during the Battle of Surabaya in 1945, the overthrow of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in 1965 and the licensed assassination of criminals by the police in 1982 – when the river swept the discarded corpses of the victims of politically motivated violence down-stream towards the sea. This association of the river with death was contemporised each time a corpse was found along the riverbank or seen floating down the river. A favourite place to congregate and drink alcohol, the river was also the place where several kampung men had died after falling into alcoholic comas. According to their friends and family, these men had succumbed to the river's dark magic rather than to alcohol.

One young man whose father had died along the river after a night-long drinking binge treated the river with great caution and, like most residents, referred to it as a 'magic river'. According to him, people must 'be careful near the river', because it has dangerous powers, which have claimed many lives. Verifying his claims, he referred to a young man who had only recently 'disappeared' while running from the police. This incident related to a police raid some days earlier, when a group of young men who had been gambling

along the riverbank fled to escape capture. One among them never returned. For kampung residents, the conclusions were unanimous: the river had 'swallowed him up' (*tertelan*).

Death along the river captured the macabre fascination of kampung men. When someone spotted a corpse along the river, news would spread quickly through the kampung and men would rush out of the alleyways, line the river bank, climb trees for a better vantage point and yell updates on the corpse's position to friends below. This collective viewing of the corpse in public space seemed a misplaced version of the viewing of the corpse during a funeral as discussed by James Siegel (1983), who noted that the corpse offered a model of appropriate expression. Dinoyo men concurred with Siegel's explanation as they sat in a riverside *warung* (street stall) one night discussing the issue. They reasoned that the expression of the corpse models an appropriate expression because that expression is inevitable for all at death. The corpse along the river, however, modelled a death that was inappropriate. Yet, for many kampung men who feared following the fate of their ancestors, such inappropriate death was seemingly inevitable. Along the river, every corpse floating down it or deposited along its banks symbolised a malicious force that the kampung man did not control: a force that claimed the lives of his relatives and ancestors. Every such corpse was also a potential reflection of himself and his own fate.

Restoration

Death and redundancy take other commonplace forms in the city. Following Graham and Thrift (2007), we only become aware of the existence of many urban forms when they break down and die. This occurred during the political and economic crisis of 1998, when the failure and eventual death of Surabaya's New Order administration was brought to the fore by the traffic jams caused by the cars that queued for petrol before the government drastically reduced the petrol subsidy, and by the buskers, beggars and street stalls that clogged the street side due to the growing numbers of people dropped into poverty by spiralling inflation and unemployment (see Sidel, 1998). Referred to locally as *macet* ("broken", "chaotic"), these conditions brought the failure of the city to the fore and, through it, the failure of the state. The New Order government of General Suharto (1966-98) had failed to maintain subsidies and contain poverty, bringing about a crisis in its legitimacy that enabled the poor to take over the street and disrupt what John Pember-ton (1994: 6) called the 'idealized absence' of disorder that Suharto had strove to maintain along the street. It was with reference to these moments of breakdown and urban disorder that Abidin Kusno (2010: 54) noted that conditions on the street have been a barometer of political stability in Indonesia. While the appearance of disorder is interesting for this reason, what is also interesting, however, is the means by which order is restored.

During the New Order, moments of failure were usually followed by brutal doses of state violence to restore order and secure the interests of the Suharto family. This occurred in 1965 during the purging of communists from the city, and in 1982 during the purging of street gangs from the city. In the post New Order period to the present, state crackdowns on society take the form of so called anti-terror raids into kampung

homes and boarding houses. Whether during the New Order period or after, the common denominator in all these examples has been the sudden and momentary spectacle of terror as a means of social control (Elson, 2002: 173). At all other times, the far less conspicuous method of what Graham and Thrift (2007) call repair and maintenance prevails.

In present day Surabaya, repair and maintenance is most apparent through the restoration and renovation of its colonial buildings. Dinoyo's surrounding area is replete with such a restored landscape. In the adjacent industrial estate where Dinoyo residents once laboured, the Heineken Brewery and Barata machinery workshops, two of the estate's largest concerns prior to its complete deindustrialisation by 2000, are now restored. The brewery is a home improvement centre that has been meticulously renovated: its exterior rendered and whitewashed and its large and rickety old doors and windows refitted with expensive teak replicas. The brewery's new facade matches with the nearby replication of a Javanese palace that encases the Novotel hotel upon which the Unilever factory once stood. Nearby, at the old Barata machinery workshop, an indoor soccer centre is fully encased in the restored old factory, where replica lights gleam down on the soccer players while spectators sip soft drinks served by attractive female hosts who shuffle along in tight mini-skirts.

These ornately restored factories that house the city's new service industry exclude the very kampung people that once worked there. There is no expression of injustice, however, about this exclusivity and no sense that the death of a local industrial working class had to take place to enable the restoration of these buildings. The renovation and repair process that has reconfigured these buildings into zones of conspicuous middle class consumption seems, following Graham and Thrift, to have gone unnoticed. Repair and maintenance are inconspicuous and much unlike the 'shock tactics' that General Suharto said had formed his method of urban management during periods of crisis (Elson, 2002: 173). Rather than shock tactics, the violence of urban renewal in the present bears more resemblance to Suharto's doctrine of development, or *pembangunan* (Heryanto, 1998). A form of intervention by means other than naked violence, *pembangunan* is powerfully symbolised through the building or repair of infrastructure like roads, bridges, homes and kampung alleyways.

Unlike the *pembangunan* of the New Order period, the *pembangunan* of the present does not involve the so called "people," or *rakyat*. During the New Order, the *rakyat* built kampung alleyways and homes through community work projects known as *kerja bakti* and built roads and bridges through public works projects known as *inpres* (*instruksi president*: presidential instruction) schemes. The *pembangunan* of the present is captured by the city's new hotels, plazas and restored factories. Such buildings are icons of the new *pembangunan* and link into one another through efficient road networks that resemble what Latham (2000: 11) called a 'plexus' or 'narrow constellation', where 'the choices and room to move within it are typically constrained'. These roads link these buildings to middle class homes through what Denis Rogers (2004) calls fortified networks accessible by four wheel drive vehicle. In contrast to what Dick and Rimmer (1998) in their study of the Southeast Asian city called the bundled city where people live in self contained gated communities, a city made up of fortified networks relies on an efficient road transport system that

can carry a person from their home to the plaza, for example, without them having to get out somewhere in between and exit the secure air conditioned cocoon that has become the hallmark of middle-class existence in large Indonesian cities.

Through its reliance on petrol powered transport, a city of fortified networks constrains the movement of the poor by exposing them to the increasing price of fuel and public transport and the unmanageable loans for motorbikes (see Peters 2009; 2010). These costs cut the poor off from access to road transport and from what the World Bank (2009) recently promoted as the benefits of economic growth brought about through the accelerated passage of people and goods through cities.

The violence and death caused by this imperative towards acceleration and circulation is captured along the street by an aesthetic abhorrence of poverty and disorder. Like the idealised paintings of rural panoramas and garden settings born out of the period of urban dystopia in 19th century England, Surabaya's streets are the painter's canvas of idealistic urban planners with a deep aversion to disorder. Surabaya's streets convey a painting in the making that is regularly touched up through the daily sweeping of streets, whitewashing of gutters, greening of riverbanks and trimming of the hedges and verges of roundabouts. Hotels, plazas and museums across the city play their part by conveying those forms that are defunct along the street – forms such as the pedicab (*becak*) and the street stall (*warung*). In these places, mock warungs sell more authentic food that was once available on the street, while restored becaks stand like antique references to a bygone era.

If, as Baudrillard (1998) states, simulation is death, then its setting is the street, which, as Abidin Kusno (2000: 117; 103) terms, is 'a space of discipline and fear' and 'framework for [the] displacement' for the poor. Surabaya's most prominent urban planner, Johan Silas (1996: 528), uses one verb to describe how the municipal government shifts the poor from sight and revokes their claims to the street. The verb is *gusur*, which Silas defined as 'to make/instruct someone to shift location'. He states: 'So, if you experience *gusur*, it means you have moved location and someone or something has caused or instructed it to happen'. *Gusur* underpins urban renewal in Surabaya: it highlights the ignoble side of the new *pembangunan*, which has as its imperative the displacement for the poor.

Networks of disconnection

A state backed initiative to unclog roads and accelerate vehicular mobility through Surabaya has destroyed important street side income earning activities like street vending and *becak* driving. Since the mid-1990s, for example, the number of motorbikes has increased six-fold (from 461,000 in 1995 to around 3 million in 2010), while the number of becaks has dropped from around 27,000 to around 3,000 (SDA, 1995: 330; SDA, 2005/6: 352; *Surabaya Post*, 3/1/2010: 31). The dwindling number of *becak* drivers no longer wait for customers at street corners, kampung entry gates and intersections as they did in the past; they now keep cycling around the street in an attempt to both find customers and avoid the police, who are

intent on eradicating the becak to make way for vehicular traffic. The warung, like the becak, is a mobile income earning instrument that has enabled its operators since colonial times to evade the police by shifting location. Makeshift and dismantlable, it stands as testimony to a city intolerant of forms that once provided an income and formed an agora of sorts where kampung residents exchanged information and jobs.

The elimination of warung and becak from the street is an elimination of this valued form of communication among kampung. Called *berkumpul* (socialising/congregation), Surabaya's urban poor capture its meaning through the following Javanese adage: 'whether you eat or not, what's important is getting together' (*mangan ngak mangan sing penting berkumpul*). As an example, when people sit in a warung or when becak drivers cluster at an intersection waiting for customers, they mingle. While mingling, they hear of some work available for someone able to paint a house, a peddler of second hand clothing finds customers, a scrap picker meets someone willing to buy his scrap metal, a petty criminal finds a buyer for some marijuana he had purchased and a broker finds a buyer for a watch that someone wants to sell. *Berkumpul* underpins an informal economy. A destruction of *berkumpul* is then a destruction of the ability to earn income and gain the work that is enabled through this exchange of information among the poor.

The most recognisable features of Surabaya's streetscape in the present are no longer warungs and becaks, but bulldozers and the growing corps of civilian police (*pangreh praja*) dedicated to the tearing down of warungs and eradication of becaks. Bulldozers and black uniformed civilian police are the tangible expressions of a government now pouring investment into road construction and road widening. In Surabaya, in 2010 alone, authorities planned construction of 13 new linking roads that are set to cut through kampungs and market areas; the city's gross oversupply of plazas continues unabated with five more under construction; and street-stall traders continue to be dragged away kicking and screaming from roadsides and public parks during daily clearance operations by the police (*Jakarta Post*, 22/5/2009; Harasaputra and Faisal, 2009). Municipal finances fund this reclamation of the street, with the head of the municipal government's Body for Development Planning, or Bappeko (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Kota Surabaya*), calling for a continual scaling up of funding for its urban renewal project – a call which has the full backing of the municipal government's Finance Committee (*Anggota Panitia Anggaran*), whose head announced: 'We're ready to [provide the finances] to drive the process' (*JPO*, 13/9/2009).

From accumulation by dispossession to legibility by dispossession

The exclusion and suspension of basic rights to the city that results from gusur are only the initial stage of a clearing out process aimed at the reconfiguration of the citizen through all out drives to document the occupation of space as well as people's movement across it. Licensing caravans, licence checks and police raids on squatter settlements and kampung homes to document residents and their motor vehicles are now commonplace. These initiatives forge a citizens by documenting them. The targets of these initiatives are documented, rather than prosecuted. As one confused victim of a police raid on his squatter shack stated:

“This is only a shack, but we have been made Surabaya residents” (*Java Post*, 16/4/08). For the police, their granting of residency to the squatter made perfect sense because there was no right of residency other than that bestowed through legal documents by the state — documents requiring regular renewal and always subject to summary revocation by the state.

Gwen van Eijk (2010) makes the astute observation that the new geography of exclusion taking place in many cities is not simply the result of economically driven urban renewal imperatives but the result of a forging of a new and more surveillable citizen. Numerous studies are now showing that this involves the tracking and targeting of more geographically mobile people in a post 9/11 urban landscape in which the mobile person is a potentially murderous and insidious figure (Weber, 2005; Duffield, 2007; Amore, 2009; Graham, 2010). As crucibles of mobility and passage, cities are no longer sites of anonymous flaneur-like personas, who transit leisurely through the streets. They are now places of undocumented and illegible persons who can cause maximum destruction by metamorphosing into terrorists. The city, in this understanding, harbours terrorists and forms what Graham (2010) calls a city under siege, or what Samuel Weber (2005) calls a militarised city.

State crack-down on movement through the city and the undocumented persons it harbours is not new in Indonesia: such crack downs occur every year during the return home to celebrate the end of the Islamic fasting month as roads fill with traffic and opportunists descend upon bus terminals to pick pockets and swindle people out of their tickets and cash. In the wake of terrorist attacks and well publicised fears that the city is being overrun by migrants, the police are now extending the crackdown to all time frames. The site of these crack downs at present is the rooming house, or *kos kosan*, which has undergone a boom that is transforming the kampung as entrepreneurs build dormitories in the city’s kampungs to house the growing numbers of migrant workers in rooms of around 2 by 2 metres that accommodate up to four people who cram in to reduce costs.

A distinguishing feature of Surabaya in comparison to East Java’s other towns is the amount of rental accommodation as well as those who rent. In comparison with the average for East Java’s towns, Surabaya has by far the lowest number of owners (53 percent compared with 86%) and by far the greatest number of renters (14.82 percent compared with 2.07%) and boarders (14.47 compared with 3.2%). In addition, those who most often seek accommodation in the city’s rooming houses and rented rooms – young adults between 15-30 years old – are around 2 to 5 times more numerous in Surabaya than the urban average for East Java (*Hasil Susenus 2007*: 153; *Statistical Yearbook of Indonesia 2008*: 5). These statistics alone seem to confirm the popular impression that Surabaya is a city of rooming houses inhabited by a young adult migrant population. For many, this is a dangerous trend. Pointing to what he termed the ‘attack’ on Surabaya of the growing numbers of newcomers (*pendatang*), for example, the head of Surabaya’s Department of Religion singled out rooming house owners, stating: ‘don’t seek big rental returns’ and warned that if the flood of newcomers is not managed it will ‘endanger everyone’ (*Jawa Pos Online*, 16/12/2009).

This idea of a city under siege by newcomers goes back to the early years of independence, when it found regular expression in the barefoot clown of the popular comedy troupes (*ludruk*) that drew large crowds in the kampungs up until the 1970s. The ludruk clown typically appeared with swag over his shoulder, bare-chested and with pantaloons made of gunny sacks. Representing the newcomer who fumbled his way around an unfamiliar urban landscape, he also represented a typical land use pattern in what was then called the 'Third World'. According to Dick and Rimmer (1998: 2309), that land use pattern was characterised by 'the collapse of the segregated colonial city ... [as] people moved with impunity into low density urban space'. In the Indonesian language, this land use pattern was termed tanah perjuangan, or 'land of struggle' [in the sense of a revolutionary freedom fight to reclaim territory/sovereignty] (Tosa, 1983; RI, 1953; Silas, 1996: 135). This pattern of land use was suddenly ended in 1965/6 with the obliteration of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), who had given it their vocal support. The obliteration of the communists was in effect the obliteration of this land use pattern and the forging of a new city. As Dick (2003: 109) states, it was 'the first stage in urban rehabilitation'.

The obliteration of communists did not simply constitute a new land use pattern; it also constituted a new urban citizen. This new citizen had its foundations in the mass public funeral in Jakarta for the six generals murdered in the coup attempt that supposedly involved the communists. Taking place several weeks before the brutal purge of communists began, the mass funeral catalysed the anti-communist putsch around the emotional symbol of the revolutionary war hero, the most sanctified symbol of the new Indonesian nation. All six murdered generals had fought in the revolutionary struggle for Independence. Although revolutionary experience was a certainty for any soldier of this generation, including many communist soldiers and veterans, it served to bind the six generals into symbols of an affronted nationalism. The well, where the generals' bodies were discovered, became a nationalist monument infamously termed the crocodile hole (*lubang buaya*), while main streets throughout Surabaya and other cities were renamed after the generals.

Heroes were created, but more importantly, the mass public funeral in Jakarta marked the beginnings of a new non-citizen in Indonesia – the communist. In Surabaya, the Hero's Monument, a towering modernist monolith on the gravesite of fallen revolutionary fighters, was the point, around which the Surabaya district military commander, Colonel Sukotjo, rallied together the different social groups and political parties to go out and kill the communists, in what was called the mass Akbar Rally of 16th October 1965. The purges began on that day. By the end of the year, Surabaya was declared by the military to be purged of communists. As many as seventeen thousand communist sympathisers were killed in Surabaya and many more tortured, starved and imprisoned (see Setiyawan and Sarkawi, 2010: 5). The killings marked a new beginning for the communist, who was kept alive in the popular imagination as a looming and insidious figure hiding in the city and ready to take any chance to re-establish authority.

This re-inscription of urban space with the memory of the dead generals unleashed that internal and constitutive villain that Giorgio Agamben (1998: 105, 107) called the wolf man of man, who formed at the

moment the city was formed. A variety of what Agamben calls 'bare life', the wolf man could be hunted down and summarily executed to safeguard the city. Nevertheless, he remained untamed and not yet fully purged from the city, surfacing from time to time within it and from among its seemingly benign personas. The runaway communist was such a figure, dwelling unknown within the New Order city and an apparent danger to it. According to military instructions aired once the purging of communists began drawing to a close in Surabaya by late 1965, the city's informal sector and its squatter settlements were deemed the hiding place for communists, justifying a constant state of emergency against them and enabling the police and army to act with impunity against criminals or anyone deemed a fomenter of disorder. The end point of this impunity was the powerful communicative device of the abandoned and disfigured corpse. Dick (2003: 106) provides a pertinent example, stating: 'For weeks [after the killings] there were bodies floating in the Kali Mas. Until the government gave orders for a clean up, it was a brave man who had the courage to give any a decent burial.' The nature of the commemoration, rather than just the killing itself, was crucial in the constitution of the new form of bare life known as the communist, who would occupy Indonesia's political landscape for the next three decades.

Death and the control of life: Citizenship formation in the New Order City

The constitution of the non-citizen hinged on the denial of the right to commemorate death and was used to great effect during the global recession of 1982, when General Suharto employed the police to kill so called 'criminals' and leave their corpses along the street and riverbanks as a warning to the dissident elements from among the lower orders of Indonesian society. Through this mode of communication, the New Order was forging citizens by intervening in a ritual that was the most constitutive of community membership in Java. That ritual was the death *slametan* (communal feast and associated prayers), which served to mourn the deceased and verify their presence within a community.

The community here is that which occurs in real time through those present at a *slametan*. The spectacle of the defeated and decaying corpse communicated the absence of a *slametan* and the existence of a bare life that was not yet incorporated into community. Unincorporation through the absence or inability to be mourned in a *slametan* was a most powerful means of exclusion and was documented by Clifford Geertz (1973) in his account of the politicisation of a *slametan* in the Indonesian town of Pare during the 1950s. In Geertz's account, the ferocity of political divisions in 1950s Indonesia settled on the shock of the stiffened corpse of a young boy that a religious officiator refused to bury because of the leftist political sympathies of his parents. The stiffened, unmourned corpse symbolised the terror of social exclusion. Throughout the New Order, it symbolised the defeated villain of New Order society – the petty criminal and the communist.

Inversion of the slametan

The slametan is an inherently inclusive institution that verifies community through those in attendance (Jay, 1969; Geertz, 1973; Siegel, 1983; Guinness, 1986). As Siegel (2000: 196) contends: 'It seems to me that there is a local community and the slametan is its ritual expression'. The use of commemoration to deny membership was institutionalised during the New Order through a politicisation of commemoration that both marked and bolstered its rule. In middle class neighbourhoods, this involved an inversion of the slametan's functioning as an inclusive institution. Aris Mundayat (2005) provides the best example of the way the slametan served to exclude people during the late-New Order period. In detailing how the slametan inverted its inclusive function by functioning, instead, to exclude outsiders in a middle class neighbourhood of Jogjakarta, Central Java, Mundayat is able to show how this inversion was successfully contested by an NGO lobbying on behalf of the poor. In his account of the fight to bury the street kid, Dodo, Mundayat highlights what is more implicitly a struggle against a middle-class neighbourhood's creation of non-citizens.

Dodo's burial was not an attempt to prevent his unsettled spirit from turning into a roaming ghost that would haunt the living, such as in the examples by Shaun Malarney (2001) of Vietnamese war dead: it was, instead, a challenge to an urban trajectory that negated the poor from the street and relegated them into a frontier of illegible urban spaces and populations that are absent from the municipal imagination of the city. In the Mundayat example, Jogjakarta's poor street people struggled to redeem their members from this administrative frontier and resettle them back into society through appropriate commemoration. This imperative to redeem those personas absent from the municipal imagination of the city is enabled through the map of being in the world that the slametan so effectively captures. It is this map that the state struggles to control.

In Surabaya, funerals rather than rallies, political parties or NGOs communicate the sovereignty of poor kampung people, who tend to shun the standard political franchise of the ballot box – viewing it as a mock sovereignty that attracts the participation of only 50 per cent of the population (*Java Post*, 29/6/05; 26/5/2008). Finding no representation through the standard organs of neoliberal democracies, the kampung poor are at the bare life end of the scale of political sovereignty. Through slametans, as Siegel (2000) notes, kampung people find a reflection of themselves that is otherwise lacking in mainstream forms of political representation. This reflection of oneself occurs because slametans present and validate neighbourhood networks by bringing them to the fore and making them visible in one place and at one time.

In Surabaya, around 25 burials take place each day in public cemeteries, not to mention the far more numerous commemorations of the deceased that take place for between seven days and 40 days and then every 100 days, every 365 days and on the thousandth day after death (SDA, 2009: 213). In the kampung of Dinoyo, when a neighbour dies, the most official declaration of proceedings begins with the beating of a *kentongan* (small wooden or bamboo drum used to sound alarm), usually by a young boy as he walks the alleyways of the neighbourhood. The delineation of those for whom this message is intended, and therefore those who inevitably became involved in the commemoration of the deceased, defies the state's

imagination of neighbourhood that is conveyed in the maps of neighbourhood and ward boundaries that hang on the walls of municipal offices throughout the city.

In the wake of the state breakdown marked by the fall of General Suharto in 1998, the municipal government moved to intervene in the slametan by requiring the family of the deceased to notify the neighbourhood official, who then distributed to each household their family name cards (*kartu keluarga*). Receipt of these cards served as formal notification to household members of the death of a neighbour. This formal notification took the place of the informal call out through the beating of the kentongan. Unlike the sound of the kentongan, which was meant for all, the cards were meant to exclude those without residency cards by allowing them no notification of a funeral.

This rationalisation of the slametan was more than a simple rationalisation of municipal finances by preventing newcomers, or *pendatang*, access to the funeral allowance for kampung families. It underlined a far more invasive political project – the delineation of urban citizenship. Through the distribution of name cards, the state had found a way to effectively problematise the *pendatang*'s participation in the most important of kampung rituals and clearest verifier of community membership. This verification took place through what generations of anthropologists of the slametan term 'just being there', 'participation' and 'neighbourliness' (Jay, 1969; Geertz, 1973; Siegel, 1983; Guinness, 1986, 2009). While the name cards did not prevent the participation of *pendatang*, they served to highlight their status as outsiders at the moment when community membership in the kampung was most publically affirmed.

When compared with the violent intervention into the commemoration of death caused by the spectacle of the stiffened corpse, the name card initiative seemed a mild and even benign intervention – an example of Graham and Thrift's notion of the more subtle style of intervention captured in the mundane and largely unnoticed processes of repair and maintenance of the city undertaken by municipal governments. Control over commemoration, however, is a domain that those marginalised from the mainstream public sphere will not release from their grip. In a city where urban renewal creates death – both real and metaphorical – from public space, the slametan gains importance as a mechanism of reincorporation into the city for its poor people. Despite municipal attempts to intervene into the slametan to make it constitute citizens in accord with the municipal imagination, the slametan continues to represent a community reflected through those present rather than those registered as formal residents of the kampung.

Unlike the slametan, the municipal government's framing of the kampung population remains outdated and provides a poor representation of neighbourhood population dynamics. The huge chart on the wall of the ward office that gave a breakdown of population in each neighbourhood was eight years out of date, and the guard post computer meant to collate and store new data on population in the neighbourhood was broken. Whether through the incapacity of municipal administration to constitute a legible population, the negation of the poor from the street as part of the urban renewal process, or the denial of commemoration that results from the state's attempts to constitute citizens, the low income urban resident finds no recognition or reflection of him/herself in the city. It is against this background of absence from the formal maps

and public spaces of the city that kampung residents reclaim a space for their own representation of community – a representation that validates their being in the world rather than absence from it.

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