ACCESS: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN EDUCATION
2012, VOL. 31, NO. 2, 104–114

ACCESS

Performing Identity and Community in Indonesia in Modern Times

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ABSTRACT
Zygmunt Bauman's argument that in contemporary conditions of 'liquid modernity', conscious construction and display of identity signal the death of lived community has recently been invoked in an article about Manggarai in eastern Indonesia. The authors assert a similarity between 'the shifting grounds of late modernity' and the 'shifting and melting' taking place today in Indonesia, with the dismantling of the authoritarian, centralist Suharto regime. While endorsing this picture of the changing, fluctuating nature of contemporary Indonesian society, I argue that the processes of construction of identity and community taking place in this context co-exist with, rather than replace, older ongoing communal practices. I attempt to show how, within the domain of performance, intersections and tensions between the familiar and the new are giving rise to productive new social meanings and relations.

Introduction

"Identity … sprouts on the graveyard of communities, but flourishes thanks to its promise to resurrect the dead", writes Zygmunt Bauman, explaining the power of identity as a "surrogate of community" in this modern age of liquefying social change. (Bauman, 2001a: 128-129). Bauman's dictum is grounded in the experience of hyper-urbanised, heterogeneous, Western societies, where, he suggests, globally-wired but socially-isolated individuals seize particular constructs of identity from multiple possible options, seeking security and social bonding in a threateningly diverse, changing world. But Maribeth Erb, Romanus Beni and Wilhelmus Anggal (2005), in an article on cultural conditions in contemporary Indonesia, have recently invoked Bauman's words in a very different setting: Manggarai on the island of Flores, at the eastern end of the Indonesian archipelago. The relatively isolated, agriculturally-based society of Manggarai might be seen to present a striking contrast with the social conditions typically associated with Bauman's "liquid modernity". However, the authors draw on this concept as highly relevant to their study. They posit a parallel between "the shifting grounds of late modernity" and "the kind of shifting and melting" taking place today in post-Suharto Indonesia, where the social "places" and "placements" guaranteed by an authoritarian, centralist political regime have been destabilised by the shift to a regionally-based administrative system (Erb, Beni & Anggal, 2005: 143). Following the demise of Suharto's New Order regime in 1998, new laws were passed transferring much of the political and fiscal control previously held by the centre to provincial and regency governments. Governors, regents and mayors would no longer be appointed from above, but elected to their positions by local residents. And the New Order ideological enterprise, which had imposed a single, ideal model of Indonesian national citizenship,

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has given way to "a redefining of culture from the point of view of the regions" (Erb, Beni & Anggal, 2005: 141) in which varying, competing understandings and positions are expressed.

In this context, Erb, Beni and Anggal suggest, display of "identity" takes on a much- enhanced importance. They cite the example of grand ritual events, involving "traditional" dance, music and games, held to revitalise and celebrate "Manggarai identity". The instigators of these activities are elite figures, local government officials and Manggarai people long resident in Jakarta, who see benefits for themselves in defining and promoting this construct. "Ownership" and cultivation of Manggarai-ness provides them with social capital and new "placements" amidst uncertain political conditions. Local residents, however, express little interest in these activities, being much more concerned with practical issues of survival. "'Culture' and 'identity' for them are not really the issue … because for them community still exists, a community grounded in land, kinship and marriage relations" (Erb, Beni & Anggal, 2005: 164). The authors draw an explicit contrast here between "cultural identity" as a construct and ongoing, lived community, recalling Bauman's observation that "'spoken of' community (more exactly, a community speaking of itself) is a contradiction in terms" (Bauman, 2001b: 12).

Cultural identity, community and regional autonomy

Cultural celebrations like those described taking place in Manggarai flourish widely in contemporary Indonesia, within the socio-political framework of regional autonomy and its accompanying cultural climate. Government officials and local elites sponsor spectacular parades displaying the constructed identities of particular provincial cities: the ongoing royal authority and contemporary cultural pluralism of Yogyakarta, the traditional artistic pre-eminence of neighbouring Surakarta, the heroic nationalist resistance displayed during the Indonesian War of Independence by the East Javanese city of Surabaya. Festivals of regional art forms abound. Cultural identity extending across regions and even into neighbouring Malaysia is displayed and contested in the many festivals of Malay art and culture organised in sites in Sumatra, Kalimantan and beyond.[1] At the other end of the scale are the small-scale events and activities taking place in particular localities—performance festivals in revered natural sites and in communal spaces, training of neighbourhood youth by self-styled "communities" of artists—of the kind I will discuss below.

These cases, like the Manggarai example, involve self-conscious identification with a cultural form or forms seen to signify attachment to a geographical place and a purported 'community'. Here too, the organisers of and leading participants in these activities gain new social 'placements' and kudos in times of major social and political change. However, in contrast to the Manggarai example, I argue that in some contexts complex patterns of continuity rather than sharp separation characterise the relationship between constructs of identity and community and lived social relations. Rather than being simply artificial, externally-imposed constructs, cultural forms consciously styled as embodiments of 'local identity' can tap into familiar local imagery and mobilise existing loyalties within new frameworks and settings. Contemporary expression of 'community' often connects with and reframes existing group relations. In areas of ethnic and religious contest, reinvigorated cultural forms and rituals evoking particular identities have at times contributed potently to social conflicts (Winn, 2002). Without challenging Erb, Beni and Anggal's findings in Manggarai, examples from other sites illustrate the great diversity of political and cultural expression and performance practice in contemporary Indonesia.

This article focuses on performance in the area of Indonesia where I have done most of my research, Central Java. It seeks to adapt Bauman's analysis of constructed identities and community to contexts where longstanding practices of community are not dead but ongoing and constantly evolving. It describes the self-conscious focus on expression of identity and community of contemporary performers and cultural activists, and how their activities interact with ongoing local

social practices and cultural understandings. I argue that it is in the intersections and tensions and between the familiar and the new that interesting new social meanings are generated.

Central Javanese performance

Central Java, particularly the court cities of Yogyakarta and Solo, exemplify very clearly the patterns of celebration of cultural identity through performance described above. Longstanding traditions of performativity are engrained in local social life: in the marking of important family and community events with performances bringing neighbourhoods together in shared conviviality and celebration of cultural values in grand performance spectacles displaying the wealth and power of social and political elites. Since the modernisation of Indonesian society through interaction with Dutch colonialism in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sophisticated court performances, village folk plays and more recently-developed popular theatre forms have co-existed along with modern, Western style drama.

During the long period of control of the Suharto regime, from the late 1960s until 1998, 'traditional' performance genres were mobilised by government bodies to display their power and authority and inculcate models of ideal Indonesian citizenship. Whereas in the 1950s and early 1960s government attention had focused on the creation of a progressive national culture for the new Indonesian nation,[2] after 1965 the Suharto state cultivated regional cultural forms as sources of values supportive of its development programs (Yampolsky, 1995: 710) and strictly censored any artistic activities seen to question its policies. Performers nevertheless worked subtly between the lines; contemporary theatre groups drew on the imagery of traditional dramatic forms to satirise contemporary power holders, attracting an enthusiastic response from critically-minded audience members.

With the ending of the Suharto regime, however, there is no single, authoritarian body prescribing ideological values and constructing national identity through its arts policies and funding. Similarly, theatre groups have no common political enemy to demonise and satirise, nor a broad-based opposition movement to work with. Today, the main threat to performance activities is not state repression but negative reaction from within society, from hard-line Islamic groups who on occasion act as "morality police", disrupting public events which they consider offensive to religion such as performances with erotic elements (Lindsay, 2008). But the diffuse social links of these groups and the power of organised Islam make them a dangerous target to oppose directly. Instead, theatre groups celebrate alternate pluralist values through their performances,[3] and negotiate supportive alliances within their local environment. Jennifer Lindsay (2008) suggests that performers focus on their own situations rather than work together for change as a legacy of the New Order period, when artists protected their freedom through informal deals with officialdom. Current political conditions arguably foster connections of a more diffuse, expanded kind between performers and local officials and politicians. Performers enliven the constant election campaigns for governors, regents, mayors and parliamentary representatives, and lobby for funding from local budgets.[4] They also contribute very actively to the display of local cultural distinctiveness fostered by the regional autonomy system.

Celebrating the local

Recent years in Yogya and Solo have been marked by an almost constant stream of "festival" performance events celebrating a particular occurrence, place or performance genre. The annual Yogyakarta Arts Festival is augmented by many other smaller events marking the anniversaries of particular organisations, and focusing attention on local sites of rivers, markets and rural communities. Parades or "karnaval", mobilising hundreds of performers and thousands of viewers as they process through city streets, concentrate the festive mood through spectacular display.

Performance in these contexts frequently combines the concretely local with a hybridity and fluidity of style. In rural areas, in big gatherings held on sports fields and other open areas, groups of young people, trained by a resident performer or a practitioner from the city, stage local performance genres. The organisers of such events, often government officials but also church organisations and independent NGOs, see these activities as a way of giving young people a sense of pride in and commitment to their own culture. Their speeches often mention the vital importance of maintaining local culture in the face of all-consuming globalisation.[5] The performances themselves, meanwhile, involve an exuberant blending of local genres with global influences. *Jathilan* hobby horse dance pageants encompassing hip-hop and break dance moves and monster figures reminiscent of horror movies display and celebrate the local, while simultaneously connecting with the world of international popular culture.

In the context of big city parades the cultural blending can be still more eclectic and consciously marked. In 2009 the huge parade staged in Yogyakarta annually since 2007 to celebrate the founding of the city featured a highly-crafted rendition of glocalised horse dancing. Acrobatic young men with spiked, coloured, mohawk hairdos and ninja-like painted faces, in striped leggings and ankle boots, somersaulted, performed handstands, swallowed fire and rode hobby horses, as a singer rapped triumphantly in Javanese about the wonders of *kebudayaan!* and *jathilan!* "our culture" and "jathilan". The event as a whole offered a spectacular variety of local acts: stately court dances, prancing Chinese lions representing the Chinese community, stilt-walkers, a transvestite fashion parade. Speeches by the mayor of the city and the Sultan and governor of the Special District of Yogyakarta enthusiastically endorsed the parade's representation of Yogyakarta culture as diverse and dynamic and a site of harmonious, pluralistic interaction.[6] Celebration and promotion of a consciously constructed "local identity" indeed play a prominent role in Yogya, within a political campaign to defend the unique administrative status of the Yogyakarta Special District, with the Sultan as governor for life, against changes proposed by the national government.[7]

Contemporary horse dancing presents an intriguing example of a cultural form that draws upon and reworks longstanding social meanings, and fuses these with novel, global references, to convey an enlivened sense of 'local identity'. Taking varying forms and names—*jathilan, jaranan, reyog*—across different regions of Java, hobby horse dancing has its roots in ancient spirit beliefs and fertility cults (Holt, 1967: 107-109). With its pulsating, mesmeric music, dynamic physicality and incidents of possession by spirits, it contrasts strikingly with the refinement and control of court-cultivated art forms, and has a history of association with anti-aristocratic, populist sentiment.[8] During the New Order period, government officials took steps to reinterpret and refine horse dance forms;[9] in this context, performances maintaining its original format could be seen as acts of resistance. Today, spirit possession is downplayed. Instead the emphasis is on exuberant physicality, pulsating music and individual displays of prowess amidst general participatory celebration. As elements of hip-hop movement and rap music are added, their underclass connections and populist spirit reverberate intriguingly with the past image of rebelliousness of the local form. Presumably the vibe of global youth culture adds to the appeal of, and sense of pride in the local form.

Other ways of expressing a sense of identification with the local include staging stories of local experience and performing in everyday social spaces outside the confines of theatre buildings. Members of the group Papermoon take their giant puppets to railway stations and markets; Gardanalla actors have performed everyday life dramas to fellow passengers on city buses and "exchanged" stories with visitors to shopping malls. A theatre festival held in Yogyakarta from 2009 to 2011, proclaiming the motto *Berkunjung ke Rumah Sendiri* (Visiting One's Own Home), staged performances in the yards of *kampung* and village homes, in a neighbourhood meeting hall and a market. Once again the framing shadow of the global is invoked in directing attention to the local. These different sites all have their own stories, myths and social themes, writes theatre critic Indra Trenggono; their narratives urgently need to be revived "before they are crushed by the free market under the guise of globalisation" (Trenggono, 2009: 12).

Cultivating community

In staging local stories and performing in everyday social spaces, performance practitioners likewise embrace the notion of constructing and connecting with "community". They term their groups *komunitas,* indicating a body of people with a shared identity grounded in commitment to an artistic practice: theatre, dance, mime, music, video arts; they also attempt to engage with "communities:" in the alternate sense of residents of a particular neighbourhood. The group *Teater Gedag-Gedig* in Solo started staging simple, humorous shows in neighbourhoods around the city to provide entertainment and bring residents together after the violent ethnic and class-based riots that swept Solo just before Suharto's resignation in 1998. More often theatre practitioners facilitate direct involvement in performance by community members. Some provide training to young people in particular city neighbourhoods; others, such as *Komunitas Wayang Suket* in Solo headed by the experimental wayang puppeteer Slamet Gundono, invite residents of the area around their own *sanggar*, their studio base, to participate in performance activities.[10] More combatively, the term *Komunitas Tanggul Budaya*—translating as something like Community for Cultural Defence—is used for activities held at the studio of another Solo-based group, *Teater Ruang*, where local children learn traditional Javanese poetry, drawing or dance, and perform informally. The reference is to the studio's physical location, next to an embankment protecting the rice fields, as well as to the function of such sessions in protecting embattled, threatened cultural forms. Joko Bibit, the group leader, describes contemporary Indonesian culture as being swamped by the globalised mass media, while government and other social leaders pay no attention.[11]

Such widespread use of the term '*komunitas*', rather than previous designations for arts groups, such as *sanggar* (workshop), *paguyuban* (association), *keluarga* (family) or simply *kelompok* (group) gives rise to questioning. How has this borrowed foreign term come to replace local terminology? Some analysts of contemporary performance comment critically and sceptically on this trend. Is the ubiquitous claiming of the term *komunitas* by theatre groups simply a fad, asks one cultural activist, like other labels, such as *keluarga* (family), echoing the valorisation of the "family principle" in state ideology of New Order times?[12] The concept of "community" has been described as utopian and romantic, its constant invocation signalling absence rather than presence, an attempt to conjure up a wished-for state rather than describe an existing entity.[13] Use of a borrowed foreign term without a direct Indonesian equivalent might be seen to suggest its artificiality in the local context. Might influence from overseas theatre trends be a key factor here: the current fashion, internationally, for "community theatre" prompting local imitation? Recalling the Manggarai example, how relevant are the notions of cultural identity and community promoted by theatre practitioners and event organisers to the people they attempt to involve and speak for?

Performance practitioners are indeed well aware of and connected with international theatre trends, maintaining active links and exchanges. Meanwhile, along with others involved in contemporary performance such as event organisers and government officials, they gain from their activities various forms of "placement" in the contemporary social and political context. Theatre groups can be seen to cultivate community connections in part out of a need to construct social moorings appropriate to contemporary times. During the Suharto era, from the late 1960s until 1998, political commitment provided a common bond with audience members. Today performers aim to engage with their public through events that celebrate the local, providing a sense of reinforcement of self and group identity.

Yet they do so as fellow participants in local social interactions and structures, rituals and everyday practices expressive of relations between neighbours, well-recognised by participants and richly documented by scholarly observers. Clifford Geertz's classic account of the spiritual and social meanings of the communal ritual of the *slametan* or *kenduren* has been followed up by Norma Sullivan's revelation of the female-controlled practical organisation of these events (Geertz, 1960: 11-16, 30-85; Sullivan, 1994); and Robert Jay (1969) analyses everyday practices of "neighbourship".

While the English word *community* may not translate precisely in Indonesian or Javanese, concepts such as *rukun* (social harmony), or the *appearance* of such harmony, and *gotong- royon* (reciprocal communal co-operation), embody subtle, nuanced understandings of neighbourly relations and the contexts in which they are mobilised.[14] Meanwhile the organisational structures of Javanese settlements, rural and urban, have attracted special attention from and been remoulded and reinterpreted by successive historical regimes: Dutch colonialism, Japanese Occupation, Suharto-era political authoritarianism and developmentalism (Breman, 1982; Onghokham, 1975; Sullivan, 1992). Contemporary evocations of "community", including those of performers and cultural organisers, are informed by this long history and complex body of ideas and practices.

Analysing and performing the Kampung

Javanese practices of community have been particularly well-documented and actively supported in the context of *kampung,* urban neighbourhoods consisting of densely- packed houses lining small roads and laneways between the main city thoroughfares. Writing about the Yogyakarta kampung where he and his wife lived and visited for 17 years in the 1970s and 1980s, John Sullivan describes the way the New Order state mobilised kampung communal units and cultural practices still strongly claimed as their own by local residents, thus extending its social control (Sullivan, 1992). In two studies, published 23 years apart, of the same Yogyakarta kampung (Guinness, 1986, 2009), Patrick Guinness analyses "the informalisation processes that characterise kampung social and economic relations", through which residents balance state programs with neighbourhood interests, and which provide support in periods of economic hardship (Guinness, 2009: 249-250). Guinness also reports on the work of the *Yayasan Pondok Rakyat* (literally *People's Shelter Foundation*), a non-government organisation involving academics, architects and students, which provides training and support for programmes of kampung empowerment and publishes widely about kampung life in neighbourhood bulletins, and on a website with articles in English, French and Indonesian.

Beyond the circles of academics and social activists, kampung have attracted new interest in recent years from government officials, city planners and other elite figures. Long viewed as pockets of backwardness and underdevelopment, requiring upgrading to the level of modernity of the city as a whole, kampung have started to take on a more positive image. The efficacy of their self-help initiatives at the time of the 1997- 1999 financial crisis is noted approvingly by urban administrations, even as kampung populations continue to struggle with problems and land pressure and unemployment. As part of the promotion of "local identity" by local officials, kampung take on value as distinctive forms of urban organisation celebrating "the uniqueness of place". In Yogyakarta, the reputation of the city as a "City of Tolerance" includes recognition of harmonious dealings with its slum neighbourhoods, and incorporation of the kampung is a key element in urban planning discourse (Krishnamurti, forthcoming: 12-13).

Performance has long played a vital role in the social and cultural life of the kampung and its interaction with state structures. Elsewhere I have described the lively neighbourhood concerts, *malam kesenian*, with which Central Javanese kampung celebrated Independence Day, 17 August, during the 1970s and 1980s. Such events, I suggest, provided the opportunity for different groups—tiny toddlers dancing, teenagers playing guitars, adults performing local popular drama—to display their skills, contributing to a show which celebrated the identity of their neighbourhood within the wider framework of the Indonesian nation (Hatley, 1982). By the late 1990s, influenced by commercialisation and the expanding mass media, popular participation at such events had declined in favour of more spectacular professional shows; during the economic hardship and social upheaval surrounding Suharto's fall in 1998 few concerts took place—life was too hard and uncertain for such celebration (Hatley, 2008: 179- 180, 223). But by 2003 and 2004, community Independence Day shows seemed to have revived, and some exhibited a clearly enhanced social inclusiveness.[15]

Contemporary performers cultivating "community" frequently work at the kampung level, mobilising and building on local performance skills. They necessarily interact with kampung representatives as they invite residents of the surrounding neighbourhood to practice in their studios or provide training to local young people. Environmental activist/performers stage festivals in kampung located near significant geographic features, such as the springs and waterways of the city of Salatiga, and create a "collective imaginary" for the site through performances by local groups and outside artists, photographic and filmic documentation, and widespread communication of this material online (Crosby, forthcoming).

A major performance project explicitly targeting the kampung as a site of identity construction and mobilisation of community took place in 2008 in the context of the annual Yogyakarta Arts Festival. The organising committee for the festival, comprising artists and performers, activists and researchers,[16] invited nine kampung situated across the city to research the history of their neighbourhoods, create performances playing out these histories and stage them locally, within the community, as part of the festival program. The aim was to allow kampung-dwellers to tell their own stories rather than being subsumed in hegemonic state narratives and to strengthen the image and position of the kampong "as a vibrant, productive and creative" entity in the context of urban development (Krishnamurti, forthcoming: 2)

The process of compiling the stories mobilised and illustrated local social relations. Use of written materials was combined with group discussions of shared recollections and interviews with respected elders and authority figures. The show was developed by locals, with guidance from performance practitioners, by drawing on whatever performance genres were cultivated in the particular kampung—wayang shadow puppetry, *ketoprak* melodrama, theatre, pop music, traditional Javanese sung poetry. Types of stories, processes of preparation and dynamics of performance differed significantly between sites. Samirono Baru staged as the theme of its performance an exploration of the current state of the kampung, with community residents playing their own parts. In the performance, the real-life hamlet headman and head of the youth organisation meet with an actor in the role of a journalist who has come to write an article about the kampung. The youth leader tells him about the kampung's cultural activities, then introduces him to the various groups, which each perform in turn—a pop band, a gamelan orchestra, *macapat* (traditional Javanese sung poetry) singers, a group of girls doing rap dance. Conflict threatens over the journalist's developing relationship with a local girl, but all is forgiven when a glowing article by him about Samirono appears in the local newspaper. In real life, too, the *Babad Kampung* (Kampung Chronicles) project helped publicise and promote Samirono and its activities. After the event the macapat singing group received invitations to perform in various locations around the city and local young people were asked to act as guides to members of an academic project researching the kampung (Krishnamurti, personal conversation, February 2011).

In contrast to this example and others of productive community collaboration, in some cases the *Babad Kampung* project evoked tensions between social groups. Where project committees made up of young people staged their interpretations of past history and current social conditions, intergenerational differences often surfaced. In the kampung of Kricak Kidul, for example, the musical play by the young people in charge of Babad Kampung activities discomforted many older generation audience members by including scenes from the kampung's past operation as a gambling and drinking den. Local authorities were offended by references to the communist connections of the kampung before 1965, and corruption among officials and military personnel. Many older people left the performance early. A kampung meeting was called in the following days to discuss the problematic performance and differences between the young people and their elders. The event dominated community conversations for weeks but gradually tensions dissipated, and the occurrence and open discussion of such conflict has been described as a significant outcome of the Babad Kampung project. It provided the opportunity for people of different generations to talk to one another directly, discuss their differences and "come to some common understanding of

neighbourhood life … The joints of living together were ordered and rebuilt in new ways" (Krishnamurti, forthcoming: 10).

Alexandra Crosby expresses a different response to the conflict which occurred in the kampung of Kalitaman in the Central Javanese city of Salatiga over the planned staging there in 2008 of an environmental festival by the alternate arts collective *Taman Untuk Kehidupan* (TUK).[17] TUK had organised a successful festival in the kampung in 2007, celebrating local identity through activities centred on two neighbourhood springs and invoking connections with global environmental concerns. But the following year kampung authorities refused permission. Their formal letters to the collective complained of drunkenness and general disturbance of the peace at the last festival. Mistaken rumours that the collective had made huge profits from the previous event were also circulating, while the real reason for the stance of the authorities may have been the fact that they were in the process of selling the large spring at Kalitaman to a water bottling firm. Meanwhile local young people who had been involved in the previous year's festival were very keen to participate again. The outcome of the situation was that the festival moved to an alternate site, the kampung of Kalimangkak, and was bigger and better than ever. The young enthusiasts from Kalitaman joined in.

Crosby argues that this experience of relocation "challenges the idea of the kampung as a static, rooted community" (Crosby, forthcoming: 10). While people's shared identities are embodied in the neighbourly relations of the kampung, they are not bound to this physical context but are free to engage with a variety of imaginings of place. Crosby questions the connection of places with single essentialist identities, proposing the term "affinity space" instead of "community" to convey this sense of fluidity and generative possibility.

Concluding thoughts

Both activities of fluid place-making by the waterways of Salatiga, and the Babad Kampung performances mobilising local neighbourhood relations, brought together people and ideas from outside the kampung with local residents, and combined conscious constructs of "identity" and "community" with ongoing, lived practices. In each example the interaction might be said to have resulted in productive new outcomes—testing and adapting existing social bonds, even strengthening local entrepreneurial capacity as in the Babad Kampung case, and creating an imaginative new pride in local place not bound by physical and social constraints in Salatiga.

Attempted expression of identity and construction of community through performance takes place in many other sites and forms in today's Indonesia. Along with performers and cultural activists, numerous others such as local government officials, politicians, tourism operators, business entrepreneurs, promote their visions of contemporary society and position themselves within them. Zygmunt Bauman's (2000) analysis of the conditions of liquid modernity marked by struggles for "placement" as previous structures dissolve and places disappear, aptly describes this picture. However, in keeping with the widely varying social and political conditions across different regions of Indonesia, the relationship between constructs of identity and the lived experience of local communities also varies dramatically. In some cases, such as the situation described by Erb, Beni and Anggal in Manggarai (2005), cultural identity may be a preoccupation of elite figures of little relevance to actual local residents. In others sites, like Central Java, longstanding, ever-evolving communal structures and practices interact with new constructs of identity and community. A current political issue—maintenance of Yogyakarta's special administrative status—attracts widespread public interest in local identity and its display: blended art forms, like horse dancing fused with hip hop and rap, allow young people to both identify with the local and connect with global cool. As performers, along with officials, business operators and others, focus attention on existing "communities", the results can be messy, confusing, problematic. As some critics suggest, performing groups may at times idealise and romanticise the concept of community and the nature

of their own activities. Yet they certainly contribute actively to the lively, complex dynamics of contemporary Indonesian society. And they do so not as individual artistic experts, but of, and within "communities", however these operate and are understood.

Notes

1. On Malay identity and its diverse sites of cultivation and contestation see Barnard (2004). For reports on recent festivals and competitions of Malay performance see, for example, *Pemenang Festival Budaya Melayu* 2011 <http://www.analisadaily.com > and *Perlombaan Seni Meriahkan Festival Budaya Melayu* <http://www.kalimantan-news.com/berita.php?idb=2477>.
2. For rich and vivid illustrations of the perceived centrality of culture to the creation of the new nation among artists, writers, intellectuals, political organisations as well as government representatives, see the various contributions to Jennifer Lindsay and Maya Liem (2012).
3. In one instance, the group Garasi in its performance *Tubuh Ketiga* (The Third Body) celebrates the hybrid, plural, non-essentialist nature of Indonesian culture through the example of Indramayu, near Jakarta, partly urban, partly rural, its language a mixture of Javanese and Sundanese, site of enthusiastic cultivation of the hybrid Middle Eastern/ Western popular music form *dangdut*, with its daringly erotic women singer/dancers.
4. In 2005, performers of the popular theatre form *ketoprak* in Bantul south of Yogyakarta lobbied for funding from the Bantul regency budget for their programme of community festivals and workshops, and now receive a routine yearly allocation (Hatley, 2008: 287). Practitioners of other forms have followed their example.
5. See for example the speech "Opening Up the Potential of the Younger Generation" given by the representative of the *bupati* (regent) of the Kulon Progo regency, west of Yogyakarta, at the Festival of Traditional Arts of the Catholic Youth of Kulon Progo, July 4, 2010. The speaker welcomed this event as a medium for "instilling in the younger generation the importance of maintaining the culture they have inherited from their ancestors. This art and culture can disappear, swallowed up by the wave of foreign culture flooding in, if we don't constantly work to preserve it." (Event programme, *Festival Kesenian Tradisional OMK Rayon Kulon Progo*, 2010, 5)
6. The mayor expressed the hope that the parade would entrench Yogya's image as a tourist centre, and convey the "pride and love" of local citizens for their constantly changing, developing city. The Sultan and governor of the Special District of Yogyakarta described the arts as a site of interaction between traditional, local and modern global cultures, through which performers convey a sense of cultural identity grounded in tradition as well as flexibility and openness to change.
7. In early 2011, a time of peak activity, thousands of people participated in and watched a huge parade of performers, social organisations and people dressed as *abdi dalem*, retainers in the sultan's court, singing along with rap and hip hop star Marzuki, as he proclaimed his rap "anthem" *Yogya Istimewa* (Yogya is Special). After the national parliament postponed the decision on Yogyakarta's future, the campaign became quiescent, but will no doubt be mobilised again when needed.
8. Kartomi (1976: 115) writing about the variant of horse dance cultivated in the Ponorogo region of East Java, also discusses the past association of this form, *reyog Ponorogo* with *warok*—rural strong men—and their protégés and partners, effeminate young boys who performed as horse dancers.
9. In the Ponorogo area, the replacement of effeminate boys with girls in the role of horse dancers in *reyog* was a central step in 'upgrading' and cleaning up the form.
10. One of the best-known, most active and highly organised communities of this type is CCL, the Cultural Centre of Ledeng, situated behind the Ledeng bus terminal in Bandung. (The rather grand-sounding English name, in place of the expected *komunitas*, makes parodic reference to institutionalised cultural centres—the Japanese Cultural Centre, etc.) The collective invites young people from the surrounding neighbourhood to rehearse with them and participate in their spectacular, movement-based performances, often focusing on environmental themes.

11. Photos of such practices are uploaded constantly on to Joko's facebook page; in the ensuing dialogue with commentators he describes them as *budaya gerilya* (guerilla culture), aimed at subverting the hold of the global media, and urges others to join in. Joko cultivates a role as beacon for feelings of discontent and anxiety among other artists about contemporary cultural trends, and acts as their informal leader and spokesman.
12. This question was posed by the cultural organiser and activist Halim HD, speaking at a workshop *Cultural Performance in post-New Order Indonesia: New structures, scenes, meanings* held at Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, in June 2010.
13. Ariel Heryanto, in comments likewise made at the workshop mentioned in note 12, to appear in the forthcoming workshop publication, observed that the way "community" is used today reminds him of iconic terms such as *pembangunan*, (development), in New Order ideological discourse (Chua, Heryanto & Varney, forthcoming).
14. Hildred Geertz in *The Javanese Family (*1961) gives an extended analysis of rukun as ideology and social practice; Bowen (1986) describes gotong royong as "a genuinely indigenized notion of moral obligation and reciprocity" used by the state to pressure villagers into contributing their labour to building and development projects.
15. In some cases previously marginalised groups such as street buskers participated in concerts; one show commenced with a display by a huge Chinese dragon, symbolising Chinese identity long suppressed during the Suharto years, next a devout Islamic group sang and proselytised, then housewife line dancers gyrated provocatively (Hatley, 2008: 229-232).
16. In this particular year, due to resignations from the earlier organising committee, a more varied and creative group of people, less closely associated with the provincial government bureaucracy, took over the organisation of the festival. At the same time local government authorities were heavily involved in the Babad Kampung programme. The Sultan and Governor of the Special district of Yogyakarta acted as patron of the project, attended all performances, along with the mayor and other city officials, and presented a monetary prize to each participating kampung.
17. The collective's name translates into English as "Plant for Life" while its acronym form TUK means water source or spring in Javanese.

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