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Becoming a Developer: Processes of Personhood in Urban Community Driven Development, Indonesia

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Abstract : Community driven development in Indonesia requires the recruitment of volunteers: local residents with the will to develop themselves and others. By revealing the processes of personhood in light of volunteers' own theories of self, I aim to disrupt simple readings of subjectification in the anthropology of development. Local volunteers understand their recruitment as having the opportunity to occupy a social position that is aligned with their jiwa (nature), and their participation as satisfying their hati (seat of emotion). Rather than assess the success or failure of state actions to regulate or constitute citizens through discursive and affective means, I take seriously this understanding of development as a process of locating and recruiting people predisposed to becoming the subjects of state development. Doing so prompts new lines of enquiry that have been overlooked in understanding processes of subjectification in development: namely the reason why some people are recruited as development subject, while the majority are not.

Keywords: Community development; Personhood; Volunteers; Indonesia; Subjectivities

Introduction¹

The first time we met Pak Anto² was in Medan in April 2013 at a ceremony to mark the successful completion of a social welfare project. Pak Anto is the coordinator of the local Badan Keswadayaan Masyarakat (BKM—Community Self-help Board): the implementing body at the local level for the Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Mandiri—Perkotaan (National Program for Community Empowerment Self-Reliant—urban, from here PNPM). The BKM had established a tailoring program to improve the economic situation of women in the locality. After organising training and providing loans for sewing machines, the BKM had placed the first large order for 200 school uniforms. The ceremony was to distribute these uniforms to the children of parents *belum mampu* [not yet capable].³ Government officials had been called, each giving a speech exhorting the people to work hard to improve their situation, and praising the BKM for their efforts. Pak Anto was an unassuming figure at the ceremony, standing to the side, prompting the local residents to come forward to receive their gifts, and encouraging guests to fill their plates with food at the conclusion of the ceremony. He became animated after the guests left, chatting excitedly with us about the program, and the other activities of the BKM in the area. He explained later that his *hati* [heart] is touched in such moments; doing good enables him to satisfy his *jiwa*—that is, be true to his nature.

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² All the names in this paper are pseudonyms (many selected by respondents). Pak is the polite term used before the name of men, and Ibu for women. I have therefore not stated whether a respondent is a man or woman.

³ I translate *belum mampu* as not yet capable, rather than not yet able to afford as some might. Focusing on capabilities is critical to the ‘empowering’ dimensions of the PNPM, and self-improvement. It is different to, and a softer version of *di bawah* (as below the poverty line): used to describe the characteristics of beneficiaries, but tellingly, rarely in front of them.

The PNPM was launched in 2007 as the Government of Indonesia's flagship poverty alleviation program. At the time, the PNPM reached all villages (*perdesaan*—rural) and wards (*perkotaan*—urban) in Indonesia, making it the largest 'Community-Driven Development' (CDD) program in the world. Its reach and financial commitment made the PNPM an important part of Indonesia's development infrastructure, or as Tania Li (2007) insightfully describes it, the 'will to improve'. 'Improvement' is a common and persistent trope in post-*reformasi* Indonesia. Programs of intervention are 'traversed by the will to improve, but it is not the product of a single intention of will' (Li 2007, 6). Rather the 'will' circulates as a repertoire or modality, recruiting individuals as subjects in positions of 'trustees', and of deficient subjects: the objects of improvement.

Pak Anto is one such person recruited into a national project of improvement and representative of a new breed of 'developer'. Having previously been a recipient of government welfare, he now leads the implementation of local development projects. From a modest socio-economic background, his status is not due to his superior 'knowledge' (as for Li's (2007) trustees), but rather his motivation, or 'will', to improve other people in his locality. He describes himself as a volunteer, or *relawan*, working selflessly for the people, without receiving any salary or honorarium.⁴ I prefer Pigg's (1992) term of 'developer' to emphasise the close social location between 'developers' and 'developees', and to indicate the way Pak Anto is embedded in national development efforts. The question I raise in this article is how and why someone like Pak Anto becomes motivated to become a developer? Or in other words, how does the 'will to improve' that circulates as national discourse and affect become a personal project?

I am in conversation with studies in the anthropology of development that examine personhood in sites of development or state-led welfare. This literature has focused on the ways individuals are constituted as subjects (as either developers or developees) who self-regulate their behaviour in ways that achieve development objectives (Agarwal 2005; Chatterjee 2004), or else examines the failures of such projects, and resistance to the processes of subjectification and operations of government (Jones 2010; Li 2007). Studies in what Bulloch (2017, 11) describes as the 'new ethnography of development' take a middle

⁴ Unlike other participants in the PNPM in other parts of Indonesia, BKM members in Medan did not receive any financial incentive to participate. Due to the costs of participation (transport and phone) some coordinators requested an honourarium, but their demands were unmet.

path, examining how development discourses shape subjectivities, but pointing out that such discourses are multiple, and reinscribed with local meanings (Bulloch 2017; Hilhorst 2003; Pandian 2009; Yeh 2013). I contribute to this literature by asking what happens when we take seriously the ways subjects understand these processes themselves. In privileging the terms through which ‘people actually represented themselves to themselves and to one another’ (Geertz 1984, 126), I reveal different responses to standard questions as to the intersection of personhood and development, and elicit new questions rarely addressed in the literature.

If we take seriously BKM members’ own understandings of why they became involved, we can interpret their ‘will to improve’ as less a state-led objective incorporated into self-making projects (Muehlebach 2012), and more the ability to occupy a position and modality of being to which they were predisposed. BKM members are not disciplined to become ‘developers’, but animated by the affective experiences made possible by involvement in the program. My argument is not to deny the disciplining effects of development, nor the importance of resistance to it, but to argue that their own understanding of personhood enables and forecloses different forms of agency currently unrecognised. Such a conceptualisation also draws attention to the moment of recruitment, raising the question as to why some people, but not others, respond to the call to become a developer.

My findings are drawn from ten months of ethnographic research in Medan, North Sumatera, between April 2013 and April 2015. I worked with two local researchers, Yumasdaleni and Aida Harahap in the collection and interpretation of empirical material. All three of us are university educated women in our late 30s/early 40s at the time of fieldwork. We deployed a ‘double lens’ to study subjectivity, of in-depth profiles and participant observation that ‘captures both individual experience and the social cultural structures in which it is embedded’ (Simon 2014, 6). We co-constructed seventeen profiles with men and women, entailing multiple formal interviews and informal discussions, in which we examined people’s engagement with the state and state-led development in the context of their broader life-biographies. Some of these interviews we did together, others Yumasdaleni and Aida Harahap did without me, revealing variations of self-representation partially attributable to my positionality as a foreign researcher. Of the seventeen profiles, eight were BKM members, in which we explored experiences of becoming and being a volunteer. Participant observation was conducted with three BKMs and included additional interviews with members and coordinators from other BKMs, facilitators, ‘beneficiaries’ and government

officials.

Community Driven Development

The recruitment of *orang biasa* (ordinary people) into the national program of development is critical to the success of the PNPM. The aims of the PNPM are ‘fostering community participation, improving local governance, and delivering basic needs at the community level’ (Baker et al., 2013, vi).⁵ Community driven development has been an important part of the development landscape in Indonesia. In 1998, the World Bank Social Development unit in Jakarta designed and led the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP) with the objective to support development planned and implemented by rural communities (Guggenheim 2004). Following its success, CDD programs followed in urban areas, most notably the Program Penanggulangan Kemiskinan di Perkotaan (Urban Poverty Alleviation Program), or P2KP, that then was transformed into the PNPM-Perkotaan. The vision of P2KP was the ‘realization of civil society (*masyarakat mandani*) which is progressive, independent and prosperous in healthy, productive and sustainable neighbourhoods’ (www.p2kp.org).⁶ Both Community based development programs are based on the premise that the people know best how to solve their problems, at the same time that communities were undergoing a period of moral crisis (Effendy 2015; Li 2006). They thereby reflect the shift in thinking about the relation between citizens and the state, with new expectations on citizens to become active agents in development (Rudnyckyj and Schwittay 2014).

Critical to these objectives is the establishment of implementing agents at the local level. There is one BKM for each Kelurahan: an urban administrative unit with a population between 10,000 and 30,000 residents. The BKM are responsible for developing a Community Development Plan and implementing projects in three areas: infrastructure (building of roads and drains etc.); economic (rotating funds and small enterprise development) and: social (small gifts of welfare and training). Trained facilitators recruit individuals to become BKM members, approaching potential candidates individually, or in community meetings and religious forums (such as the *pengajian* or *wirid*). Each BKM has between 7 to 12 members,

⁵ The Jokowi government has ceased funding the PNPM-Perkotaan in order to focus on rural development. As my research mostly predates this change in government policy, it has not affected the empirical material.

⁶ Author’s translation

roughly one per *lingkungan* (the lowest level of urban administration below the *kelurahan*).⁷ Anyone can express an interest in becoming a BKM member, and current members are from diverse socio-economic and occupational backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, and contain a mix of men and women. An election is held to select the members and coordinator, repeated every three years.

The BKM are tasked with knowing the real needs and desires of the local people, as well as being able to identify those who are most needy or worthy of receiving benefits. Already armed with knowledge of the poorer localities of the *kelurahan*, they go door-to-door to collect additional household information about income, health, number of dependents and so on. The BKM are also responsible for the management of the rotating fund which is a central part of the PNPM. They recruit people to take small loans for productive purposes, and much of their day to day work consists of collecting repayments. The BKM also hold regular community meetings to receive the suggestions and proposals from the people and to prioritise infrastructure projects. Awareness of the activities of the BKM is generally low, however these practices are nonetheless critical to the representation of BKM as *berbasis masyarakat* (based in the community).

All BKM members are trained by government appointed facilitators, who continue to support them in the day to day running of the organisations. BKM coordinators are also invited to trainings and workshops run by the state held in local hotels and government departments. Rather than strictly being a community-based organisation, BKM are therefore closer to what Ben Read (2009) describes as a ‘straddler’. They have extensive presence at the grassroots, yet ‘institutionally linked to the state rather than independent of it’ (2009, 1). The significance of the term is not to suggest a state-society divide. Rather it helps identify state-efforts to shape the ‘local’, not as ‘large swathes of the grassroots [that]...grow in unchecked profusion...but rather ...cultivated and tended, more like a garden. Here the governments actively shape their citizens’ associational energies’ (Read 2009, 1). An explicit objective of the PNPM is to impart certain values that are conducive to good governance (Effendy 2015; Marcus and Asmorowati 2006), or in other words, to teach citizens to engage with the state in new ways, or to inculcate new ways of being among its citizenry. To achieve this objective requires ‘local developers’, who locate themselves in the *masyarakat*, but who conceive of

⁷ There are no Rukun Tetangga and Rukun Warga in Medan. The *lingkungan* corresponds to the RW in Java.

and implement development in state-defined terms. In this way, the tending and cultivation of the grassroots also entails the fostering of certain modes of being at the individual level.

The ambitions of inculcating new norms and modes of behaviour conducive to the state's conception of associational life has opened the PNPM and its forerunner the Kecamatan Development Program to criticism (Carroll 2009). The program can be read as exemplifying 'government' in the Foucauldian sense by 'educating desires, and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs' (Li 2006, 3). I follow Tania Li (2006) however, who critiques the design of the program while noting that the actual social transformations should be an object of empirical enquiry. Bulloch (2017) and High (2014) likewise provide more nuanced accounts of the ways such discourses influence self-fashioning and reconfigure social relations in programs in the Philippines and Laos respectively. While recognising the potential of the PNPM to cultivate model subjects for development, I argue that this potential must be assessed from the perspectives of BKM members themselves, and their own narratives of how they became developers. Doing so reveals the importance of questions as to the prior nature of the individual, and their pre-disposition to occupy such a role.

Development Subjects

The fashioning or constitution of subjects amenable to development—as either developers or developpees—has long been a concern of scholarly enquiry in the anthropology of development. Foucault's concepts of governmentality and biopolitics have been particularly influential (see for example Chatterjee 2004; Corbridge et al. 2005; Hodge 2014). Anthropologists have since responded to post-development critiques, which often presented development discourses as monolithic and singular. In more nuanced accounts, discourse remains central to the constitution of development subjects, but with greater consideration of discourses as multiple, localised, fluid and unstable (Bulloch 2017; Hilhorst 2003). The focus is less on the interpellation of the subject, and more on how self-fashioning occurs within a terrain of moral cultivation, in which 'development' plays an important part (Pandian 2009). Anthropologists such as Pandian (2009) have turned towards later work of Foucault (1984, 1994), and new ways of governing behaviour through ethics (Allahyari 1996; Hoffman 2013, 2014). The 'care of self', as an 'aesthetic practice...an exercise of the self by which one attempts to develop and transform oneself, and to attain to a certain mode of being' (Foucault 1994, 282), is a convincing explanation for the motivations of volunteers recruited into

development projects. Volunteers' efforts at improving others is tied to their own projects of self-improvement. Power is not absent, but rather is achieved through structuring a field of possible actions (Li 2006) within which individuals exercise 'freedom'.

Rose (2000) has usefully extended Foucault's practices of self through his concept of ethopolitics. 'Ethopower' works through the self-regulation of individuals as social beings by appealing to and intensifying emotions and affective forces, individuals' sense of obligation, shame, guilt, and so on. Rose argues that 'values, beliefs, and sentiments...underpin the techniques of responsible self-government and the management of one's obligations to others' (2000, 1399). Ethopolitics is particularly relevant to CDD, as freedom in the Foucauldian sense is not enjoyed as atomized individuals, but rather as citizens of communities. Community is an 'affective and ethical field, binding its elements into durable relations' (Rose 2000, 1401) but which can also be deficient in these same qualities, and hence a site for re-invigoration (Li 2006; 2007). Citizens are encouraged to expend their energies strengthening civil society and building social capital in the forms directed by development experts. Governing behaviour in this way requires the employment of affect, the intensifying of emotions, so that citizens will become attuned to their own stirrings of the heart, compelling them to act in ways aligned with government ambitions (Rose 2000).

Muehlebach's (2012) careful ethnography of post-welfare Italy demonstrates the effectiveness of ethopolitics to mobilise the citizenry to engage in volunteer activity. State-led pedagogical projects mobilise sentiments, arousing citizens to be attentive to the 'corporeal stirrings of the heart' (2012, 18) and to act upon these in ways that appear self-directed and spontaneous. The state thereby mobilises as it produces a passionate and sympathetic citizenry: ethical subjects who *willingly* perform welfare functions previously the responsibility of the state. Hoffman's (2013) study of Dalian, China, similarly examines the rise of volunteerism and social organisations to compensate for the withdrawal of the state in areas of welfare provisioning. In response to the question 'how were people activating themselves to pursue these voluntary activities?' (Hoffman 2013, 849), she finds that inner transformations, improvement of self and opportunities to experiment with new ways of achieving self-fulfilment were critical. Hoffman locates in these responses not the increase in freedom that the roll-back of the state implies, 'release[ing] people to be who they really are' (2013, 848), but rather the mobilization of people's sense of duty and responsibility so that they 'freely' take on the duties of welfare provision. Although there is the *appearance* of

autonomy, the volunteer is engaged in ‘a learned process of self- fashioning, self-government and being governed by others’ (839).

Hoffman’s (2013) study is exemplary of a genre in the anthropology of development that draws upon Foucauldian theories to reveal development as a disciplining apparatus. While some nod to the variations of subjectivities (Agrawal 2005) or doubts and scepticism (Muehlebach 2012), most point to the effectiveness of these regimes of governance, and the production of ‘subjects’. This stands in contrast to studies that highlight the failures of such projects. Tania Li (2007) describes those identified as deficient as ‘prickly subjects’ who resist the processes of subjectification, and the operations of government. Welker (2012, 401) likewise demonstrates the ‘failure of the fashioning of subjects’ in a corporate social responsibility program in Sumbawa, Indonesia. Her findings counter studies that portray processes of subjectification as complete, arguing that ethnographic attention to the actual practices and its effects reveals that failure is as likely, if not more so, than successful instances of governmentality.

In making failure the counterpoint to success in the constitution of development subjects, however, we fail to displace the central question that has monopolised the anthropology of development in relation to personhood, namely: what role does state-led development play in processes of subjectification. As useful as this question is, I argue that it is not always the most appropriate one to ask, or at least gives state-led development a primacy in processes of personhood that is not warranted. Part of the problem seems to lie in the over-reliance on Western conceptualisations of personhood. Muehlebach’s (2012) study succeeds in part because the Christian hermeneutics that Foucault sees as facilitating reflection and attunement towards an inner self has similarities to the Catholic confession that facilitated the production of ethical subjects in Italy. People with a different conception of the ‘self’ – the nature of one’s interiority and its relation to an external reality – might not be animated in the same way, that is, might not engage in the same processes of self-cultivation. The influence of Foucault’s theories of subjectification has therefore produced a body of literature that emphasises development’s governing effects, but this emphasis has also neglected alternative ways that development intersects with personhood.

Counter to this literature, I ask what local conceptualisations of personhood reveal about the processes of becoming a development subject. This does not mean an ignorance of theories

that aim to speak to general aspects of being (such as Butler 1997; 2015; Foucault 1986; Moore 2011; Ortner 2006), the coherence of which to explain some of the particularities of the Medan context is worth interrogating. I also take as a point of reference the ethnographically-informed theories of selfhood from across Indonesia (Boellstorff 2005a; Errington 2012; Geertz 1984; Hoesteray 2015; Simon 2009). I do so cautiously, as variations across this literature suggest there are multiple conceptions of the self across the archipelago. They nonetheless raise important entry points to scrutinize interpretations of personhood in Medan. If we take their own theories of personhood seriously, I argue that the extent to which the state ‘produces’ subjects for development is less relevant for BKM members than how sites of development provide opportunities for the imagining and actualisation of self. To make this argument, I examine the meanings that BKM members give to their own experiences in the program.

Expanded possibilities for self

A tour of BKM Maju is not complete without a visit to the *kue* (cake) making workshop: one of PNPM Medan’s most successful small enterprises. Yumasdaleni and I met Pak Anto at the BKM office;⁸ the informality of the visit was evident by Pak Anto’s clothing. For official activities, such as workshops or ceremonies, he wore his BKM uniform that not only signalled his membership to the BKM, but also helped obscure his relatively poor socio-economic position. Today, he was wearing his best casual clothing: jeans, a t-shirt, and a stylish sling bag. Pak Anto entered the workshop without hesitation, and proceeded to show us how the *kue* were made, answering questions as to where they were sold, and how many livelihoods the small enterprise supported. The workers chatted comfortably with Pak Anto, who was their friend, neighbour, as well as coordinator of the BKM. He introduced us to the owner of the workshop, who used to be a mini-van driver until he found that he could earn more money making *kue*. Pak Anto has not joined the enterprise, and continues to drive a mini-van just as his friend once did, filling his ‘empty hours’ with BKM activities.

This scene underscores the close social location between many BKM members and the *penerima manfaat* (recipients of benefits) of the program. None of the BKM members that we engaged with could be called wealthy, although some coordinators were former PNS

⁸ We always met Pak Anto at the BKM office, and it was only after the office closed in 2017 that we met in his home. He said he was embarrassed to meet in his *gubuk* (a small home of poor people).

(government officials) or private-sector workers with considerable social capital and a steady income. A large number were like Pak Anto, however: a similar socio-economic status to *penerima manfaat* and who had at times also fallen below the poverty line. Interactions between ‘developers’ and ‘developees’ therefore lacked the differences of dress, comportment and language that uncomfortably and unavoidably lays bare class distinctions and social hierarchies in different development encounters (Moje 2000).

Despite being financially worse off than some of the *penerima manfaat*, Pak Anto nonetheless sees his role as improving the livelihoods, thinking and habits of people in his locality. According to him, the desire to help is not new. Since high school he has been involved in several social organisations, often leaving when the actions of organisations contradicted their own stated values. Finding an organisation that he can join and which shares his values is not easy. He lacks the cultural and social capital to join or work for an NGO, or the economic capital to engage in charity. When a facilitator held a meeting in his Kelurahan to raise awareness about the PNPM, Pak Anto was therefore immediately interested: ‘Why? Because it is useful for my own life and for other people’s life, especially the underprivileged’.

Pak Anto elaborated the meaning of the program for his life in a later interview.

After I joined the PNPM, I feel that my life has more meaning. I only graduated from high school, stupid. A principled life means that we *bisa* [can] do something for family and other people, people who need our help. Help is not only material. We can help with *tenaga* [energy or labour power], with our *pikiran* [thought]... After I came to PNPM, [I thought] maybe this is a place I can become myself, that which I have dreamt about, I can devote all, and finally I can achieve happiness’ (Pak Anto, Dec 2013).

I return to the significance of the final sentence below. Here, I note the importance of the addition of the word ‘can’ (*bisa*) to the meaning of a principled life. This may be akin to a speech filler in the flowing words of Pak Anto, however *bisa* also highlights that helping is an ability as much as a will; not everyone is able to help, and hence lead a meaningful life. Pak Anto long had a *desire* to help, but lacked the agency to transform this desire into an actionable *will*.

Several other BKM members uses similar language to explain why they joined the program. Ibu Hanum runs several small businesses with her husband (some supported by PNPM loans) to support their six children. Despite the demands on her time, when a PNPM facilitator came to her *wirid* (prayer meeting) to explain the program, she enthusiastically joined. The scene of recruitment is significant, and religion seemingly plays an important part in her motivations. Her husband initially protested her involvement, as constituting an activity outside the home which did not bring in additional income.⁹ She convinced him by stating ‘If I want to give alms [*sedekah*], just like them [potential beneficiaries] I do not have money or wealth. But I can give alms [*sedekahkan*], only with my energy and thoughts’. *Sedekah* has significance for Muslim Indonesians as being the giving of alms or the helping of others voluntarily [*sukarela*] and with sincerity [*ikhlas*]. Being involved as a BKM member thereby enables Ibu Hanum to engage in Islamic acts of charity despite lacking financial means. The PNPM is different from charity works through the *masjid*, as according to Ibu Hanum, they can reach many more people, multiplying their efforts.

Pak Anto and Ibu Hanum’s involvement as BKM members seemingly contributes to their projects of self-cultivation. Returning to the final line of Pak Anto’s quote, we see that it is through the PNPM that he can realise his self in relation to a meaningful life, where ‘I can become myself that which I have dreamt about’. Since joining the PNPM, he has not only achieved satisfaction through virtuous action, he has also used the constant feedback from officials and the *rakyat* [people] to reflect on his actions in an explicit ambition of self-improvement: ‘as a normal human being I still need guidance, advice, and input [feedback] so that I can engage in self-introspection [*berintrospeksi diri*]’.¹⁰ For Ibu Hanum, involvement enables her to fashion herself as a good Muslim, as well as a good person. The explanations as to why people joined the BKM were often thick with ‘the subjective work produced by agents to conduct themselves in accordance with their inquiry about what a good life is’ (Fassin 2012, 7). That is, they seemingly reinforce the explanatory power of Foucault’s ‘care of self’ to examine the motivations of volunteers in both charity and development work (Allahyari 1996; Arvidson 2008; Fechter 2012).

⁹ Earning additional income outside the home has long been socially appropriate roles for women in Indonesia (Robinson 2008), however there can be resistance to wives devoting time to non-economic social activities.

¹⁰ I suggest that the introspection is in this instance more important than the specific suggestions of the *masyarakat*. Elsewhere I explore how BKM members are subject to frequent complaints due to the moral atmosphere of development as *bagi-bagi*. Pak Anto continues his narrative by contrasting his morality to that of a rich man complaining that he did not receive help. He is therefore not responding *to* the morality among the *rakyat*, but rather in rejection of it (see author name forthcoming).

The trope of self-improvement is not new in Indonesia. Jones notes the deep national history of ‘Identifying, cultivating and managing the self’ (2010, 273). Self-control and bodily training to become refined (*alus*) in both the interior and exterior realms of self are central to the Javanese achievement of personhood (Geertz 1984). During the New Order, Suharto drew upon Javanese ideas of *priyayi* to emphasise the importance of mastery over self as a means to strengthen his centralised authority (Jones 2010). In post-*reformasi* Indonesia, Hoesterey (2015) argues that the state is no longer the primary actor constituting citizens through self-regulation, as Islamic organisations play an increasingly significant role (see also Wieringa 2015). His study of Aa Gym, a Muslim celebrity TV preacher demonstrates how Sufi Islam is blended with Western self-help in a message of ‘aspirational piety that emphasizes the process of becoming one’s true self’ (2015, 4). Rudnyckyj (2014) similarly finds that Islamic spirituality is mobilised in an Indonesia steel mill, so that being a good Muslim is commensurate with being a disciplined worker. Appealing to one’s ethics and sense of responsibility does not produce the docile subjects of other institutions, but rather is an injunction for workers to ‘actualise their own will and develop their own will power’ (Rudnyckyj 2014, 124).

Rudnyckyj’s (2014) and Hoesterey’s (2015) major intervention is to draw attention to the way affect and emotion is deployed to encourage certain modes of being. For example music, provocative clips, and emotionally-charged activities animate the will of the steel workers, but in ways that appear to be an expression of inner desires, leading to ‘voluntaristic’ action (Rudnyckyj 2014). The recruitment of BKM members can also be seen as moving people in a particular way, animating them to voluntarily give their efforts in the program. Ibu Hanum told us that after being introduced to the program, she saw around her people that were not touched [by welfare or development], and that this moved her to tears, motivating her to join the program to ‘uplift the poor’. The key point is that this affect hit her with a force after the facilitator sensitised Ibu Hanum to the program in the *wirid*. ‘Sensitise’ is the right verb, as it was an encouragement for her to open her heart, to be affected in ways that prompted her towards compassionate action. BKM members are in this way similar to the volunteers in post-welfare Italy, who were encouraged to become a “soulful” citizenry ‘that translates the corporeal stirrings of the heart into publicly useful activity’ (Muehlebach 2011, 18).

In the next section I return to the importance of the soul and the heart (*jiwa* and *hati*), and argue that ethnographic attention to these concepts disrupts easy readings that BKM members are produced as a soulful citizenry. Before I do, I make two points in relation to this interpretation. The first is that opportunities for self-cultivation are differentiated according to class, gender and other social positionings (Pandian and Ali 2010). The emphasis on the negative aspects of the production of self-governing subjects neglects the satisfaction associated with becoming an ethical subject (Mahmood 2005). Pak Anto and Ibu Hanum had desires to become better, more ethical people through social activity, but lacked opportunities due to their socio-economic status, and prescribed gender roles. While one interpretation is that the BKM is a site in which individuals are recruited to cultivate a self in accordance to the objectives of the state, an equally valid interpretation is that development is a site in which people formerly excluded from the practice of ethics are given the opportunity to engage in self-making. Second, while the narrative of animating citizens to become development subjects fits the case of Ibu Hanum, Pak Anto had ambitions that were previously unrealised, requiring an outlet for action. He was in a sense ‘pre-activated’, and the program enabled him to turn his desire into a will. To further unpack this ‘pre-animation’, and ‘pre-disposition’ to become and be a developer, I turn to the terms they use to describe their involvement

Panggilan jiwa (the call of the soul)

BKM Bangkit is in a poor neighbourhood on the edge of the city, known for its history as a centre for drugs and prostitution. Among the houses – some two-storey concrete abodes, others little more than shacks – sits the BKM office, built through the proceeds of loans given through the program. Consisting of one large room and a small kitchen, it is a venue for the monthly ‘community meetings’ and a more informal setting for people to come and discuss their problems. Ibu Rosa, the BKM coordinator, proudly tells us that government officials also come and sit in these same chairs. In this setting, where even government officials must come to her on equal terms, she explained her humble background.

I only used to sell *nasi goreng* [fried rice]. Indeed I was just a housewife and a member of the *masyarakat* [people]. If I put it like this, I received a *panggilan jiwa* [call of the soul]...[that] I should use my hands to serve the *masyarakat*. Maybe [pause], indeed it is *because* I have a *sifat* [characteristic] of compassion in

my *hati* [heart]...after coming to know this program, I could not sleep. I looked around the locality. Apparently there were people who did not eat, could not buy medicines. I got a headache and I could not sleep (November 2014).

Several of the above themes are evident in Ibu Rosa's narrative. As a woman, Christian Batak (Toba) and from a low socio-economic class, she is marginalised in multiple ways. Depending on one's reading, the program has provided her an opportunity to engage in social activity that was previously foreclosed to her due to her social positioning, or alternatively the program has enabled her to occupy a different (higher) social positioning through social activity. We can also see that like Ibu Hanum, Ibu Rosa was physically affected when she heard of the program, a point I return to below.

Ibu Rosa states that she responded to *panggilan jiwa*, a call of the soul. Being called by the *jiwa* was a common phrasing among BKM members to explain why they joined the program, and their ongoing motivations. *Jiwa* directly translates into English as soul or spirit. As used by Ibu Rosa and others however, it has more the connotation of one's nature.¹¹ So for example Pak Adnan states: 'I do not have any expectations from the BKM, I do not want reward. Why? Indeed my *jiwa* is like this...my *jiwa*, I like to help people' (Pak Adnan).¹² The *jiwa* explains why individuals became BKM members, and why they expect nothing from the work that they do. I argue that *jiwa* is a means through which 'people ...[represent] themselves to themselves and to one another' (Geertz 1984, 126). *Jiwa* as a symbolic form also helps them to make sense of their being, is a vehicle through which they can negotiate life and therefore critical to agency (Geertz 1984). I consider *jiwa* a response to the inherent unknowability of self, that which cannot be understood through conscious thought (Butler 2005). It helps people grapple with 'the problems of the self' (Geertz 1984), such as the existence (or not) of an individuality and autonomy independent from society (Simon 2009), and the 'sense of personal freedom with an equally strong sense of being conditioned' (Jackson 1998, 34). In other words, *jiwa* is part of a cultural theory of the will, its origin and interaction with society.

Before turning to my own interpretation of *jiwa* in the context of Medan, I consider Boellstorff's (2005a; 2005b) examination of the same term among *lesbi* and *gay* Indonesians. Boellstorff (2005a, 6) translates *jiwa* as being roughly equal to "subject position", underlining

¹¹ I thank an anonymous reviewer for prompting me to describe it in this way.

¹² The missing section is due to an inaudible section of the recording.

that there is no ‘pre-culturally agentive person’, and one can only come into being through a social location (see also Butler 2005). The actual contours of *jiwa*, how it is inhabited and enacted in practice, depends upon the cultural resources for becoming, or in Boellstorff’s (2005a) terms the grammar with which the *jiwa* finds expression. *Lesbi* and *gay* offer one such grammar, and rather than indicating a unique individuality, have a collective meaning. For example, ‘women will sometimes say “*lesbi* have the same *jiwa*”’ (2005a, 10). *Jiwa* is also used collectively among BKM members, referring to the occupation of a subject position ‘sosial’ (social). I argue, however, that *jiwa* is not translatable to subject position in this context, but rather is their explanation as to why ‘certain individuals occupy some subject positions rather than others’ (Hall 2000, 23).

My interpretation is based on a common response BKM members had when asked why they joined the program. The question often turned into a reflection as to why they, and not others, responded to the invitation to do social activity without material reward. That most citizens do *not* chose to become volunteers, or are *not* produced as ‘compassionate citizens’ is an observation that has remained unexamined in studies examining the intersection of development and personhood. Pak Wibawa said that he cannot explain why he works so hard as a BKM member without any reward, but notes that the work is light because he has *berjiwa sosial*. He described the difficulties of finding people who were willing to work without a salary, and noted that many BKM members left the program when they realised that there was no material benefit; ‘it is volunteer work. If s/he¹³ is not called by his/her *jiwa*, if s/he does not care for the *masyarakat*, then they will be less able to do this work’ (Pak Wibawa). A social soul (*berjiwa sosial*) is essential to be able to invest time and energy without feeling burdened, and a response to the question as to why they, but not others, find satisfaction from this work.

I argue that the *jiwa* can provide agency, at the same time that it downplays the importance of an individual ‘will’. Pak Adnan could not remember a time when he did not want to help people. There was no ‘origin’ story for his social *jiwa*; ‘my *jiwa* was already *tertanam* (embedded)...*ikhlas* (sincerity, working without benefit) is already normal’. Here Pak Adnan downplays the possibility that he has cultivated his will in a particular way. He reiterates this later, when he states: ‘in this kind of work we must have a volunteer soul [*berjiwa sosial*].

¹³ Pronouns are not gendered in Bahasa Indonesian

This work fits with me. I am not proud of myself, not to be arrogant, I am sorry. I like to do social activity for the people'. The representation of self suggests that having a social *jiwa* is like any other natural characteristic, not worthy of praise but rather just the way one is. Indeed, Pak Adnan presents it not as an unequivocal good, saying that 'people assess me as having too much of a volunteer *jiwa*' leading him to pay more attention to other people than his own family. Pak Adnan's description of his *jiwa* may be a strategy of self-representation: a way of talking about one's motivations and activities without being arrogant [*sombong*]. At the same time, when personhood is conceptualised in this way, *jiwa* deflates the sense of agency that people have in crafting the self in ways that might be called 'self-fashioning' or 'self-making' (Moore 2011; Ortner 2006). The *jiwa* is not an object of reflection and improvement, but rather is understood as a force external to the self, to which the conscious self aligns.

Such a conceptualisation of the *jiwa* may be particular to Medan, but it also seemingly resonates with Boellstorff's (2005b) empirical material. A gay Indonesian man explained to him why he did not consider that he was sinning, even though homosexuality is forbidden in Islam. 'Because it is God who creates us as gay . . . if for instance we have a gay soul [*jiwa gay*], and we try to be like a hetero man, it's transgressing God's will for us' (conversation in Boellstorff 2005b, 580). *Jiwa* is in part an explanation as to why *they* feel in ways that are out of alignment with conventional social norms. Gay man may be the subject position, but the *jiwa* answers why he, and not others, are called to occupy this position. Locating this call in one's nature, does not negate the sociality of being gay, as 'gay' can only exist as a social positioning. The *jiwa* however calls the conscious self to those subject positions that 'fit' (a point I return to below).

I argue that by downplaying or negating the importance of the will, *jiwa* provides a form of agency. In the case of gay and lesbian Indonesians, it makes a socially transgressive and religiously forbidden way of being possible. For some female BKM members, *jiwa* helped them negotiate with family members. We return to Ibu Rosa:

Sometimes I am called to work until midnight. When I came home, my husband would ask, why are you out until this time, and not even bringing any money?....one time he asked me, "you chose me or [PNPM]". I did not want to answer.... for almost two weeks there was a cold war in the household [laughs].

He asked again, “where is my answer, have you chosen me or [PNPM]”. I panicked...I said “I chose you, but please respect, respect that this is my *jiwa* and I feel I have already fitted [*pas sama*] into this [PNPM]”.

Readers familiar with gender in Indonesia will detect that the reason for Ibu Rosa’s husband’s objections was less the tension with domestic duties, but rather that her activities did not bring in additional income: long an important gendered role for women in Indonesia (Robinson 2008). What is more interesting for the purposes of this article, is the way Ibu Rosa appeals to her *jiwa*, ‘respect that this is my *jiwa*’, when her husband asks her to leave the BKM. Her *jiwa* demands its own attentiveness to its, rather than her conscious self’s, desires.

My interest lies in how *jiwa* becomes a vehicle for being in the world, and therefore its connection to the anthropological puzzle of the location of agency. Simon (2014) too locates a ‘real’ self or a personal sphere among the Minangkabau people of West Sumatera, called the *paribadi* [*pribadi* in Bahasa Indonesian], which: ‘includes any qualities that are specific to an individual: it is one’s personality in the broadest sense’ (Simon 2014, 127). The *paribadi* should not be shared, and part of the work of self is to keep hidden those personal aspects of self in public. He argues that this creates a tension between spontaneity (the autonomy of the *paribadi*) and conventionality (the socialised self) that is overcome through certain practices (such as prayer). In this way *paribadi* hints at an agentive self outside of society.

Paribadi was not used when BKM members described their involvement. In contrast, the use of the term *jiwa* has the effect of locating the will beyond the conscious self, one not to be suppressed, but responded to. The ‘will’ in the ‘will to improve’ is therefore in a sense ‘externally-given’, rather than a matter of self-authority. Counterintuitively this enables agency, by allowing individuals to occupy certain social positionings even when these are transgressive, or counter to prescribed social roles. What is most significant for our purposes here is that the *jiwa*, as a location of an authentic self, casts doubt over the extent to which the process of recruitment of BKM members entails the constitution of development subjects. If we take seriously the BKM members’ own conceptualisations of personhood, then the pre-dispositions of individuals are just as important as the discursive positioning of the program. When seen in this way, an equally valid interpretation to the cultivation of development

subjects is that sites of development may enable or create the opportunities for the actualisation of self: a self which, as seen above, may have been previously foreclosed.

I am not, however, rejecting the importance of state-led development in shaping personhood. I return to the word, ‘fit’ [*cocok*, or *pas sama*], in relation to the *jiwa*. Ibu Rosa appeals to her husband that her soul has ‘fitted’ in the PNPM, Pak Adnan says that the work ‘fits/suits’ him. While the *jiwa* may call the individual, the actual positions that they can occupy can only be produced by society (including the state). The *jiwa* does not enable an individuality, or pre-cultural self, as much as it identifies which social positions or activities are aligned with one’s real nature. The PNPM provides one positioning and a range of activities through which the self gains expression. This raises two questions that I address next: a) what is the mechanism through which the *jiwa* calls or aligns the self to one’s nature? and; b) what does this indicate about the understanding of the relation between internal and external realms among BKM members?

***Hati Tersentuh* (Touched by the Heart)**

Ibu Asmira was unrecognisable when she walked into the BKM office for a ceremony to celebrate a social activity. Painfully shy when we met in her home or on the street, she looked five inches taller as she shook the hand of the assembled guests. They were *penerima manfaat*, children and their mothers selected to receive school bags as part of the social activities of the BKM. Ibu Asmira beamed as she led the children in a song to start the proceedings, and sat with a wide grin and puffed chest as the government officials presented each child with their gift. The joy of the act of giving was evident; she was animated, touched by the scene. Her manifest satisfaction with her work was in contrast to Ibu Citra, who had attended the ceremony in the opening paragraph. Ibu Citra did not interact with the recipients, and left the scene early. She explained later that she joined only as a favour to the *Kepling* (*kepala lingkungan*), and within a year, she had left the program. We met both women several times, and rather than a one-off expression of joy or preoccupation, the scenes are indicative of more stable dispositions.

The comparison of Ibu Asmira’s and Ibu Citra’s responses to similar scenes helps to further unpack why some people become and remain BKM members, and in doing so reveal the mechanism through which the *jiwa* aligns the self to one’s nature. This is not a matter of

conscious reflection (as per Foucault's aesthetics of self), but of being attentive to affective pulls (more in line with Moore's (2011) extension of Foucault). These affective pulls, the signals to the self, arise from the *hati*. Returning to Ibu Rosa's quote above, she says that it was due to the compassion in her *hati* that she was moved so much that she could not sleep; the *hati* enabled her to feel the call of the soul (*terpanggilan jiwa*). I interpret my observations of Ibu Asmira as an instance in which the *hati* evoked joy and satisfaction from 'doing good'. Other BKM members evidently felt satisfaction through other aspects of their work. For example Pak Anto emphasised the importance of being useful to other people; Pak Alrasyad was animated by doing things efficiently and according to the rules. The gendered dynamics of these differences is ripe for unpacking (but unfortunately outside the scope of this paper). The point is that despite the variations, affective responses were critical for individuals to identify the activities of the BKM as a fit for them.

BKM members sometimes used *hati* in a similar way to *jiwa*, saying for example that they were called (*terpanggil*) by the *hati*. The *hati* has a different function in conceptions of personhood, however. BKM members referred to the *hati* as that which affected them, that moved them when they saw poverty, and also that they sought to satisfy with their good work. For example Ibu Muslimah (BKM coordinator) explained her commitment by recounting a discussion she had with her friend:

My friend asked, "why do you want to go to the BKM everyday, every Monday you have a meeting until night, why go"? It is not [pause], it is my *hati*, my *hati* which makes me happy... I am also amazed, why I want to do it, but I have to. It seems like an action [interrupted]

Ibu Utari (BKM member): The *hati* is feeling happy, right!

Whereas the *jiwa* represents one's calling, the *hati* aligns the individual to this calling by ensuring that they are affected in appropriate ways. The *hati* brings happiness to acts that are aligned with the *jiwa*. To be called by the heart, or be responsive to it, enables one to respond to the *jiwa*.

Hati is the seat of emotion in Indonesia: a word that also means liver (Boellstorff and Lindquist 2004). I translate *hati* as heart (see also Rudnyckyj 2011; Munsoor 2015; Simon 2009) as it captures more accurately the figurative meaning in English, the organ that is moved or moves us. My heart beats faster, my heart sinks—these are somatic responses that I

feel in my chest.¹⁴ According to Ibu Muslimah, the *hati* does more than respond to experiences, it also demands actions that will satisfy it. She is amazed why she wants to work hard, but she *has* to. This could be interpreted as an inner compulsion, but is better described as an animation, as the *hati* can also be a source of energy. Later in the interview Ibu Muslimah explained that she was able to undertake the BKM trainings during Ramadan from morning to evening without tiring because her *hati* made her happy. The *hati* affects those with *berjiwa sosial* in particular ways so that they are satisfied by social work, and energised to engage in it.

I interpret the *hati* as a surface where the external realm interfaces with the inner realm. The *jiwa* belongs to the inner realm, representing one's authentic self that is satisfied through its engagement with the external realm. The *hati* mediates this engagement by producing the emotional and affective responses that align the conscious self to the *jiwa*. The importance of the external realm is in providing the experiences and relations that affect the *hati* and thereby the opportunities for the actualisation of self. This offers a different conception of personhood from other parts of Indonesia (Simon 2009; Geertz 1984) in which the external reality (*lahir*¹⁵) is distinct from the internal, felt reality (*batin*). In West Sumatra personhood is achieved when the boundaries 'parts of the self that are individual—the *paribadi*—and those that are constituted in confluence with others' are maintained (Simon 2014, 128). In Java, the *batin* and *lahir* are considered 'independent realms of being...to be put in order' (Geertz 1984, 127). I argue that in Medan, the external realm is something to be responded to in accordance with one's inner being, which thereby enables the actualisation of potential authentic ways of being.

The *hati* thereby has distinctively different features to the *ati* of the Minangkabau people. Simon (2009, 265) translates the *ati* as the emotional heart, 'in which there exist those things that people truly feel, no matter what they may express outwardly, and their true intentions, no matter how they actually behave'. The *ati* is connected to the *paribadi* and the 'attributes and behaviors that adhere to the individual person and should be kept apart from those parts of one's self that integrate with others' (2009, 264). Simon does not observe (or at any rate

¹⁴ Where Indonesian speakers physically feel emotions is an interesting question, but one beyond the scope of this paper.

¹⁵ I use the Indonesian spelling of *lahir*. Geertz (1984) uses *lair* as the Javanese spelling in the original text

mention) the importance of the *ati* in enabling one to recognise and fulfil one's authentic self. If anything, there is a disavowal of the validity of a self acting authentically in society. The *hati* in Medan, in contrast, is the means through which one responds to the *jiwa* in order to achieve a form of self-realization. The *hati* therefore *should* animate behaviour.

There are limits, however, and sometimes the *hati* needs to be 'cooled' if it becomes too 'hot'. This understanding of the *hati* as needing to be managed informs contemporary projects of self-improvement in Indonesia. Hoesterey (2015) locates Islamic concepts of the heart in a middle-class project of 'aspirational piety that emphasizes the process of becoming one's true self' (2015, 4). His ethnography of the Aa Gym, a *tele-dai*, and his program of *Manajemen Qolbu*, (heart management) outlines the significance of *qolbu*:

In Sufi psychology the heart is a moral organ, and the cultivation of a pure heart (*qolbun salim...*) is integral to the ethical pursuit to purify the self... The cultivation of a soft and pure heart is necessary for the word of God to enter one's consciousness and transform one's moral subjectivity (2015, 3)

The objective of an inner transformation through the heart is also found in the 'Emotional and Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) training that Rudnyckyj (2011; 2014) argues has been used to inculcate a work ethic among workers in a steel factory. Training includes *membuka hati* (opening the heart), in which people enable themselves to be moved spiritually and submit fully to Islam. In both cases the emphasis is on the management of the heart, the control of desires and self-interest. The respondents of both Hoesterey (2015) and Rudnyckyj (2011) use the Indonesian term *hati* to explain these processes of self-cultivation and transformation.

The transformation and management of the *hati* are not absent in my empirical material. For example, Pak Anto talks about '*perang batin, perang hati*' (the inner battle, the battle in the heart) and the need to overcome the desire to pursue his own self-interest over others. BKM narratives reveal further shades of grey. Although Ibu Muslimah's *jiwa* was always disposed towards helping others, she said that her *hati* was forged (*tempu*) through her years of being a *kader* (cadre, women volunteers in state welfare programs). The unanswered question for her remains, however, why not all *kaders* wanted to become BKM members, and why she gains satisfaction from her work while others find it a burden. Pak Adnan says that his *jiwa* was already cultivated to do social work, but later describes how recruiting new BKM members is

difficult, because ‘we have to *memupuk* [fertilise] the volunteer feeling’. These accounts suggest that a pedagogical project can encourage others to be moved in ways conducive to the program. The *hati* may be individual (not unique), but it can still be cultivated and managed.

Discussions of the forging or cultivation of the *jiwa* and *hati*, were, as seen above, usually tempered by reiterating the longevity of one’s own dispositions towards social work, and in any case reflected a minor theme. For the most part, in Medan in relation to the PNPM, the *hati* is less an object of transformation or something to be managed, but rather is something to which one responds to actualise a possible and authentic way of being. The objective of engaging in social activities through the PNPM is not to become more spiritual, nor even in most cases, more moral. Rather, it is the means through which satisfaction is achieved. The difference in the ways BKM members in Medan use *hati* compared to the followers of Aa Gym (Simon 2014) or the steelworkers undertaking ESQ (Rudnyckij 2011), may indicate the ways that Islamic concepts of the *qalb* (Munsoor 2015) are inflecting existing understandings of the *hati*. This is not an inconsequential finding, as it indicates the growing influence of Islamic revivalism for conceptualisations of personhood in Indonesia.

My main purpose in highlighting these differences is not to reject the interpretation that BKM members are ‘governed by affect’ (Rudnyckij 2011), or that their sentiments are not mobilised to create ‘ethical subjects’ that perform the caring labour of the state (Muehlebach 2011). At the same time, explicit focus on these processes overlooks questions raised by an alternative reading of how development subjects are constituted. I return to the questions that BKM members had when asked about their motivations. Why is it that *they* responded to the invitation to become volunteers? Why are *they* moved so much by poverty when others are not? Why is it that *they* gain satisfaction from work that is difficult, entails long hours, and which garners complaints as often as gratitude? Their response is that they are predisposed to such action, that social activity is aligned with their *jiwa*, their nature and their inner being. The *jiwa* is not to be explained, nor is it to be kept internal, rather it is to be enacted through engagements with the social world mediated by the *hati*. It is these enactments and engagements which provide the affective and emotive resources that help one find and achieve satisfaction in one’s life.

Conclusion

In choosing to take seriously the volunteers' own explanations and self-representations of why they joined the BKM, I am not denying that there are other motivations. Unlike in other similar programs, including the PNPM in villages and other cities in Indonesia, the economic and political benefits of participating were relatively slim. The desire to satisfy their *jiwa* through good work was not, however, the only motivating force. Some BKM members said that they now have better relations with government officials and have become more well-known in the area. These relations have helped grow some businesses, such as Ibu Hanum's laundry. Studies often point to benefits accrued through community development work as being the *real reason* for participation, disregarding self-representations as mere deception. Ethnographic accounts of volunteers in the Global South in contrast highlight the complexity of motivations, finding that personal satisfaction is critical (Crewe and Harrison 1998; Russell and Vidler 2000) even as "material reward through stipends, sitting fees, and access to resources is also important" (Boesten et al. 2011, 54). BKM members most often describe such outcomes as benefits, rather than motivations, keeping to the script of having a *jiwa sosial* outlined above. Not *all* BKM members described their involvement using this script (although they were a majority in our small sample); I have necessarily been selective in the material I have presented. I argue that the pervasiveness of this script demands that it nonetheless be taken seriously, particularly as it is in contrast to dominant interpretations that it is material and political incentives that drive participation.

The question I raised at the beginning of this article was: how does a national will to improve that circulates as discourse and affect become a personal project tied to self-imaginings in which individuals become 'developers'? An answer based on the theories of personhood of the BKM members suggests that the will is activated, or animated, when a person is given opportunities to engage in social activity that is aligned with, or fits, an individual's *jiwa*. An individual is predisposed to social activity, or occupying the position of 'developer', due to the characteristics of the *jiwa*, best described as an externally-given self, or one's nature. An individual is alerted to the possibilities to actualise a possible self aligned with one's *jiwa* from the affective signals transmitted from the *hati*: the seat of emotion. The *hati* animates the individual so that they gain satisfaction from their work without feeling burdened. This cultural understanding of personhood attunes people to the signals of the *hati*, enabling them to locate their 'nature' or possible selves in ways that are personal, but not unique. The self is

nonetheless a relational self, its possibilities shaped by the socio-cultural context and one's positioning within it.

I am therefore not suggesting that BKM members respond to the *jiwa* in a manner that disregards the relationality of personhood. Rather I am interested in how the *cultural* conception of personhood enables or forecloses certain forms of agency in relation to the program. While BKM members are animated by the particular techniques of the development program, they retain self-authority over their narrative. There are two possible interpretations of this. First, *jiwa* and *hati* as cultural concepts enable the recruitment of volunteers by the state. Being attentive to the *hati* is a technology of self, a means of transformation, recruiting individuals to self-govern in ways commensurate with the objectives of the state. A second interpretation is that the state provides opportunities for certain forms of becoming to which people understand themselves as already predisposed. The possible forms are culturally-recognised ways of being, with the state an important (although not the only) author of their production. The self-understanding of this pre-disposition is a form of distinction from others (who lack a *jiwa sosial*), while also a conceptual tool in negotiations with significant others (husbands, friends, authority figures) that helps them to expand the socially-recognised subject positions that they occupy. This second interpretation, not mutually exclusive with the first, reframes development as a site for the actualisation and enactment of latent selves, offering a counter to the disproportionate emphasis on development's disciplining effects.

Such an analysis based on the theories of personhood of respondents should, I argue, sit alongside analysis based on Western philosophical foundations. I am not arguing that we take at face value the ways interlocutors understand the process of their 'becoming' without making use of these latter analytical tools. At the same time, it is arrogant to suggest that anthropologists' interpretations should take precedence over those of our informants, and more so to silence their own theories of personhood in order to develop acceptable (read critical and sceptical) academic accounts. Such ignorance and silences are also a missed opportunity to open ourselves up to new questions. This includes the critical question as to why some people respond to state efforts to mobilize and constitute subjects for development, while the majority do not. Attention to individual (but that is not to say asocial) responses that result in differential recruitment can add depth to our understanding of the processes of personhood in sites of development.

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