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UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA
DE MURCIA

ESCUELA INTERNACIONAL DE DOCTORADO
Programa de Doctorado Ciencias Sociales

Chinese *Benteng* Women's Participation in Local
Development Affairs in Indonesia: Appropriate means for
struggle and a pathway to claim citizen' right?

Autor:

Vinny Flaviana Hyunanda

Directores:

Dr. D. Jose Palacios Ramirez

Dr. D. Antonio Aledo Tur

Murcia, Septiembre de 2021



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AUTORIZACIÓN DE LO/S DIRECTOR/ES DE LA TESIS PARA SU PRESENTACIÓN

El Dr. D. Jose Palacios Ramirez y el Dr. D. Antonio Aledo Tur como Directores de la Tesis Doctoral titulada “Chinese Benteng Women’s Participation in Local Development Affairs in Indonesia: Appropriate means for struggle and a pathway to claim citizen’s right?” realizada por D. Vinny Flaviana Hyunanda en el Departamento de Doctorado de Ciencias Sociales, **autoriza su presentación a trámite** dado que reúne las condiciones necesarias para su defensa.

Lo que firmo, para dar cumplimiento al Real Decreto 99/2011, 1393/2007, 56/2005 Y 778/98, en Murcia a 30 de Septiembre de 2021

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“Expecting voluntary work from poor women who do not have any time to spare is a form of patriarchal exploitation that has been institutionalized and naturalized within the state’s development framework”
(Sharma 2008, p.57)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AMAN	<i>Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara</i> (Indigenous People Alliance of the Archipelago)
ATM	Automated Transaction Machine
AusAID	Australian Aid
BAPERKI	<i>Badan Permusjawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia</i> (Consultative Council for Indonesian Citizenship)
BAPPENAS	<i>Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional</i> (National Development Planning Agency)
BCA	Bank Central Asia
BNI	<i>Bank Negara Indonesia</i> (Indonesian National Bank)
BPJS	<i>Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial</i> (Social Security Administrator for Health)
BPS	<i>Badan Pusat Statistik</i> (National Statistic Agency)
CB	Capacity Building
CDD	Community Driven Development
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DVD	Digital Video Disk
EO	Executing Organization
FMCG	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
FWMCB	<i>Forum Warga Miskin Cina Benteng</i> (Poor Chinese <i>Benteng</i> People's Forum)
GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross Development Product
Gerwani	<i>Gerakan Wanita Indonesia</i> (Indonesia's Women Movement)
GoI	Government of Indonesia
HCS	Holland Chinese School
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency syndrome
IDR	Indonesian Rupiah

IFC	International Financial Cooperation
IILS	International Institute for Labour Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISEAS	Institute of South East Asian Studies
Jabodetabek	Jakarta Bogor Depok Tangerang Bekasi
JMC	Joint Management Committee
JSDF	Japan Social Development Fund
KB	<i>Keluarga Berencana</i> (Family Planning)
KRL	<i>Kereta Rel Listrik</i> (Electric Rail Train)
KTP	<i>Kartu Tanda Penduduk</i> (Identity Card)
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transexual
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAD	<i>Musyawarah Antar Desa</i> (Inter Village Meeting)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOB	Mail Order Bride
MP	Managing Partner
MPR	<i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat</i> (People's Consultative Assembly)
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PAN	<i>Partai Amanat Nasional</i> (National Mandate Party)
PDI-P	<i>Partai Demokrasi Perjuangan Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Democratic Party Struggle)
PDO	Project Development Objective
PEKKA	<i>Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga</i> (Empowerment of Women Head of Household)
Perhimpunan INTI	<i>Perhimpunan Indonesia Keturunan Tionghoa</i> (Association of Indonesians of Chinese Descent)
PfGR	Partnership for Governance Reform
PKH	<i>Program Keluarga Harapan</i> (Family Hope Program)
PKK	<i>Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga</i> (Family's Welfare Empowerment)
PMKS	<i>Penyandang Masalah Kesejahteraan Sosial</i> (bearer of social welfare problem)

PNPM	<i>Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat</i> (National Program for Community Empowerment)
PP	<i>Peraturan Pemerintah</i> (Government Regulation)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSF	Program Support Facility
PSMTI	<i>Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia</i> (Chinese Indonesian Social Clan Association)
RASTRA	<i>Beras Sejahtera</i> (Rice for the poor)
REPELITA	<i>Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun</i> (Five-year development plan)
ROSCA	Rotating Credit and Saving Association
RPJMN	<i>Rencana Jangka Panjang Menengah Nasional</i> (Mid Term national development plan)
RT	<i>Rukun Tangga</i> (neighborhood wards)
RW	<i>Rukun Warga</i> (hamlets)
SARA	<i>Suku, Agama, Ras, Antar golongan</i> (Ethnicity, Religion, Race and Intergroups)
SBKRI	<i>Surat Bukti Kewarganegaraan Republik Indonesia</i> (Indonesian citizenship proof document)
SC	Schedule Castes
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self Help Group
SHIA	Soekarno Hatta International Airport
ST	Schedule Tribes
THHK	Tiong Hoa Hwe Kian
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UN-REDD	United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programs
USAID	United States Aid
USD	United States Dollar
VIP	Very Important Personnel
VOC	<i>Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie</i>

	(United East Indies Company)
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association
WID	Women in Development
WPR	What's the Problem Represented to be
WRDC	Women Resource and Development Centre

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I - INTRODUCTION

I - INTRODUCTION

“And like the rotation of the earth which we cannot observe clearly as long as we are on the earth, the word “Development” has an extraordinary power to deceive and is rarely grasped by the consciousness of the millions of human beings in the century who live with it.”

(Heryanto, 1988)

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

It had been more than two decades passing by aftermath the devastating Asia’s Financial Crisis in 1997, subsequently followed by Suharto’s step down from his presidential throne which he occupied for more than three decades. The financial turmoil turned to a political disaster furthermore has led to massive looting that severely impacted Indonesians of Chinese descendant, including unresolved mystery of the most atrocious sexual violation against women and covert killings of students and democracy activists in this country. Since then, precisely aftermath May 1998, which publicly known as “*Reformasi*”¹, Indonesia underwent political reform that eventually corresponded positively to its macroeconomic growth. Twenty years later, in 2018, Indonesia captured worldwide attention because it has successfully hosted two internationally renowned events, namely the Asian Games 2018 – the most prestigious sport events in Asia – conducted in Jakarta and Palembang; and the IMF/World Bank Annual Meeting 2018 in Bali. Particularly in the IMF/World Bank Annual Meeting, this event has significantly elevated Indonesia’s credibility and international prestige in the global economic powerplay as one of the nations with promising growth and openness. However, the narrative about poverty and inequality, including increasing racial tension, religious conservatism, and sexual violation against women are superseded by friendly climate for foreign investment and eventually excessive glorification of the nation’s economic growth. By portraying the image of

¹ *Reformasi* literally translated as “reform” which refers to national political reform towards democracy. This marked by the end of Suharto’s 32 years authoritarian regime.

promising new economic power, as rhetorically promised by President Joko Widodo during his presidential terms, Indonesia has swept the growing inequality in this highly stratified society that historically compounded with religious and racial tension under the carpet of digital economy.

Economic advancement and promising growth of the nation, including the massive pool of middle class, are some significant results of Indonesia's 'development' trajectory that is used as an ideological compass to catch the train of modernity. During the 32-year Suharto-led New Order government, from 1966 to 1998 that was engineered by US-trained Indonesian economists, Suharto conceptualized the nation's development pathways, guided by the famous "REPELITA" or *Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun* (Five-year development plan) that seemingly followed Rostow's growth model to set the stone of Indonesia's journey towards modernization which was backed up by a handful yet powerful capitalist oligarchs which mostly were prominent but discreet Chinese Indonesian tycoons, corrupt bureaucratic political elites and the military, especially the high-rank generals and retirees. By portraying himself as "*Bapak Pembangunan*" (Father of Development), Suharto constructed contemporary Indonesia as a Javanese-style family state – where the father figure holds the highest authoritative form of power – whose public policies were developed to support the vision of the father which ultimately represented the objective of the nation's development plan. Under his regimen, Suharto's visions on development model focused on a number of specific areas, namely: basic needs, that was around food security and housing (REPELITA I in 1969-1974), large-scale infrastructure that mainly focused in Java (REPELITA II in 1974-1979), export-oriented industries, employment creation (REPELITA III in 1979-1984), capital good manufacturing (REPELITA IV in 1984-1989) and public services that comprised of transportation, communication, and education (REPELITA V in 1989-1994). In the name of development, Suharto's New Order regime marched towards the nation's welfare and prosperity at the expenses of the powerless commoners, which include ethnic and religious minority groups, indigenous people, left-affiliated activists and scholars, and many more. For more than three decades in power, the fall of Suharto's regime has led Indonesia to a new chapter, namely democracy era under the monumental narrative of *Reformasi* (political reform) followed by mass-swept decentralization policy which devolved previously centralized political power to the local authorities.

Indonesia is a country with remarkable size, topography and diversity span over 6,000 kilometers. An archipelago comprised of more than 17,000 islands, Indonesia is a home to more than 230 million people from over 300 distinct native ethnic groups and speaking some 700 languages and dialects. Indonesia is also considered as the most decentralized country which comprised of 34 provinces, 511 districts/cities and more than 70,000 villages. Indonesia ranks as the fourth most populous countries in the world, with the largest Muslim believers at nearly about 90 percent of its total population. Despite being one of the post populous countries, Indonesia's population distribution is extremely unequal, where more than 58 percent of the total population concentrated in the island of Java and of that number, about 65 percent live in urban areas².

Picture 1 – Map of Indonesia



Source: Nations Online Project

Aftermath the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, has consistently performed well in terms of ensuring its economic growth at 5-6 percent GDP growth annually³

² Population Data taken from Indonesia's National Statistic Agency Open data and calculated by the author. <https://www.bps.go.id/Subjek/view/id/12#subjekViewTab3|accordion-daftar-subjek1>. Accessed on 20 Jan 2017

³ Data cited from <http://data.worldbank.org/country/indonesia?view=chart>. Accessed on 20 Jan 2017

(The World Bank, 2019). Align with its economic performance, in the past decades, Indonesia has halved its poverty rate from 23.3 percent in 1999 down to 11.2 percent in 2015⁴. Indonesia's constant effort to slash its poverty rate has remarked its most notable achievement by bringing down the poverty rate to 9.4% in March 2019 as noted by The World Bank's Economic Outlook report. The same report also indicates that Indonesia's achievement in the economic dimension has created sizeable portion of the country's middle class, which has significantly multiplied from 7% in 2002 to 23% in 2018. This means that every one of four Indonesians belongs to the middle-class income group. However, The World Bank noted that nearly 30% of Indonesia's population remain prone to economic shocks, regardless numerous poverty alleviation interventions (The World Bank, 2019). This figure has also supported by Indonesia's consistent increase in its Human Development Index (HDI) from 0.523 in 1990 to 0.719 in 2019, which illustrates growth of 37.7 percent⁵. Despite its remarkable achievement in economic growth and poverty reduction, inequality rose significantly. In their report, The World Bank notes that between 2003 and 2010, consumption per person for the richest 10 percent of Indonesians grew at over 6 percent a year; on the contrary for the bottom 40 percent (i.e. the poorest quintile), it grew less than 2 percent per year (The World Bank, 2016a). The disparity in consumption between different income levels has given rise to a sharp increase in Gini coefficient over the past 20 years, from 28.6 in 2000 to 38.2 in 2019⁶.

For two decades, Indonesia has been considered successful in sustaining its macroeconomic achievement. However, benefits of the economic growth do not trickle down to the majority of its population. World Bank data, published in 2016 cites that of 225 million Indonesian population, around 40% of Indonesia's population remain clustered around the national poverty line and earn about IDR 330,776 per person per month, which is less than 1 USD/day. While growing inequality become a public issue, public attention continued to question immediate

⁴ Poverty rate cited from Indonesia's National Statistic Agency Open data. <https://www.bps.go.id/linkTableDinamis/view/id/1219>. Accessed on 20 Jan 2017

⁵ Data cited from http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/IDN.pdf. Accessed on 6 May 2021

⁶ Data cited from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?locations=ID>. Accessed on 6 May 2021

impact on poverty reduction efforts and the government socio-economic policies. In fact, the World Bank noted that pace towards reducing national poverty rate has slowed down; still at 11.22 percent in March 2015, relatively flat compared to 11.25 percent in March 2014 (2015).

The narrative of Indonesia's political reform always depicted as a grand victory against the dictatorial regime engineered by Suharto and his powerful cronies, who benefitted from the political patronage with the dictator himself. Obviously, the *Reformasi* towards democracy is not cost-free; as it lays on unstable ground of unfinished business around complex issues on identity and singular interpretation along the trajectory of nation building project. Since the *Reformasi* era, Indonesia continues to witness widening inequality gap among people from different income groups, despite such narrative of *Reformasi* had created collective expectation of freedom from Suharto's military oppression. Along with the rapid and mass shift towards decentralization, it was initially expected that development would not be centralized anymore and its benefits would spread more evenly to the remote and disadvantaged areas which previously untouched by "development".

For most Indonesians, general understanding about "development" remains evolve around activities to build or to construct something as its literal translation, "*pembangunan*"⁷, particularly in terms of infrastructure projects that are materially visible. Such infrastructure projects are often used to symbolize progress and improvement which is followed by expectation of economic enhancement for its population where "development" operates. In almost every corner of Indonesia that I had visited, "development" emerged as a kind of hope that made people

⁷ According to Heryanto (1988), in Indonesia, "development" is translated as *pembangunan*, which derived from the word "*bangun*" that means to erect, to build, or to construct. The discourse of development as *pembangunan* in Indonesia started in the New Order era (late 1960s-early 1970s), marked with massive infrastructure construction projects to support economic activities. He strongly criticizes the translation of "development" which previously was associate more with the idea of national awakening (*kebangkitan nasional*). This translation has shifted the political orientation of national awakening against colonialism into something more technical, namely "*perkembangan*" or "*pembangunan*". According to Heryanto, Suharto's New Order regime has depoliticized the political term of "*kebangkitan*" by solely emphasizing the physical aspect of such process, namely infrastructure development as the signature of modernity

longing for, to save them from economic misery and backwardness, according to the government label. As long as I remember, back in the 1980s, the idea of “development” has been induced to Indonesian society, through our national education system, as a freeway to modernity, just like numerous images from foreign movies on television. The image of being modern that was depicted on TV was the one with characteristics of metropolitan urban cities like those in America, Japan, Hong Kong or Singapore, where skyscrapers, concrete buildings, airports, bridges, smooth roads and avenues represent the imagination of a modern civilization. Such images were not only projected on the television, but also displayed in the main cover of our schoolbooks that we saw every day. On those schoolbooks, city life was represented as *modern*, depicting an image of a small family with two kids that lives in brick walled house in a gated compound, owning car and frequently travels with airplanes. On the contrary, village life was showed as *modest* and *traditional* where villagers were depicted as farmers with large family size, work in paddy field with water buffalo-pulled cart and live in a bamboo hut with thatched roof. Back then, “development” was projected as the only way to obtain prosperity and welfare through pathway that has been predetermined.

My critical encounter with “development” started to flourish along with my endeavor for higher education in Development Studies with key concentration on international political economy way back in 2008. Such concurrence had activated my curiosity which leads me to deeply question about the “development” itself. Throughout my academic exploration, I began to acquaint myself with a more critical reading about “development” itself that basically rest on postcolonial and post-structural critiques towards hegemonic model of “development” that focus on modernization towards economic enhancement and linear growth orientation. Unfortunately, my critical encounter did not last long as I engaged as practitioner in the development sector in which I participated to maintain such hegemonic discourse. Throughout my professional involvement in one of the largest community empowerment projects in Indonesia, I became so skillful in utilizing various *mandatory* buzzwords such as “participation” and “empowerment” in a professional setting to show how “monitoring results” of the project that I had managed, contributed in achieving the desired “development outcomes”. To comply with this technical perspective, I was trained to think and to act professionally as development bureaucrats through crafting project reports that

should explicitly show how the intervention was attributed in changing the way how people used to live, into the *improved* and *better* habits as we have designed according to the project result framework.

Emerging global evidence shows that severe poverty interweaves with the notion of “social exclusion”, which both concepts share intersecting multidimensional aspect of marginalization. From the bottom 40% of Indonesia’s population, there were significantly large bucket of disadvantaged groups that remain excluded with limited access to basic service provision including limited participation in socioeconomic life. Among those groups – which often times associated with minority population, despite these groups are not necessarily smaller in terms of population size – are those who are continuously denied in the mainstream society on the basis of various grounds such as ethnic background, racial features, religious beliefs, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity and political preference. Therefore, as a result of widening inequality gap that combine with increasing intolerance in Indonesia, these people continue to be in the fringe of the society and remain alienated from the mainstream population that able to access public service and to engage in socioeconomic live in a comfortable way.

The arrival of a new concept, namely “social inclusion”, as a policy prescription that imbued in the preexisting and more popular discourse of “empowerment” which aims to solve “problem” of “social exclusion”, has been very appealing for policy makers to adopt in order to optimize development results. In this context, the more I think about “social inclusion” as a logical solution to include the marginalized people into the hegemonic conception of “development” process; the more I discern that marginalized people are constructed as a category which is continuously problematized and subjectified through a series of corrective mechanisms due to their particular “problem”. Such “problem” can be their *problematic* behavior that drives people away; their *problematic* way of living which provokes negative sentiments towards them; or just simply *problematic* areas in which they live that consequently made them *problematic* communities. My involvement in operationalizing the concept of “social inclusion” in an intervention that was part of the main community empowerment program in Indonesia that spanned over 6 years, has given me an insight how

discourse of “*social inclusion*” was established as a way to redefine what the society call ‘problematic’ others into Indonesian-style ‘normal’ mainstream society.

While actively engaged in nurturing the project, I found myself slowly transformed as an inseparable part of ‘development bureaucrats’, just like what Mosse (2011) has argued in his article. Becoming ‘development bureaucrats’, my attention was oriented into technical and managerial issues that only matter for the interest of the project’s objective, namely how certain inputs would lead to a certain kind of “development” outcomes just as we have designed according to the blueprint or popularly known as “Result Framework”. This part was my main job description, to ensure how the project would achieve its end finalities. However, at the same time, my role has contributed in depoliticizing my knowledge and critical consciousness about the notion of “development” itself. In addition, by working in a prestigious international institution with ambitious goals on poverty alleviation, I somewhat believed that the project where I worked would provide greater impact than the mainstream projects. Most target population of this project was people with certain *problematic* characteristics and conditions who continuously engaged in a constant battle and still strive around their identity, even until today. The project that I involved in, has viewed them as “marginalized people” in a technical way according to the logical thinking of professionals like my colleagues and I as the project developers. From that perspective, the process of constructing “marginalized people” as the target population of our project had involved continuous problematization around their identity along the lines of socioeconomic dimension in order to legitimize our presence as the “benevolent savior” and made them the “beneficiaries” of development project.

Despite I realized that the term “marginalized people” to address the project participants was extremely slippery and context-dependent, this project explicitly depicted them as *problematic* people whom development projects often neglect. For that reason, by engaging with the marginalized group”, I was under the assumption of the universally benevolent intention of “development” project would bring greater benefit for these groups who are seen as lack of “visibility” and “presence” for the mainstream community and lack of “capability” to engage in a meaningful way with their social environment prior to receive “development”. The Government of Indonesia (GoI) frequently describes them as people whom “development” rarely or never “touch”; and by saying that, representation about

them is determined by the development projects that create perception of backwardness and misery. As a result of their “problem”, they are seen as failing to enjoy the “goodness” of prosperity under the umbrella of what modernity offered, through “development” as the only vehicle. Therefore, throughout this thesis, I will incorporate some of my personal narratives as examples on how the dominant “development” paradigm that operates through existing constellation among various powerful actors has deeply entrenched into local system and structure. Guided by Foucauldian (1991) governmentality analysis in which has been vastly applied by many anthropologists of development, I aim to explain how the notion of “social inclusion” as a European-model of policy prescription is deployed, re-organized, and operated as a *voluntary* corrective mechanism to govern the *problematic* population in order to behave and to function according to what they think they ought, which commonly described as *conduct of conduct* (Li, 2007; Rose, 1999a).

Some scholars have distinguished two distinct notions of “development” (Bebbington et al., 2007; Hulme, 2008; Lewis, 2019). The development with big “D” described as a project-based and intentional activity, characterized with tangible output that have little attention to make fundamental change. The other is with small “d”, understood as on-going process that emphasis radical and systemic alternative which seeks different ways of arranging economy, social relationship, and politics. In Indonesia, general understanding of development often refers to the first one, which is simply described and understood as projects with particular intention, which in most cases are related to infrastructure construction. Furthermore, it is also important to note that different social groups in Indonesia face different development experiences, in which led me to reflect that generalizing problems and experiences faced by various groups concerning their encounter with development in their respective particularity is a reckless thing to do. Similarly, this also applied for some types of the “marginalized group” as the *problematic* people that are assembled together by the development agencies as the target beneficiaries, in which their development experiences were homogenized in a single container of what it defines as “social exclusion”. Then this concept of “social exclusion” was translated, understood and disseminated in a homogenous way by universalizing the experience of having “problems”, which can be solved by development through European model of “social inclusion”.

One of many *problematic* identity-based social groups in Indonesia that continuously experience process of *othering* is the Chinese Indonesians. In the past, structural discrimination and active exclusion policies were explicitly targeting the Chinese Indonesians, in such a way that hampered their social life at the community level. Dominant narrative that emphasized on racial issues and socio-economic distinction with the native population through the activation of “*pribumi*”⁸ identity (Tan, 2001) that based on the idea of indigeneity or nativeness, were skillfully manipulated that made the Chinese Indonesians as a number-one target of anger, jealousy, and frustration of the natives. A report issued by Indonesia’s National Human Rights Commission (2016) points out that ethnic Chinese Indonesian is one of several minority groups that continued to be discriminated against based on their racial identity. Such discrimination was also associated with dominant role of Chinese-descendant community in Indonesia that Kwartanada (2012) referred as the “middleman minority”. Kwartanada then highlights that their “middleman minority” role in East Indies colonial society often perceived as seeking protection from the ruler. Consequently, this was perceived that their loyalty is being questioned and it is continuously repeated overtime. Stereotyped as rich and exclusive community, Chinese Indonesians are not only subjected by local gangsters for extortion practice, but also from the corrupt bureaucrats that exploit them for their own advantage. They also always be ‘the scapegoat’ during any political turmoil in the country because of deeply entrenched anti-Chinese sentiment that was ingrained in Indonesian society. This anti-Chinese sentiment was culminated in May 1998, where socio-political upheaval occurred in many major cities throughout the country which caused severe damages to their houses and business establishments. Those damages included massive loot and burnt properties that owned by Chinese Indonesians, also sexual violation towards a number of women, presumably of Chinese descendants (Anggraeni, 2017; Budianta, 2000; Heryanto, 1999; Purdey, 2006; Siegel, 1998; Tan, 1991; Tim Relawan untuk Kemanusiaan, 1999; Winarnita, 2011). Until now, the memory of May 1998 Riot marked the paramount of anti-Chinese

⁸ Literally translated as “son of the soil”. This term is generally used to describe Indonesian native which contrast with the term *non-pribumi* that exclusively used to refer to Indonesians of Chinese descents.

violence that have been occurred since 1740, during the colonial regime. Although many have claimed that discrimination against Indonesian Chinese has stopped since the 1998 *Reformasi* due to the changing landscape of current political climate, however the fragments of anti-Chinese sentiment continue to exist until now as a constant reminder⁹.

As I will explain in a lengthy manner in Chapter 2, the dominant representation of Chinese Indonesians as economically powerful minority group is often treated as single reality and truth. This in turn has silenced and has neglected other reality, which is the large portion of Chinese Indonesian population that are economically not as powerful as the dominant stereotype. There are parts of Chinese descendant population in Indonesia's rural and urban areas that remain disconnected from the country's economic growth, including being denied to obtain full rights as citizens and experience discrimination because they are Chinese descendants. For instance, rough realities experience by poor Indonesian Chinese in West Kalimantan, forced them to engage in human trafficking business as mail-order-bride (MOB)¹⁰. Many poor families have to marry off their young daughters, with the age between 18 to 22 years old, as Mail Order Brides (MOBs) to Hong Kong, China and Taiwan. This was believed as the only way out from their severe poverty, which was worse than families from other ethnic groups in the same area (Raymond et al., 2002). Besides Chinese Singkawang¹¹ (Rini, 2010), the Chinese *Benteng* community is one of Chinese Indonesian sub-groups that often stigmatized, particularly because of their poverty and physical appearance that do not confirm the mainstream stereotype. Despite living in poverty, they remain to be an easy target by petty bureaucrats and local gangs in illegal taxing operation that usually termed as 'security fee' to maintain their 'safety' or 'administration fee' to get their legal documents.

⁹ Further reference, see: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/ethnic-chinese-still-grapple-with-discrimination-despite-generations-in-indonesia/2017/03/17/4abba780-0444-11e7-ad5b-d22680e18d10_story.html?utm_term=.3ade66883f85

¹⁰ See <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/10/10/ri-warns-of-mail-order-bride-scheme.html>

¹¹ One area in West Kalimantan

My personal experience as urban middle class Chinese Indonesian development practitioner that mostly work in the rural setting, often gave me certain level of discomfort, especially when I had to travel to visit the project location and interact with villagers who rarely share the same ethnical background with me. When I travelled to rural areas or villages, it was quite often that I was being asked with suspicion where I came from. As I said I came from the capital city, it was quite often disbelieved them and I was further questioned – as if I was being interrogated – until the point that they concluded I am Indonesian of Chinese descent. In development sector, such discomfort made me even more marginalized as I often teased by some colleagues that ‘my job does not fit my physical features’ or vice versa. Regularly I got ridicule commentary, despite I did not take personally, like I am too “fair-skinned” for doing many outdoor activities in the village; because walking by foot from house to house, visit paddy field, or go into the forest might “endarken” my skin tone. Those commentaries – despite in a joking manner – implicitly refer to the common stereotype labeled to Indonesians of Chinese descent that are wealthy which does not make me fit this type of job. I am not alone and some colleagues of the same ethnicity background, fellow Chinese Indonesians, that work in development sector also face similar experience. Due to such representation as non-poor community, Chinese Indonesians are often scrap out from the list of benefactors of government social welfare programs.

This thesis specifically discusses about Chinese *Benteng* people which often described as “the opposite” of common depiction of regular “normalized” Chinese Indonesians. Generally, the Chinese *Benteng* people are constantly represented through the mainstream stereotyping lens which in turn labels them with derogatory representation, namely “black Chinese” and “poor Chinese”. Such representation maintained by not only the mainstream media – especially the television – but also through verbal and informal testimonies about them. Consequently, such representation become disparaging stereotypes that worsen their condition. A number of works (Leo, 2018; Santosa, 2012; Wibisono et al., 2018) have attempted to show their cultural richness that is believed as product of natural assimilation between the early Chinese migrants and native community in which become an important part of Tangerang’s history, the area where the field work was conducted. Some works also praise that the Chinese *Benteng* community is the ideal type of assimilation that should have been naturally emerged among

communities with various cultural background (Banten, Sundanese and Betawi) without imposing and engineering attempt to enforced assimilation. Some even suggest that the existence of Chinese *Benteng* people could be used as 'prototype' of racial-related conflict resolution model (Asgart, 2006).

For the past couple of years, written works that focus on Chinese *Benteng* people started to gradually emerge. Most of these emerging works mainly elaborate their cultural uniqueness such as acculturation model, rituals and religious practices, or house architectural style. Besides that, some resourceful works (Fuad, 2012; Go, 2008; Purwanto, 2012) also explored their modest style of living, which mainly are small traders and farmers, that often are theorized to contribute to their economic deprivation. Among those works, pieces that focus on discussing Chinese *Benteng* women are almost inexistent. After the *Reformasi*, there have been various attempts to portray Indonesian Chinese community through static and folkloric characterization such as building Indonesian Chinese museum, excessive celebration and festivals which somehow ignore the dynamic changes experienced by the community itself. Therefore, through this thesis, I attempt to propose a refined point of view of Indonesian Chinese *Benteng* representation that evolves overtime, whether preserve or perhaps recreate their reality.

My experiences working in development projects have introduced me to the concept of "social inclusion", more as policy prescription and less as analytical lens. I should admit that my earlier encounter with *social inclusion* started from a very weak conceptual foundation due to its novelty that remains foreign in Indonesia's development policy landscape, even until now. It was a moment of sudden 'revelation' when a high-level vice minister mentioned about *social inclusion* as a better term to overcome poverty experienced by those who are 'rejected', rather than just the "empowerment" per se which has been the magic bullet for any development projects involving the community. The vice minister argued that while most projects often failed to reach the 'rejected' and 'discriminated' people because of various reasons, "social inclusion" has the potential to better reach the 'rejected' and 'discriminated' others through including them in projects so they would enjoy the benefit of it. In this very narrow context, the concept of "social inclusion" then often understood mere as a decorative element to complement the mainstream community empowerment project in order to tap into the *problematic*

others. Nonetheless, it is simply used as a reverse policy instrument to eliminate “problem” of social exclusion faced by the marginalized people.

“Social inclusion” is still a foreign concept to Indonesia in which is literally translated as it is, without complex process of unpacking, interrogation, contestation and analysis. The discussion about “social inclusion” almost always started from experience of discrimination combined with negative stereotype which are associated as a simple equation and narrow version of social exclusion. This narrow explanation therefore leads to an understanding that activities with discriminated and negatively stereotyped individuals/groups are automatically seen as “social inclusion” effort to include them in. Lack of theoretical debate and contestation about “social inclusion” and “social exclusion” particularly in Indonesia resulted in a conceptual simplification that create simplistic duality on *exclusion/inclusion*. By reflecting on such simplification, I would interpret “social inclusion” – as implemented by many projects that target discriminated communities – as a particular way to govern the “problematic” others in a way that it produces neoliberal subjects that are autonomous, self-reproduced, and self-governed that can benefit from Development projects (Dean, 1996, 1999; Lemke, 2002, 2019; Ong et al., 1996; Rose, 1999a; Triantafillou and Nielsen, 2001). Rather than changing the way in which development is operated, either as a discourse or as a project, “social inclusion” as a policy prescription is simplified into an effort to technically and materially alters the excluded others, which are often seen as *problematic* people/communities by the mainstream. Without critical debate and contestation, “social inclusion” is operated through the creation of a new subject, by educating the excluded others about how *problematic* they are and how to improve themselves by employing one of development’s weapons, namely empowerment. Under Foucault’s idea of governmentality, this is what he calls a subjection process (Cruikshank, 2011; Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983; Foucault, 1983, 1990, 1997; Lemke, 2019) through following the logic of empowerment as a path to socially improve and capacitate oneself to take advantage and benefit from Development projects that are formulated based on market-based ideology.

My familiarity with “social inclusion” started in a project I administered, which targeted socially and economically disadvantaged communities across Indonesia to engage themselves in a productive way. Despite not all of them were extremely poor, majority of the project beneficiaries lived with inadequate irregular

income that led to difficulties in accessing basic services provided by the state such as basic education, healthcare, adequate housing, clean water and electricity, or simply legal registration. Some of them also lived in hard-to-reach areas that are geographically isolated; some others faced constant discrimination and negatively stereotyped base on their identity and social status. Beside discriminated, some groups are also labelled negatively and derogatorily from the community where they live, due to various causes, including religion, occupations, political affiliation, sexual identity, ethnic background and so on. It is often the case that they also formed minority populations. As mentioned above, one of the minority populations that often face discrimination, negative and derogatory labeling, or mockery is Indonesians of Chinese descents, that always been constructed as “the Other” due to their lack of compatibility to Indonesian culture, especially during the Suharto’s government.

Chinese Indonesians are always represented as the antithesis of what Indonesian native. Some stereotypes like “*pasti kaya*” (must be rich), “*pelit*” (stingy), “*pengkhianat*” (traitor), “*eksklusif*” (exclusive) in addition to various physical marking like *mata sipit* (slanted eye) and *kulit putih* (fair skinned) that are often used to described Chinese Indonesian. Experts on Chinese Indonesians (Chirot and Reid, 1997; Coppel, 2002; Reid, 2010; Skinner, 1996; Suryadinata, 1986) wrote that discriminatory state-engineered policies and stigmatization were culminated during the New Order regime. Despite state discriminatory policies have been abolished once the regime collapsed; but in many cases, practices of discrimination remain in many places in Indonesia. As a result of dominant narrative that represented Chinese Indonesians with particular images, often imbued with generalizing stereotypes, they remain treated unfavorably, particularly by the government officials and viewed as target of illegal taxing that often called “under the table payment”. It is not rare that Chinese Indonesians have to pay more expensive fees, often much higher than the publish rate, when dealing with government officials on various issues particularly administrative registration. Intended or unintended discrimination towards the Chinese Indonesians is like “Elephant in the room” that no one wanted to talk about until a point that it became normal – that Chinese Indonesians had to bribe to get most needed services. Therefore, this further aggravates the quality of public service and creates lucrative opportunities for *calo* (means: brokers and middleman) to deal and navigate the

government system. Due to such practice, many Chinese Indonesians prefer to get private service such as education and healthcare to avoid such hassles, despite the cost are way more expensive than the public system.

My interest to study Chinese *Benteng* people stems from a growing curiosity about marginalized group where they are considered as one of such population. For years, stories about them always appear in television every Chinese New Year exposing their misery and intergenerational poverty for public consumption. These community often targeted as the beneficiary population of many companies' CSR events, donating food or providing onetime off health check – assuming they are so poor so cannot afford to buy food and healthcare. Repeatedly, representation about them always portray their negative image that exoticize to their poverty in combination with racist stereotype about them. Furthermore, my professional engagement in government-sponsored community development program has made me question why disadvantaged Chinese Indonesians were rarely be part of government program, whether it was social safety net or various subsidies. Just because the image that stereotyped Chinese Indonesians are wealthier than the native, such representation is reproduced over generations which gradually accepted as the normalized reality. In addition to that, being Chinese Indonesians worked in a government program was rather rare which sometimes led me to feel that I was subject of othering and exoticization in the project. This is also one of my underlying questions whether disadvantaged Chinese Indonesians communities across the countries are being approached to benefit from government programs, like the one I worked for, or just simply being ignored because the assumption that these groups do not require any public support.

1.2. LOCATING ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Growing up witnessing endless massive construction projects that gradually change the face of Jakarta has normalized my view about the idea of development as the only pathway to progress and improvement. For majority of Indonesian, development is generally equated with the modern image of a city represented by skyscrapers and highways. The image of modern city also inaugurated by naming Jakarta as Indonesia's "metropolitan capital" with its glamorous image, but at the

same time creating common perception of what “backwards” is, namely *kampung*¹² – a kind of urban village area where I grew up. I was raised in a highly populated sub-urban settlements near to one of the largest bazaars or wet market in the border between eastern and southern part of Jakarta. Back in the colonial times, people used to call this area *Meester Cornelis*, following the name of its original landowner, Mr. Cornelis. Native residents called this area *Mester* by adjusting foreign Dutch pronunciation with the local dialect. This area was also well-known as military-own residential areas with mixed population, including the non-Muslim natives like Ambonese, Menadonese, and Timorese, Chinese and also Arab communities (Cribb, 2008: 12). Following the Japanese occupation and until now, this area is called Jatinegara; but the native residents, including my mother and her side of the family that also grew up in the same house since the 1950s, they still refer this area with its old name – *Mester*.

Despite growing up the urban *kampung* area, which for many people it is often equated with the antithesis of modern settlement area marked with houses that are neatly arranged, I am privileged enough to be able to enjoy uninterrupted education, comfortable access to healthcare, and greater support to pursue my interest. Growing up in the 1980s-1990s era, I witnessed Jakarta steadily metamorphosed into one of the glamorous cities in the region. In that decade, this city transformed its façade through mushrooming skyscrapers that erected along Jalan Thamrin¹³ continued to Jalan Sudirman as the home of Jakarta’s most prestigious financial and business districts. Connected to Jalan Gatot Subroto, this area often called as Jakarta’s “Golden Triangle”, where many international companies establish their representative offices there, including foreign banks and private insurance companies, FMCG¹⁴ companies, international hotel chains,

¹² Crib (2008) describes *kampungs* as “cluttered areas of less permanent housing away from the main streets, tucked behind the solid commercial and residential buildings of Batavia and Weltevreden” (p.12). In their book, Colombijn and Côté (2014) mention that “urban reformers, like H.F. Tillema, attributed the ‘backward’ conditions of the urban kampong to the attitudes, values and practices their uneducated and illiterate inhabitants brought with them from their traditional rural villages.” (p. 6)

¹³ *Jalan* means street or avenue. Jalan Thamrin is one of the most prominent main avenues in Jakarta, known as central business district. Jalan Thamrin is connected with Jalan Sudirman as its continuation. Together this area often referred as Golden triangle.

¹⁴ Fast Moving Consumer Goods

branded retails, and many more. During that time, new landmarks have been established as a sign of modern civilizations run by capitalist development, including the very first McDonalds that opened its outlet in Jalan Thamrin in 1991 and the first Japanese department store chain called Sogo that established its business operation in Plaza Indonesia, about a kilometer from the flagship McDonalds' restaurant. For more than a decade, I continuously witnessed Jakarta's uplifted veneer which mirroring its neighbors, city-states Singapore and Hong Kong. However, such modernization game is not cost-free, as it is operated at the cost bear by the most disadvantaged segment of the society. For that, it dismantles local neighborhoods, which magically transformed into apartments, hotels, shopping malls, and offices towers; and pushes low-income household to the outskirts of this metropolitan city. In the new modern-look Jakarta, local cultures and the long-time settlers were fringed, in particular those that pushed away due to corrosive capitalist system that continuously deteriorate their existence, including their culture and their way of living. They were pushed outward to Jakarta's fringe, where land was still sparsely populated and relatively cheap, in order to continue or to rebuilt their life and expanding their family.

Massive development in Jakarta was not followed by the same process in its neighboring areas, such as Tangerang (western border), Bekasi (eastern border), Bogor and Depok (southern border) which were designed as satellite peripheral cities to support Jakarta's metropolitan center. Unlike Bogor and Depok that are majority inhabited by native populations – Sundanese and Betawi people respectively – Tangerang area which shares its eastern border with West Jakarta administrative region is inhabited by great number of *peranakan*¹⁵ Chinese-Indonesians that are also known as one of the earliest Chinese settlers that arrive in pre-colonial archipelagic Indonesia. Among various sub-groups of *peranakan* Chinese-Indonesian of Tangerang, Chinese *Benteng* people are one of the well-known one. Generally, Chinese *Benteng* are also widely used to refer to other *peranakan* Chinese-Indonesian groups that historically reside in rural area of Tangerang, despite the Chinese *Benteng* people themselves sometimes refuse to be

¹⁵ *Peranakan* literally means womb. But it is also termed as 'local born' people which resulted from a mixed union between native and non-native person. The term *Peranakan* generally used to refer to those Chinese people that originated from mixed ancestry.

generalized that way. The word “*Benteng*” that attached as specific marker for this community refers to a Dutch walled defense tower that was built near to the Chinese quartier where they lived. Just like majority of early Chinese settlers in Indonesians, they distinguished themselves with particular location that associate their identity with the area where they live, for instance Chinese Semarang (in Central Java), Chinese Pontianak (in West Kalimantan), Chinese Medan (in North Sumatra), Chinese Surabaya (in East Java), and many more. Their *Benteng* identity differentiated them with the Chinese *Udik* that also live in Tangerang area, but further to the southern area where they live in a more rural setting in comparison to the Chinese *Benteng*’s urban setting. Unlike the Chinese *Benteng* that mostly traders, Chinese *Udik* people are farmers that own large size of ‘unclaimed’ agricultural land. Besides Chinese *Udik* that live in lowland agricultural areas, there are also Chinese *Iilir* that live in the northern Tangerang coast who are mostly salted fish farmers and fishermen. Since the Dutch colonialization era, the *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* communities have been living in the old Chinese quartiers, not very far from the main river of Tangerang, Cisadane river that flows from northern coastal Banten area down to Bogor area. Like many Chinese-dominated settlements during the pre-independence era, these quartiers relied on the river as the main passageway for their trading activities. Currently, this quartier becomes one of the busiest areas in Tangerang City, where main traditional market is located as well as the only train station that connects Tangerang area and Jakarta metropolitan region.

I slightly recall my first experience to Tangerang area, back in the early nineties. In contrast to Jakarta, at that time Tangerang was extremely left behind. There were no high-rise building and most of the area was empty, almost without inhabitants. I did not remember that experience very clearly but what I remember the most was the main road as it was the only way to get into the area. In the early 90s, highway was not existed and we had to pass the outer ring of Jakarta to reach Tangerang area. Because of that, the only route that we passed was the one through local neighborhoods, where the roads were narrow and were not as polished as the main road. Most roads and narrow pavements were badly constructed, some even without asphalt cover. In some areas, roads were bumpy and full of holes. Even without traffic, it took us more than two hours to get there, due to severe road condition and no short cut available. My father told me that in the early 90s, the

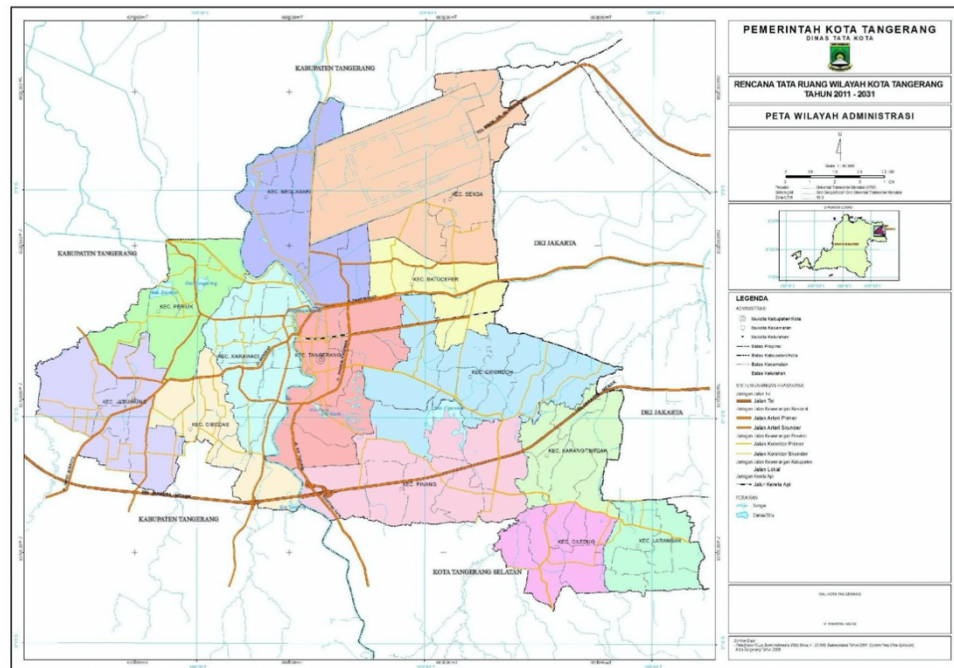
condition of the main road was far better – a way much better than the time when he first traveled, in the late 1960s or early 1970s. At that time, when there were no properly constructed roads, dirt roads were the most common ones; and during the rainy season, those dirt roads could be extremely muddy and no vehicles were able to pass. For that reason, some local inhabitants traveled with horse or bullock cart. But all had changed dramatically, especially after the expansion of Soekarno-Hatta international airports and the increasing importance of Tangerang area as Jakarta's main support for manufacture industry. Nowadays commuting between Jakarta-Tangerang is far more convenient. With intercity commuter line train, travelling time from Jakarta to Tangerang is reduced to only less than an hour. Due to such improved connectivity, Tangerang area has significantly grown as new settlement area, especially for new urban settlers that unable to afford housing in Jakarta.

The background of Tangerang is inseparable from the history of Batavia, the colonial capital of Dutch East Indies, prior being called Jakarta. According to local legend, the name of Tangerang originated from Sundanese words, "*tengger*" (or *tetengger*), which means landmark made of wood/bamboo or could also be understood as wall; and "*perang*", which means war. In short, the word Tangerang referred to a landmark situated on an area where once there was war. The early inhabitants of Tangerang often then described "*Benteng*", Dutch defense wall, as 'the landmark' to which the legend implies. This practice continued over generations so it associates Tangerang Municipality as City of *Benteng* (*Kota Benteng*) or Fortress city. Other aspects of the same legend mention that the defense wall was constructed to segregate areas that ruled by two competing powers, which were the Sultanate of Banten that ruled the west side of the Cisadane River and the Dutch that ruled the eastern part of the river.

Throughout centuries, administrative history of Tangerang area has experienced constant changes. Under the Dutch colonial regime, Tangerang area was categorized as one of the administrative districts that comprised Batavia region. Its status then changed during the Japanese occupation (around 1942-1945), when Tangerang was fully granted new status as a region, following Jakarta's new administrative status as Special Capital Area. With this new status, Tangerang has its own capital city, namely the City of Tangerang (*Kota Tangerang*). After Indonesia's independence in 1945, Tangerang area was part of West Java Province until 1999. Moreover, since Indonesia started to implement decentralization regime

through the issuance of Law No. 32/1999 about Local Government, this law has generated a great number of local regions that wanted to split from their parent-regions in order to establish their own self-administered areas. On the same note, this law justified the new establishment of Banten Province – which separated itself from West Java – that include Municipality of Tangerang (*Kota Tangerang*¹⁶) that administratively covers urban region and Tangerang Regency (*Kabupaten Tangerang*) that covers the rural district. For that, since this study was conducted in one *kelurahan*¹⁷ in Tangerang Municipality, therefore it is important not to confuse with the Tangerang Regency.

Picture 2 - Map of Kota Tangerang



Source: Rencana Tata Ruang Wilayah Kota Tangerang 2012-2031

¹⁶ For the purpose of this study, the study location “Tangerang” refers to the municipality area. To avoid confusion, Tangerang Regency is referred as Kabupaten Tangerang.

¹⁷ *Kelurahan*, often referred as administrative village is the lowest sub-division in Indonesia’s urban communities. For comparison purpose, *kelurahan* is at the same administrative division level with rural villages, but enjoy different level of autonomy.

Kota Tangerang is located next to Jakarta, located approximately 35 km to the west of the capital city. In the past, this municipality was a part of *Kabupaten* Tangerang prior to their administrative separation in 1993 and served as the capital city of *Kabupaten* Tangerang. With the total area of 164.55 km², Tangerang city is considered as one of the most important neighboring satellite cities that support Jakarta's industry expansion, especially where it also located Soekarno Hatta International Airport that occupy 12% of its territory. According to Mather (1983), Tangerang area – both *Kota* and *Kabupaten* – plays a crucial part of the government's population control policy in which to certain extend has contributed to the relocation of economic activities outside the capital city. In Warouw's (2004) extensive work about factory workers in Tangerang, he notes that the Presidential Resolution (*Keppres*) No.53/1986 has greatly opened the door for foreign investment opportunities to the industrial centers. This included Tangerang area which was considered as the ideal situation given its close proximity to the capital city. During the New Order administration, Hadiz (1997) considered Tangerang as one of Indonesia's manufacturing hub (p.126) that provided a large sum of labour supply for the growing industries at that time.

As per 2019, *Kota* Tangerang comprises of 13 districts (*kecamatan*) in which 104 *kelurahan* are connected into. These *kelurahan* are consist of 1,004 hamlets (*RW*), and 5,177 neighborhood wards (*RT*) that inhabited by 590,622 households. Given its smaller size and populated by a little more than nearly 2.3 million people, *Kota* Tangerang becomes the most populous area in Banten province as per km² is inhabited by more than 13 thousand people. It also points out that this city principally dominated by economically productive population which comprised of 75% from the overall population, as it referred to those that aged between 15 to 64 years old. Obviously, such reference point could be misunderstood as many of them that fall outside of this age bracket are oftentimes forced to enter or to stay in the labor market due to various reasons. In terms of schooling, the district statistic agency notes that in 2019 alone the participation rate of those who fall within 7 to 15 years old bracket actually was very high, at about 95%. However, this high rate sharply declined to around 75% for those who are between 16 to 18 years old.

Because the international airport is located in this area, the proliferation of transportation and warehouse sector has significantly contributed to Tangerang's regional income. Nearly third of its regional income (31%) came from this sector.

Besides that, as previously mentioned above, due to the economic policy during Suharto's era, *Kota* Tangerang remains known as manufacturing hub. Large manufacturing companies focus on rubber and plastic processing, followed by process food manufacturing, metal goods and non-machinery equipment, chemical manufacturing, tobacco processing, and textile which absorb the highest proportion of labour (BPS, 2019). As per 2019, manufacturing sector alone contributes to 29% of the overall regional income. Subsequently, these two sectors also significantly contributed to the minimum wage of Tangerang city that was IDR 3,869,717 (approximately less than € 250) in 2019. Despite its status as industrial area, it does not necessarily improve its regional GDP growth. In fact, in the last two years, it experienced significant decline in its growth, from 5.92 in 2018 to 4.31 in 2019. Besides that, for the last 10 years, Tangerang's human development index (HDI) moves rather slowly, with the average growth only about 0.7% annually that brought it to 78.43 in 2019. On a good note, for the past 8 years, the Government of Tangerang has steadily decreased its poverty rate from 6.14% in 2011 to 4.43% in 2019.

Nowadays, the travel from Jakarta to Tangerang city is much convenient in comparison to my earlier travel. Since the intercity railway train has significantly improved its service quality, intercity travel becomes very comfortable, unlike what it used to be during the 1980s and 1990s. From Tangerang train station, which is located in the old Chinese quartier, it only took less than 20 minutes to reach *Kampung Wetan*¹⁸, one of few *kampungs* that comprise *Kelurahan* Kembangan¹⁹ where I conducted my fieldwork. My initial visit to these community was in 2016, together with *Ibu Tuti*²⁰ – a community organizer of a Jakarta-based NGO that I already knew from my previous project. At that time, in Tangerang City, available public transport was a medium size minibus – called “*angkot*” – that could take up to 12 to 15 passengers in a full capacity. Unfortunately, there was no direct route to *Kampung Wetan* from the train station; and with a very few connections, in addition to accumulated waiting time, it took much longer that I was anticipated. In 2018, when I conducted the fieldwork, local transportation was also become much more

¹⁸ Pseudonym

¹⁹ Pseudonym

²⁰ People's names in this thesis are all pseudonym

convenient. Not because of the improvement of the quality of the public transport, but because of the massive proliferation of on-line motor-taxi which was very time efficient and, obviously, cheaper. The use of application-based motor taxi become everyone's preference in commuting, particularly within the short-distance one.

Kampung Wetan is quite a melting pot. Despite there are a number of ethnic groups that live in that area, *Kampung Wetan* is predominated by *peranakan* Chinese Indonesians. Nowadays, native people of *Kampung Wetan* called themselves also Chinese *Benteng*; unlike what it was in the past which they were preferred to be called "Orang²¹ Wetan" instead. Moreover, for the purpose of this thesis, the "Chinese *Benteng*" explained here refers to those *peranakan* Chinese that live in *Kampung Wetan*. Previously, the whole Tangerang area was known as *particulier landrijen*, a Dutch term which means "private property", of the Chinese landlords during the colonial era. At that time, Chinese *Benteng* people in Tangerang started to establish sugarcane plantation, sugar factory and paddy field as the main source of colonial economy (Santosa, 2012). According to the native residence, they believe that their ancestors had rented the landlordless land and settled in this area following to the great Chinese Massacre in Batavia in October 1740. In the early Indonesian independence era, this area became unclaimed territory which hosted the refuge of many Chinese people aftermath another post-independence riot in 1946 in Tangerang. Gradually, these Chinese settlers together with local communities started to develop *Kampung Wetan* area as their settlement and utilized that area as cultivation land, especially for their own consumption like vegetables, fruits and rice. Besides for cultivation, some local hitman and petty landlords often rented the vacant space to the outsider and obtained profit for themselves. Despite *Kampung Wetan* is geographically spread along the Cisadane River; but for administrative purpose, this area is managed under two *Kelurahans* administration. Moreover, as *Kampung Wetan* is predominantly inhabited by Chinese *Benteng* people, we may find various cultural landmarks that indicate their existence. One of the most prominent sites is Confucian Temple Tjong Tek Bio where it considered as the main praying temple for Chinese *Benteng* of *Kampung Wetan*. Besides that, a few kilometers from the temple, there are also a number of Chinese cemetery compounds where generally local Chinese *Benteng* people are

²¹ Translated as "people of"

buried. During the tomb sweeping day, Chinese *Benteng* families visit and pay respect to the deceased family members by preparing offerings, including cleaning the tombs.

Majority of *Kampung Wetan* area falls under the administration of *Kelurahan Kembangan* which comprises a part of *Kecamatan*²² *Nagasari*²³. As a result of decentralization in 1999, *Kecamatan Nagasari* was started to be independent in 2000 from its parent *Kecamatan Batuceper*. The process of such separation was legalized through Local Regulation (*Peraturan Daerah*) No.16/2000 that made *Kelurahan Kembangan* with other 6 *kelurahans* formed part of new *kecamatan* which is called *Kecamatan Nagasari*. Therefore, administratively, the existence of *Kelurahan Kembangan* where *Kampung Wetan* is now part of has only been formally established for about 20 years; in comparison with the existence of Chinese *Benteng* people of *Kampung Wetan* that are practically the native residence of this land. *Kelurahan Kembangan* itself is relatively small administrative area, only 1.54 km² which occupied less than 10% of *Kecamatan Nagasari*'s area. In comparison with other *kelurahans* that are part of *Kecamatan Nagasari*, *Kelurahan Kembangan* is relatively closer to the *kecamatan*'s office. In fact, the *kecamatan* office is located within the area of *Kelurahan Kembangan*. The distance between *Kelurahan Kembangan*'s office and *Kecamatan Nagasari*'s office is only about 200 m; reachable within 5 to 10 minutes walking. Due to its close proximity with the *Kecamatan* office, it is no doubt that the bureaucrats of *Kelurahan Kembangan* strategically positioned within the government mobility, not only institutionally but also personally among the government officials. *Kelurahan Kembangan* consists of 33 neighborhood area or *Rukun Tanga* (RT) that comprise 6 hamlets/wards or *Rukun Warga* (RW). With the total population has reached more than 10 thousand people, *Kelurahan Kembangan* is considered as a very high-density area with more than 7 thousand people per kilometer square. Despite so in comparison with other *kelurahans*, population of *Kelurahan Kembangan* only counts for 9% of the total population of *Kecamatan Nagasari*.

Chinese *Benteng* people, especially those native from *Kampung Wetan* often discriminated and negatively stereotyped like *Cina miskin* (poor Chinese) *pemalas*

²² *Kecamatan* is an administrative region that comprise a municipality or a regency.

²³ Pseudonym

(lazy), *suka judi* (fond of gambling) and *tukang minum* (like to consume alcoholic beverages). Purwanto (2012) writes the stereotype of poor, which somehow legitimate the fact of their multidimensional poverty status, derived from lack of formal identity that can be tracked back since colonial era. Purwanto also found out that lack of formal employment faced by the Chinese *Benteng* people has further jeopardized the stereotype of being lazy. Similarly, Wiradinata (2009) elaborated Chinese *Benteng* wedding ceremonies that often involve gambling, alcohol and *plesiran*²⁴. Wiradinata also explains that practice of gambling among Chinese *Benteng* people is still widely practiced in many occasions, especially where many people gather such as weddings and funerals. Often, some Chinese *Benteng* men and women that gamble become target of police sweeping. Consequently, this practice has reinforced the negative stereotype towards them that like to gamble.

As a result of systematic discrimination to Chinese Indonesian which culminated during the Suharto's era, the majority of Chinese *Benteng* people lacked of registration documents such as identity cards, birth certificate or marriage certificate. The absence of such documents often leads to bigger issues including inability to access public services such as health and education or benefit from government social assistance program. It then becomes worst when many Chinese *Benteng* people are subject to illegal taxing and extortion by street bureaucrats and their cronies. For decades, they have to pay a lot more than the official fees to obtain these documents. Despite having to bribe the local authorities, they should navigate their own way to pay less amount in bribing the apparatus or to smoothen the process through changing name with Indonesia-sound name or convert their religion to Islam. For those who are financially restricted to bribe the local authorities, they were left without those important documents. Consequently, they remain invisible in government database. Thus, direct implication of being invisible citizen does not allow them to be eligible as recipient of government social assistance program, such as *RASTRA* Program (rice for the poor) or *Program Keluarga Harapan* (PKH) – direct cash transfer to low-income families for health and education purpose. For many Chinese *Benteng* people, do not have formal identity

²⁴ *Plesiran* originated from Dutch word *plezier* that means fun or pleasure which often associated with the act of traveling. In the context of attending Chinese *Benteng*'s wedding parties, *plesiran* is understood as dancing with *cokek* dancer that involves spending a lot of money for the dancer.

also means unable to access formal employment, which consequently leave them with very limited options, namely informal sector such as parking attendant, street vendors, housemaid and other type of blue-collar jobs.

As one of the 'invisible' groups in Indonesia, the Chinese *Benteng* community is less likely to enjoy the benefit of government social assistance program. In mid 2014, under the auspice of Government of Indonesia, financed by Australia's official development agencies, "Peduli Program" was launched to reach the "socially excluded" groups in Indonesia, and Chinese *Benteng* community was one of the targeted populations. This program was implemented by a network of national/local grant-making-type NGOs, advocacy-type NGOs and service provision-type NGOs that aim to reduce poverty among the marginalized people who are often ignored by government programs. Under the "Peduli Program", facilitated by a Jakarta-based NGO called "WRDC" (Women Resource and Development Centre), a group of Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* formed a saving and lending cooperative. This cooperative started to be the core of their activity and gradually allowed them to engage in more activities in wider scope. Beside attended weekly meeting for saving and lending, WRDC also trained them how to obtain legal documents and facilitated them to "revitalize" the *Cokek* dance, a kind of local entertainment dance whose dancers often labelled negatively due to its association with gambling, alcoholism and covert prostitution. Because of this cooperative, the Chinese *Benteng* women of *Kampung Wetan* gained increasing attention and popularity; not only from the *Kelurahan* Kembangan officers, but also from the *Kecamatan* Nagasari government apparatus that frequently invited them to perform this dance as the opening act in various government-hosted events.

Initial success of this type of approach – forming group of women to work together – especially in the context of Chinese *Benteng* community has brought a significant interest to my attention. As the first women empowerment project in this community, this initiative has triggered increasing interest to bring about women activism through various channels. Furthermore, this initiative was believed to be an inclusive opportunity to provide avenue for the local women to continue struggle in claiming wider space. In Indonesia, many development projects that specifically target women or incorporate women into existing projects often employ this kind of women empowerment approach to increase women's

confidence and capacity to be present in public arena through group activism engineered by such project. Although for the case of Chinese *Benteng* women, impact of women's empowerment through this kind of intervention remained unexplored, it might be interesting to elaborate what roles do these women play in their community as a result of their participation in the saving and lending cooperative established by the "Peduli Program". Not only that, it is also valuable to explore how the Chinese *Benteng* women of *Kampung Wetan* see their transformation through membership status of the cooperative as an entry point to engage in a wider arena.

1.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The general objective of this research is to analyze whether and how empowering women from the excluded ethnic minority group potentially might increase their participation in development affairs and local activism at the community level, as a mean to claim their right as citizen. This objective associates with the initial result of increased women engagement in local decision-making forum and to act collaboratively in improving their welfare, especially in the area of economic and social advancement.

Besides that, this research also aims to contributes specifically:

1. To unpack the notion of exclusion in different dimensions (social, economic, and political) that are experience by women from ethnic minorities. It also aims to understand the root causes and how the exclusion occurred.
2. To unfold the complexities of various interrelated concepts of exclusion, empowerment, and participation including how these concepts are understood and utilized by women from ethnic minority as means to claim rights as citizen.
3. To elaborate the complexities of different type of relationships occurred between various actors involved in local development affairs and to further evaluate the outcomes of these relationships in comparison with the process of empowerment.
4. To analyze whether or not the notion of (women) minority participation could legitimize claim to citizens' rights, which lead to an improvement in well-being.

5. To demonstrate with evidence about various factors that support to and/or constraints against women empowerment effort, in order to claim and to exercise their citizens' right for better welfare.
6. To provide comprehensive analysis in identifying opportunities and challenges to improve women participation from the excluded communities, to strengthen collective action among actors involve in local development, and to overcome/reduce social exclusion at the community level.

This PhD research focuses on the process of how women empowerment operates as a technology that aim to build collective action among the Chinese *Benteng* women who have been constantly excluded socially, economically and politically. Therefore, this study will be guided by the following research question and sub-questions: **How and to what extend empowerment of the Chinese Benteng Women will increase their participation and activism in local development affairs, as a mean to claim their rights as citizen?**

In order to answer the main research question, I am guided with four sets of sub questions:

- 1 How social inclusion is conceptualized at the discourse level as the solution to the "problem" of exclusion, in the context of neoliberal development intervention in the formation of women's cooperative?
 - 1.1 What are the main causes of "social exclusion" experienced by marginalized people within the contemporary neoliberal discourse of inequity and injustice in Indonesia?
 - 1.2 How then "social exclusion" is represented as the "problem", in which social inclusion intervention, like the women's cooperative, is designed to overcome?
 - 1.3 What has been left unproblematic about "social exclusion" that silenced in the dominant discourse?
- 2 How "social inclusion" as proposed solution in the context of cooperative project creates calculated pathways out of urban poor Chinese *Benteng* women that are defined as excluded?
 - 2.1 What are the key features of social inclusion as neoliberal way of governing marginalized population in the context of cooperative project?

- 2.2 How these features manifested into women empowerment goal(s) on improving public participation of the urban poor Chinese *Benteng* women, as the operationalization of neoliberal subject-making process?
 - 2.3 What kind of neoliberal subject is created from various assemblages produces by cooperative project as social inclusion practices out of these women?
- 3 What are the implications that it (social inclusion as operationalization of neoliberal governance) may bring?
 - 3.1 Which gendered implication that might occur as counter-effect of this social inclusion practice?
 - 3.2 At the discourse, what kind of changes that social inclusion as neoliberal policy proposal aims to achieve and in the context of cooperative, what practical changes have emerged at the community level?
 - 3.3 To what extent the discourse of social inclusion as neoliberal way to govern the problematic population is resonant or dissonant with the practice of inclusion at the community level?

1.4. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 elaborates main theoretical framework that I employ as the key foundation of this thesis. Preeminently, the elaboration focuses on Foucauldian governmentality as the principal organizing thought and some key terms which I consistently use in this document. Furthermore, Chapter 3 deals with the explanation on methodological selection and data collection strategies and techniques used in carrying out this research. In Chapter 4, I explore the formation of Chinese *Benteng* community in the broader context of Indonesian historiography that has excluded its citizens of Chinese descendants from the nation building project. Furthermore, the creation of single and monolithic narrative and representation about Chinese Indonesian that has led to an establishment of universal identity that essentializes what constitute to be “Chinese Indonesian”. As a result of this homogenization, Chinese *Benteng* people that live in Tangerang are always represented in stark contrast in comparison to the normalized representation of Chinese Indonesian. Here I will illustrate their

unique creolized identity which far from the essentialist imagination of Chinese Indonesian. Moreover, this chapter will tease out the root of their exclusion which are not only because of racial and religion distinction, but also class segregation and low level of mobility which intertwined with political dynamic and corrupt system.

In Chapter 5, the discussion will focus on my critical reflexive analysis from my earlier professional experience as development “apparatus” (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1990) in the world of “development bureaucrats” (Mosse, 2005). Moreover, this chapter will also highlight on “social exclusion” as a concept, series of analysis and interpretation in which increasingly used in Development discourse. This chapter aims to explain how “social exclusion” is constructed as a problem, which represented as threat to development. Through What’s the Problem Represented to be (WPR) approach on discourse analysis (Bacchi, 2012a), I analyze the constructed representation of “social exclusion” as a particular “problem” to solve. Through revealing such problematization, ‘social inclusion’ emerged quite clear as a solution that should be operationalized through development intervention, especially via popular technique like “empowerment”. Besides that, in this chapter, I outline my autoethnographic experience as low-level “development bureaucrats” that participated in running development as “anti-politics machine” (Ferguson, 1990) through involving particular type of NGOs as its project implementer that subscribe to the dominant development paradigm.

In the following chapter, I describe how the concept of “social inclusion” is understood in Indonesia, in particular in the context of the predecessor of “*Peduli Program*”. Rather than utilized “social inclusion” as a policy perspective; this project, through the involvement of national/local NGOs that understood “social inclusion” narrowly, this development project focused on inserting the project participants but at the same time neglected existing structure that exclusionary in the first place. Through autoethnographic lens, I incorporated my professional experience in the project formation as a critical account which allows me to reflect on “social inclusion” as a development operation. I start this chapter with autoethnographic account as “development bureaucrats” employed in the World Bank to program a “social inclusion” project for the “excluded” groups and people. I continue with an explanation how scientific methods were used to justify reorientation in the project that led to re-program the whole intervention.

Moreover, I also explore the process of the construction of “social inclusion” is transferred by authorized western expert that hired to facilitate the way in which this concept travelled across context; and how it being understood semantically, translated locally and deployed in a certain manner through rigorous process of reprogramming development.

Chapter 7 of this thesis elaborate tricky engagement between Anthropology and Development following the line of thought proposed by Tania Li (2013). Li’s suggestion has provided a framework to show how the process of “social inclusion” intervention was conceptualized, developed and operated in the context of “*Peduli Program*” on “social inclusion”. Here analysis resulted from the previous chapter show how “social exclusion” is represented as a particular “problem” at both individual and community level in which prevents them to benefit from development effort. The solution to this “problem” is analyzed through what Li describes as “rendering technical” through which authorized experts define what consider as “problem” based on the available predetermined solution. This is why, in the case of Chinese *Benteng* women, since the available solutions are ‘technical’ and apolitical, the “problem” of “social exclusion” is therefore presented as “technical”.

In Chapter 8, I elaborate how the process of creating a particular type of neoliberal subject through assemblages that produced by government-endorsed “social inclusion” project in Indonesia. This chapter also points out gendered implication that occurred as counter-effect of this “social inclusion” project. Furthermore, this chapter will also unravel how this “social inclusion” project presented as women-focused cooperative is understood as neoliberal way to govern Chinese *Benteng* women that are perceived as “problematic population” according to characteristic determined by “social exclusion”. As the explanation evolves, I will illustrate how such way in governing the “problematic population” diverges from the original intention of “social inclusion” at the community level. My objective is to provide a more detail description on how more popular concept of women empowerment is instrumentalized to implement the induced notion of “social inclusion” through which poverty among the marginalized population is to be addressed. Following my observation, I will take a critical turn and reflect on the dominant conceptualization of womanhood in contemporary Indonesia that is maintained through public and private institution. More specifically, in this

chapter, I examine how development project that was deployed through a popular technique of “women empowerment” has been equated and destined to realize “social inclusion” of the marginalized and disadvantaged population to engage in market-oriented development projects.

Chapter 9 of this thesis aim to explain the way in which Chinese *Benteng* women were actively involved in the course of social engineering by co-creating neoliberal subject through operationalization of reductionist understanding of social inclusion as per the project’s prescription. Through intensive “facilitation”, “capacity building”, “mentoring”, and “guidance”, the implementing NGO has an important task in this operation to capacitate the Chinese *Benteng* women to self-help, to self-improve and to self-discipline according to the vision of sustainable poverty reduction. This vision would be achieved through improving social relation on governing access to resources and economic opportunities so that “social inclusion” of these “excluded” groups could be achieved. In addition to that, I present life narratives of two women that participated in the projects in which resulted differently between these two. This chapter continues to explore how the Chinese *Benteng* saving and lending cooperative operates as sphere of governmentality by adopting European-model of “social inclusion” in ahistorical and apolitical way through the work of community development NGO as their development broker. This also highlights the construction of “needy subject” (Timmer, 2010) upon these women in which required corrective salvation to achieve their full potential. Lastly, I present how “*Peduli Program*” delivered the notion of social inclusion through depoliticizing women empowerment solely into economic empowerment that based on the logic of women as economically rational, responsible individual and efficient that socially constructed based on Indonesia’s gender ideology, *State Ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). Lastly, Chapter 10 will conclude this thesis.

II – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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2.1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of social inclusion has been widely understood as universally good intention; aligned with various benevolently conceptualized concepts such as “empowerment” and “participation”. My growing interest to deeply understand social inclusion emerged from professional involvement in a claimed-as-among-the largest community empowerment projects, implemented in Indonesia, PNPB *Peduli*. Conceptualized based on the broader idea of “empowerment” that capitalizes social aspect of the composite idea of community life in Indonesia, this project has also specialized into various themes, such as conflict, health and education, disaster management, or marginalized population. Although the notion of social inclusion that introduced in the community empowerment project appears as genuinely benevolent concept, such concept tends to produce a constructed image of utopian world by emphasizing on the idea of universal inclusive society where shared resources and access would equally distributed. From this point, it is important to unpack whether the idea of social inclusion is naturally benign or carefully crafted as a form of Foucauldian conception of “Governmentality” (Foucault, 1991).

For the past few years, social inclusion becomes increasingly significant buzzword as a preferable pathway to realize what have been ‘agreed’ at the high-level discussion forums. Global development goals, such as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its ‘continuation’ the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are examples of many products resulted from the top. The SDGs for instance, which encompassed of 17 broad brushstroke agendas, intends to transform the world we are living into what the state leaders call as “The Future We Want”. Therefore, to realize that future transformed world, such global agenda focuses on social inclusion, which Boushey et al. (2007) describe based on the belief “...that we all fare better when no one is left to fall too far behind and the economy works for everyone...” (Boushey et al., 2007: 3). This could be an example to look at how

particular forms of global design shall be operated at many different levels by involving various elements thus creates specific yet diverse configurations.

“Inclusion Matters: Foundation of Shared Prosperity” (2013) is a World Bank Social Inclusion flagship report that claims social inclusion as the Bank’s key strategy to end extreme poverty (p. 2). In that report, World Bank stresses the importance to fight any form of exclusion of individuals and certain groups because such exclusion can result lower social standing; lower outcomes as in income, access to employment, and public services; and limited voices in decision-making. Moreover, those who are excluded face multiple forms of disadvantage that limit their capability to participate in society; to access public services; and to take up opportunities (The World Bank, 2013). Despite exclusion does not always associate directly only with income poverty, Sen (2000) describes exclusion as multidimensional deprivations might push those who are excluded, vulnerable, or marginalized far into poverty slope.

The conceptualization of social inclusion is very much stem from early 1970s’ French discourse, where it was associated with welfare-state model of social policy as key strategies to tackle social exclusion, by incorporating ‘the excluded’ (Silver, 1994) into formal employment (Levitas, 2003). Although it has been argued that social inclusion is not a direct reverse of exclusion, as Silver (2010) described it; but in the 1970s French context, it was understood as citizens’ rights to obtain access to social security system (Mathieson et al., 2008). Therefore, such conceptualization of social inclusion becomes problematic when it is applied to non-European postcolonial societies, like Indonesia and many other developing nations, when boundaries between agency and structure are highly obscured, involving a wide spectrum of politically negotiated domains. Other than that, as a contemporary European concept, social inclusion also faces various criticisms. One of those is that social inclusion as no more than just linguistic adjustment as politically correct term to change the world (Slee, 1998), which in turns makes this rhetoric so appealing for policy makers; or as merely a technical way to manage problematic people (Armstrong et al., 2011), especially when it also implies in segregating individuals or groups as a way to achieve social inclusion. Similarly, in the context of mental health and disability, Spandler (2007) and Cobigo et al. (2012) respectively also pose criticisms towards social inclusion, which implies to the construction of a

comfortable and satisfied “included majority” and dissatisfied “excluded minority”, in which not always applicable universally.

Through this PhD project, I aspire to profoundly understand how social inclusion takes place as a form of governing particular population, namely the Chinese *Benteng* women, in a neoliberal assemblage of development project. In developing my theoretical framework, I am guided by works of Tania Li (2007) who connects Foucauldian understandings of “power and knowledge” and “governmentality”, through the conceptualization of *trustee* that justify their power of knowledge to govern, or she calls it as “the will to improve” the others. Moreover, another relevant idea that I attempt to use is the notion of “global assemblage” (Ong and Collier, 2005) as configurations that resulted from global form of techno-science, economic rationalism, and other expert systems. Furthermore, such *global assemblage* also functioned as a method for the production of global knowledge that endeavor to replace space, culture, and society that have dominated the social science through their history.

2.2. GOVERNMENTALITY

As the backbone of this research’s theoretical framework, I attempt to elaborate my understanding of Foucauldian Governmentality which posse striking difference with Foucault’s earlier idea of sovereignty. In his work, Foucault describes that unlike sovereignty, “[...] *government has as its purpose not the act of government itself, but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, and so on; and the means the government uses to attain these ends are themselves all, in some sense, immanent to the population; it is the population itself on which government will act either directly, through large-scale campaigns, or indirectly, through techniques that will make possible, without the full awareness of the people, the stimulation of birth rates, the direction of the flow of population into certain regions or activities, and so on*” (Foucault, 2000: 216–7). Foucault then continues by describing the art of government which “[...] *essentially concerned with answering the question of how to introduce this meticulous attention of the father towards his family into the management of the state*” (Foucault, 1991: 92).

Building from family-model genealogical analysis, Foucault deeply questions a number of important concerns that are crucial to the conceptualization

of governmentality, in particular are: who can govern, how the best to govern, how to be governed and how to govern oneself and others. In his edited work, Foucault describes, “*What government has to do with is not territory but, rather, a sort of complex composed of men and things. The things, in this sense, with which government is to be concerned are in fact men, but men in their relations, their links, their imbrication with those things that are wealth, resources, means of subsistence, the territory with its specific qualities, climate irrigation, fertility, and so on; men in their relation to those other things that are customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking, and so on; and finally men in their relation to those still other things that might be accidents and misfortunes such as famine, epidemics, death, and so on*” (Foucault, 2000: 208–9). Therefore, to focus on the issue of relationship between men and things, Foucault defines government as efficient and productive arrangement of things to achieve appropriate end to the goal and convenient for those governed, which further he articulated as ‘the conduct of conduct’ (Gordon, 1991: 2).

In describing Governmentality, following Foucault’s conception on ‘the conduct of conduct’, Li (2007) elaborates Governmentality as “*the attempt to shape human conduct by calculated means*”, where it operates through what she believes as ‘educating desire’, ‘configuring habits’, aspirations and beliefs; in short artificially configuring things so people follow their-own self-interest, which they will do as they ought (p.5). In a similar way, De Cesari (2013) also describes governmentality as “*ways of shaping people’s behavior by applying specialized body of knowledge*” (p. 401), which align with Li’s argument of ‘the will to improve’ is what the best for those who being governed. With the same tone, Stripple and Bulkeley (2013) describe that “*governmentality deals with how particular mentalities (or way of thinking and acting) are invested in the process of governing*” (p. 32). Furthermore, to operationalize the ‘conduct of conduct’, Foucauldian governmentality lies on three important features. Firstly, is the rationale of government, which includes form of knowledge, expertise, and calculation through which human action can be rendered for political programming. Secondly, is the technology of government, which best described as domain of practical mechanisms, instruments, and programs in order to orchestrate human action. Lastly, is the subject of government that encompasses various types of individuals or collective identities. All of these in which might evolve into very specific composition and arrangement in a particular way to

inform the governmental activity (Inda, 2005: 10). This mode of operation becomes critically important in understanding Foucault's work on governmentality. For Foucault, managing population needs particular modalities of government, which include mechanism of calculation, oversight and command, regulations, and space creation as domain of existence.

On discussing rationale of government, Inda (2005) describes that such logic is created as the intellectual machinery or what Lemke (2002) terms as "political knowledge", that operates certain realities as calculable and governable. Lemke further added that the analysis of government heightens on "... *knowledge that part of the practices, systematization and 'rationalization' of a pragmatic guidance*" (p. 7). He then cites Foucault himself that says "*One isn't assessing things in terms of absolute against which they could be evaluated as constituting more or less perfect forms of rationality, but rather examining how forms of rationality inscribe themselves in practices or systems of practices, and what role they play with them, because it's true that 'practices' don't exist without a certain regime of rationality*" (Foucault, 1991: 79; Lemke, 2002: 7). The relative nature of government then explained how such practices are mixture between specific regimes of truth and deployment of experts; where the only possible thing is within particular epistemological regime of knowledge that represented by certain languages and analyze realities, in which that can be subjected to political rendering (Inda, 2005). Additionally, Lovbrand and Stipple (2014) suggest that researchers should look at critical discursive fields on which form of knowledge are represented then employed, through various form of diverse assemblages of technologies, material artifacts and tools which were skillfully crafted to ensure the 'conduct of conduct' is executable. In result, like what Rose and Miller (2010) call that "*governmentality is congenitally failing operation*" (p. 288) where unanticipated outcomes inherently problematize domain of activities, thus responses of such failing operation tend to be crafted as problems that should be addressed.

Other feature of governmentality is the technologies of government. In Foucault earlier book *Discipline and Punish*, he argued that the introduction of disciplinary techniques can be understood as 'techniques of power' or of 'power/knowledge' that aims to observe, monitor, shape and control individual's behavior that located within social and economic institutions (Gordon, 1991: 3-4). Somewhat diverge from Foucault's earlier thought, on his more recent view of

governmentality, Rose and Miller (1990) argue that *technologies of government* aims to “translate through into the domain of reality, and to establish ‘in the world of persons and things’ spaces and devices for acting upon those entities of which they dream and scheme” (p. 8). Such description offers a particular way to understand practical forms to understand various “mechanisms through which authorities of various sorts have sought to shape, normalize and instrumentalize the conduct, thought, decisions and aspirations of others in order to achieve the objectives they consider desirable.” (p. 8). To perform such understanding, Rose and Miller suggest deep investigation through what they outline as “... humble and mundane mechanism which appear to make it possible to govern: techniques of notation, computation and calculation; procedures of examination and assessment; the invention of devices such as surveys and presentational forms such as tables; the standardization of system for training and the inculcation of habits; the inauguration of professional specialism and vocabularies; building design and architectural forms – the list is heterogeneous and I, in principle, unlimited” (p. 8). Such forms are what Bruno Latour (1986) describes as material inscription, in which objects are to be made visible and things are calculable and programmable. Further Inda (2005) adds that through technologies of government, attentions were focused on technical ways in conducting the actions of individuals and population, which often manifest in a form of programmatic character of government. He then continues that such programmatic dimension justifies that the reality can be made thinkable through series of actions such as to diagnose, to reform, and to improve.

Lastly, subject of government become one of important themes in governmentality literatures, which encompass a wide range of typologies that include various type of selves, persons, institutional formation, actors, organizations/bodies, and many more that emerged from and inform governmental activity. Inda (2005) writes, “... to cultivate particular types of individual and collective identity as well as forms of agency and subjectivity ... government is intimately involved in making modern subjects...” (p.10). In the process of ‘subject-making’, he emphasizes that it requires particular attention to craft particular identity attached to individuals, in such a way they are exposed to an experience of specific kinds of being, with certain characteristic, qualities and capacities. The idea of subject-making becomes a crucial element in understanding governmentality as a trajectory to bring about wellbeing for individuals as well as

for population. Furthermore, governmentality also seeks how individuals are able to embrace the manufactured identity as ‘their own’ selves, through a negotiated process in which they are subjected to. Therefore, it is not only about understanding the form of ‘identities’ but also how activities of governmentality perpetuate them (Inda, 2005).

To mold certain identities, the process of subject making then bases on what Brenner, Peck and Theodore (2010) describe in their work. They argue that current modality of subjectification shapes the governed population to activate competitive relation in market, through series of ‘capacitating’ attempt towards people to deliver sort of regulated freedom that makes them ‘responsibilized’ individual and communities, who are productive yet compliant. Foucault then adds that to create responsibilized subjects, disciplinary and regulatory technologies are mandatory to insert self-discipline, productivity and welfare in the specific governed population. Foucault’s disciplinary measure then inspires Ong (2005), which finds that certain populations are given special treatment because of their specificity, like race or ethnicity, sex, course of life, and particular categorical aspects. Ong then emphasizes the role of colonial segregation policies that are deliberately preserved in state’s differentiation towards its citizens based on ethnic, class, gender, race, and so on; in which subjectifications are always reconstructed itself.

2.3. SOCIAL INCLUSION AS A WAY TO GOVERN

The concept of social inclusion has been clearly defined by many international organizations, states, supra-states or non-state institutions as a composite solution to achieve various goals, for instance: to combat extreme poverty, to ensure equal distribution of economic growth, to sustainably retain development, and so on. Majority of social inclusion literatures begin their analysis on the state of exclusion experienced by particular disadvantage groups in the society. These groups are generally depicted as underserved and underprivileged segments of the society, characterized for their peculiarity such as the disable, indigenous people, ethnic and religious minorities, that are often targeted as subjects of social inclusion intervention programs due to their ‘differences’. Institutions such as United Nations (2016a) explicitly calls for inclusion for all, regardless differences such as age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or

economic or other status; in the light of fulfilling the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. For the UN, social inclusion is understood as “*process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantage on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity and economic and migration status*” (p.1). Such process shall be achieved through dismantling barriers that limit people from full-participation, which include discriminatory laws, policies and institutions, as well as people’s attitudes and behaviors. All of these are presumably enabling active steps to make participation easier. Similarly, the World Bank emphasizes such process of improvement on “... *ability, opportunity and dignity of people disadvantage on the basis of their identity, to take part in society*” (The World Bank, 2013: 30), in its efforts to tackle extreme poverty and to achieve sustainable development objectives, by asking why certain people are overrepresented among the poor and why some people are failing to benefit from public services like health and education. Subsequently, a number of World bank’s country-based social inclusion reports, for example the report on Poland (2014) and on India (2011) were produced through complex assessment, utilizing large national data sets, and were analyzed through series of quantitative indicators. These reports emphasize that social inclusion “... *exposes interlocking multidimensional nature of chronic deprivation arising from social exclusion as discriminatory that play a key role in driving the simple and more readily observable correlates of poverty ...*” (The World Bank, 2014: vi).

As the notion of commonly understood social inclusion terminology, it is profoundly entrenched within the labor-nexus, majority of the available literatures or policy discussion that focus their debates on inclusion on economic dimension. Later, the debate on inclusion in economic arena also followed by growing interest to associate inclusion in social and cultural life in a specific society. For the European states, social inclusions means as a process to ensure that those who are exposed or vulnerable of being poor and excluded are able to enjoy the opportunity, including resources, to participate fully in social, economic and cultural life, according standard that considered normal by the European society (European Commission, 2004). Likewise, UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs (2009) highlights social inclusion as an effort that is made to ensure everyone get equal opportunity through policies and actions in order to promote equal access to public services and to enable citizens’ participation in decision

making processes that would affect their life. Emphasizing on the process to remove barrier in order to provide equal opportunity seems appear as a logical prescription to overcome social exclusion, under liberal framework, as Silver (1994) argues. Under this notion, social inclusion simply understood as creating equal opportunities, which in returns shall eliminate any form of discrimination, to an extent to which still maintain individual freedom.

Social inclusion should not be understood as simple logical antithesis of social exclusion (Silver, 2010). Silver further argues that social inclusion may even result certain expenses that those who are ‘members’ or insider should also bear, which also mean to share resources, opportunities, access, and spaces (2010: 193). Her framework on understanding social exclusion, as a critical understanding before stepping into the idea of social inclusion, has been very helpful to see how different political paradigms understand and conceptualize exclusion differently and offers very distinct social policy between one and another (Silver, 1994). In her earlier work on social exclusion, Silver (1994) argues that as oppose to the liberal conception of social exclusion, the republican and the social democratic views of exclusion propose quite different prescriptive responses, which do not call for equal treatment applied to the same individuals/groups that experience exclusion. These individuals/groups may need not to be treated equally with the insider, but perhaps differently, to achieve what she describes as social solidarity and social cohesion. Following to that, Silver then concludes that social inclusion is a prerequisite for citizen participation and it calls for empowerment to achieve such objective (Silver, 2010). Building from such conceptualization, I would like to emphasize that current understanding of social inclusion has been narrowly trapped into simplified definition on how to ensure the excluded groups could participate in ‘life’, as defined by others that are not excluded.

Common understanding perceives social inclusion as the logical antithesis of the negatively sounded social exclusion and simply locates these two concepts in binary categorical distinction. Having said that, a number of scholars indeed question the confusing concept of social inclusion. Barton & Oliver (1992) for instance, argue that social inclusion, which is advocated through special education for the disable, could further reproduce exclusion due to the process of identification and labeling to the ‘special’ participants. Thus, the idea of social inclusion associates with certain mechanism on how to manage this problematic

people (Armstrong et al., 2011) or those who are socially misfits (Lenoir, 1974). Despite, Pease (2009) attempts to acknowledge struggle as a way to challenge the system, but the ultimate goal to reintegrate or to increase participation of the marginalized group towards mainstream goals (Irmak and Guçlu, 2012) that is somehow disappointing. Such criticisms see the discourse of social inclusion as merely management tool to handle crisis that focus on problem solving orientation without explicitly interrogating unequal power relation among different groups in the society. Due to uncritical use of this concept, policy makers, development practitioners and advocates perceive and understand social inclusion as universally benevolent effort which is unproblematic negation of exclusion (Levitas, 2004; Morgan et al., 2007; Sherwin, 2010). As a fluid concept (Cobigo et al., 2012) social inclusion is criticized as simply rhetorical aspiration (Clegg et al., 2008), in which uncritical application of this 'benevolent' idea could also be seen as 'normalization' process (Secker et al., 2007) that legitimates the way of othering those who are perceived as 'abnormal', 'unusual', or 'different'.

Under such dominating liberal discourse as described above, social inclusion has been reproduced as a way to create utopian world, where everyone has the same (read: equal) right 'to participate' (or 'to contribute', as I understand through this framework) in achieving the global objectives as dictated from 'the-top'. Through continuous process of reconstructing the discourse, social inclusion is therefore widely understood as wholeheartedly benign idea rather than questioning whether the same right to participate could bring the same result of equality in power relation, which I highly doubt. Cobigo et.al. (2012) found that social inclusion often speaks about full and fair access to community-based resources and activities and emphasizing on the idea of social linkages, which underlines the sense of belonging to a group. They further conclude that rather seeing social inclusion as a static state, it should be understood as a fluid process; in which they also found very challenging. Besides that, due to lack of conceptual clarity, they criticize this concept, which the 'inclusion' criteria are basically acceptance of the dominant societal values and lifestyle that are leading to moralistic judgments (p.77).

As sounded-positive term, Graham and Slee (2006) describe that the term inclusion implies as '*bring in*' into generic dimension where something or someone

can be inserted (p.20) in a simplistic manner. The understanding of *'bring in'* in the idea of inclusion further articulated by Graham & Glee (2008) as 'implicit centeredness' as merit by incorporating "the Other" into normalized, naturalized and assembled dimensions or spheres. They further emphasize on the need to abandon the locus of 'identify otherness' when talk about 'inclusion' (Graham and Slee, 2008; Harwood and Rasmussen, 2002) that privileging 'inclusion' as "universal categories and a romanticized, universalized subject" (Graham and Slee, 2008; Lather, 2003). Moreover, in the context of questioning the idea of inclusive education, Graham and Slee (2008) argue that such normalizing view thus accentuates what Foucault defines as government technologies of 'discipline-normalization', which legitimize our judgment about certain character and ability that are considered as accepted and normal.

For years, social inclusion discourse has been dominated by 'add and stir approach' in which previously popularized by those policy makers, especially on gender mainstreaming, that aim to include women into development discourse through the instrumentalization of reformist feminist discourse. The general idea of including the Others, as a composite group with certain deficits, into policy consideration is indeed justifying legitimate form of differentiation. As Derrida describes that the word *'difference'* (as it in French) produces double movement of *differing* and *deferring*. In the first movement, it is understood as a way in grouping, labeling, and spatializing those, in which bring particular deficiencies (or characteristic) of the subject. At the same time, as the second movement come into play, it also visibilizes their invisibility, which forced them become a subject of elimination and disposal due to their invisibility (Graham and Slee, 2008). Therefore, identification and naming of the Others base on their peculiar characteristic of deficiencies, despite in the name of policy discussion with social inclusion goals, appear as unintentional strategy to preserve existing power to visibilize their invisibility, to push away, and to dispose. In sum, Derrida (1967) argues that inclusion can be theorized as a discursive strategy in a political game that construct not only position, as insider or outsider, but also act by which invisible line are drawn. This also reflects that current dominating discourse of social inclusion as genuinely benevolent concept, could also be seen as strategy to operationalize a political project, which Rose (1990) argues as *"more about the*

disablement of conflict, than the recognition of rights" (p.123), where social inclusion policies could be seen as easily harmonized with the neoliberal view.

2.4. TWO-IN-ONE: EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPTION AS TECHNOLOGY TO GOVERN

The word 'participation' has been widely utilized to ensure the involvement of local community in development projects, which also becomes increasingly popular as catchy buzzword (Cornwall and Brock, 2005) in development discourse. Oakley and Marsden (1987) define participation as the process which individuals, families or communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to their own and the community development. Likewise, Armitage (1988) defines participation as a process by which citizen act in response to public concerns, voice their opinions about decisions that affect their life, and be responsible for changes to their community. These authors define participation as processes, like Nyerere (1968) describes participation within the broader rural development framework, where people share mutual learning experiences in a cooperative's activities in which affects their wellbeing (Oakley, 1991). This involves local resources, external change agent as well as outside resources. In Indonesian context, participatory development is not a foreign concept and in fact the local concept of *gotong royong* (mutual collaboration) become key strategies in many rural development projects, especially to mobilize labour for small-scale infrastructure construction (Mansuri and Rao, 2013a). Following the fall of Suharto's authoritarian regime in the late 1990s until end of 2014, participatory development and community empowerment in Indonesia have been institutionalized in a form of state-financed community driven development project. Subsequently, this institutionalization has materialized as the backbone of Village Law No. 6/2014 which centralized on the idea of self-governing community through participation.

Historically, this so-called bottom-up development model emerged as main response towards critiques to the top-down development model which mostly around large-scale infrastructure projects (Mansuri and Rao, 2013a). Such criticism includes the needs to refine constellation of actors, issues, values as well as modes

of action (Korten and Klaus, 1984) and delivery. This alternative approach suggests conducting small-scale infrastructure projects that involve the poor to actively engage in the main operation. As a side-project, poor community is also encouraged to take part in small income generating activities. Typically, these small projects provide soft loans for groups comprised of several members from poor community to set up small businesses and it is expected to generate more income, thus will delink their dependency with market hierarchy (Mann et al., 1989). Additionally, Chambers (1983) argue that applying the idea of participation to a smaller scale development projects would allow the poor to be included as informed participants and to have control over decision.

Participatory development model in a broader term utilizes social development theory as its conceptual underpinning (Billups, 1990; David, 1993; Migdal, 1993; Rubin and Babbie, 1993) and lies its core principles in participation in community discussion, improved opportunity to learn and empowerment in order to achieve its development goals (Larrison, 2002). Mayo and Craig (1995) argued that participation and empowerment are the twin strategy to promote development that are sustainable and human focused which provide equal opportunity as well as social justice. Participatory development model cannot be detached from the notion of empowerment as its central theme, which mainly defined as a process where individuals or groups are able to exercise their ability and capability to understand and interpret problems. Mansuri and Rao (2004) underline the notion of assets and capabilities of the poor in 'empowerment', as those expand along with their participation, increasing influence, ability to negotiate, to control and to hold accountable the institutions that affects their lives. Jorgenson (2005) added that empowerment is not only the final destination, but it is useful bridge to achieve other objective, such as increase income and access to services. Oxaal (1997) characterizes that empowerment links with the quality of people's participation in decision-making and processes that affecting their lives. Although in theory, empowerment and participation should go hand in hand towards a more positive direction, but in practice the popular participation does not always empowering the poorest and most disadvantage part of the societies. Thomas (1992) places the context of empowerment within limited scope of development project, which aims to increase the power and control of the intended project beneficiaries over their own lives. Compare to the aforementioned

definitions, Mohanty (1995) criticize that the popularized model of “empowerment” has limited and channelized the politics of the oppressed in which, *“their right to struggle is circumscribed to these forms of political bargaining and the state is assumed to be an impartial arbitrator trying to ‘enable’ the poor to pursue these forms of politics.”* (p.27)

Although the underlying assumption to participatory development is expanding the involvement of a wide range of actors, which presumed to lead towards a more sustainable development outcomes; the concept of participation itself remain debatable. Scholars that affiliate with participation, agree that this concept is contextual and its application depends on specific environment (Cornwall, 2004; Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Hayward et al., 2004; Hickey, 2005; Mansuri and Rao, 2013a; Parkinson, 2009; Quaghebeur et al., 2004), which make it possible to apply the concept in many different situation (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995). This in turn could lead to multiple interpretation depend on who talk about it (Cullen and Coryn, 2011; Draper et al., 2010; Mahoney et al., 2007; Mikkelsen, 2005; Moberg, 2016). Oakley (1991), for instance, argues that participation has twin meanings, as a means and a goal. As a means, participation is associated as a tool to achieve defined objectives, as argued by Brager, Specht and Torczyner (1987) that defined participation as a means to educate citizens and to increase their competence. It is a vehicle for influencing decision that affect the lives of citizens and an avenue for transferring political power. While as an end, participation is a longer-term process, which sometimes without a specific goal, to develop capabilities and enable community to take more active role in development.

Since its emergence, the concept of participation has taken its best form into small-scale development projects, where local communities are encouraged to actively involved in every step of project designing processes as well as the execution. This resonates Rahnema’s conception of participatory approach that persuade its target populations to be ready to participate fully in development design (Rahnema, 2010). With such mainstream understanding, Stiefel and Wolfe (1994) argue that participation is a means to involve people/invite people in activities initiated by development agencies of the state. This understanding certainly differs from what it refers as people’s self-development, which involves a

series of collective action and community mobilization to negotiate, especially with those with power, including the state.

Despite the overwhelming praise, strong criticism toward the idea of participation is unavoidable. Mosse (2001) argues that local power and gender relation play important part in participatory exercise and the likelihood of high level of collusion in the planning process that serves the interest of powerful authorities and elites. Another critique also notes that communities' influence often limited by the system where the implementing organizations, for instance non-government organizations, mainly dependent on funding from donors which gear towards donors' priorities and what the projects able to deliver. Therefore, resulting more toward upward accountability to the funders rather than downward accountability towards the communities (Henderson, 2002; Holmen and Jirstrom, 2009; Mosse, 2001). Post-developmentalist scholars instead have seen the idea of participation as new tyranny (Cooke and Kothari, 2001), where it is used to legitimized agenda under broader framework of development projects rather letting the community decides (Kelly, 2004). As new tyranny, Cooke and Kothari (2001) argue that participation can impose power relation in a technocratic way and indeed it is too naïve to say that transformative power transfer can be achieve via development professionals alone. Further criticism to participation comes from Williams (2004) who argues that the idea of participation is specifically located within community, in which has been defined earlier by the project designer. He sees that participation tends to treat community as singular entity rather than complex structure of embedded power hierarchies, gender relations and traditional institutions. He adds that the idea of communities is not natural, idealized in some ways of their content, in which recreated as a product of development projects. He concludes by citing Kothari (2001) that the more participatory the enquiry, the more its outcome will hide the real power structure of the community.

Although the original idea of participatory development was genuinely transformative through giving voice to the marginalized, however the idea of mainstreaming participatory development has depoliticized its original intention. Hickey and Mohan (2005) add that the failure of participatory in understanding the issue of power and politics due to its association with the concept of empowerment. Its obsession with the idea of local community as the main theme is overly exaggerated, without paying critical attention to the wider structure of injustice

and oppression that situated surround it (Mohan, 2001; Mohan and Stokke, 2000). Additionally, Kesby (2005) added that the perception of local communities is seen as discrete, socially homogenous single entity rather than multiple and overlaps (Cleaver, 1999) which further jeopardize the fact that community is also a product of development projects whose local knowledge has been re-packaged and used by external agents. Therefore, resonate with Mohan (2001) that argue if 'local communities' is being privilege as the 'authentic' knowledge, this will bring the Westerner/development expert as the absolute savior as the only one that can bridge the gap (p.562) which will create danger of depoliticizing development (Williams, 2004). This brings back the argument of participatory development as new tyranny (Cooke and Kothari, 2001), that has been politically circumscribed through its mainstream vision of development (Rahnema, 2010) where certain external agent use participatory development more as technical method in delivering projects rather than political methodology of community empowerment (Carmen, 1996; Cleaver, 1999; Rahman, 1995).

Actually, Robert Chambers (1974) has warned us about the use of participation, which has different implication to different context. Chambers argues that although the idea of increased participation associates with more democratic, egalitarian and equitable society; but it might lead to exactly the opposite consequences depend on the context where it is applied. He then gives example that greater participation in regional planning tends to perpetuate regional inequalities, favor to those who has better planning capacity to implement. Similarly, in the context of development project, great participation could mean high likelihood to be coopted by the most powerful ones, for instance the elites who are *"wealthier, more educated, of higher social status, male and more politically connected than non-participants"* (Beard and Dasgupta, 2007; Mansuri and Rao, 2013a: 5). These characteristics are very significant in predicting how the dynamic among members' goes about (Mansuri and Rao, 2004). In addition, local context matters on the positive impact resulted from the project, especially for marginalized groups that are less likely to benefit (Desai and Joshi, 2014; Mansuri and Rao, 2013b, 2013a; O'Meally, 2014).

2.5. CITIZENSHIP AS A FORM OF GLOBAL ASSEMBLAGE

The main argument of this thesis lies of the hypothesis that through neoliberal logic, social inclusion is translated as a way to govern the problematic others, through which it transforms them into particular subjects of a global assemblage. I use the term of global assemblage that is coined by Collier and Ong (2005), who define it as “*system that mixed technology, politics and actors in diverse configurations that do not follow given scales or political mapping*” (p. 338). Their conceptualization of global assemblage shows how global and localized components are intertwined in shaping particular form of constellations that construct various domains called ‘culture’, ‘economy’, and ‘society’ (Ong and Collier, 2005). While global assemblage does not mean a single logic, they emphasize its characteristic being temporality. Ong (2007) clearly articulates her conception of assemblage, which is down to instability of networks that are produced through various experiments in governing multiple populations through various domains of which different strategies of governing will be employed to govern and regulating people from distances. She further argues that this form called ‘graduated’ or ‘variegated’ sovereignty to specify different forms of ordering populations, zones beyond formal state border.

In discussing about global assemblage, Collier and Ong (2005) describe about the idea of *displacement* and *reappropriation of expertise* that underline its global form. Such global form travels across dimensions, what Giddens (2013) referred as impersonal values that can be crafted without context, in which results universal phenomena that emphasizes its ‘mechanical’ foundation. Based on this thinking, Collier and Ong argue that this global phenomenon has distinctive capacity for *decontextualization* and *recontextualization*, abstractability and movement, disregard various social and cultural system. Such processes, according to Giddens, involved technology, in which constitute of series of techniques that become really fundamental in creating material technology and specialized social expertise. Collier and Ong then call this idea as technoscience, where material technology or specialized social expertise emerged as ideal form of this global form, in which forms of politics and ethnics configured around collective idea that are not defined culturally neither socially (Ong and Collier, 2005: 9).

Existing neoliberal discourse of social inclusion that ‘universally’ understood, often framed within the notion of citizenship that linked the idea of participation in a sovereign system designed within specific national border. Here, I think it is important to problematize citizenship as neoliberal idea with global assemblage frame that Collier and Ong have introduced. According to Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker (2017), most literatures on citizenship studies seldom occurred in postcolonial society, instead it is mostly situated in liberal and high-capacity state. Werbner (2002) and Nyamnjoh (2002) argue that majority of citizenship studies conceptualize citizenship as individual right-bearing subject, in which highly contrast with realities in many postcolonial contexts, where communal sense of belonging and local and informal connections are respected (Cornwall et al., 2011). Cornwall et al. further argue that often the discussion about citizenship takes places when rights and respects are lacking, which bring about the talks on access to ‘entitlement’. Citizenship study commissioned by Berenschot et al., (2017) then also add to the complication where discourse of citizenship become more problematic when it intertwines with weak capacity state, predominated by *clientelistic* political system, or occupied by rent-seeking bureaucrats. In their study, citizenship in postcolonial society is contextualized within local politics and history, which involve various ranges of negotiations, resistance, and acceptance; as oppose to liberal individualist notion of formal legalized engagement between the state and individuals that inhabited its geographical area. Such dominant discourse of citizenship, therefore denies those who are weaker in terms of formal legality, which inevitably will push them away.

Cornwall, Robins and Von Lieres (2011) articulated that citizenship in the global south entangled with complex and diverse relationship with state bureaucrats, exclusion, denials as well as different agents that take over role of the state. In such context, vulnerability and high level of uncertainly in everyday life of postcolonial subjects, requires them to negotiate their relation with other power holders; such as state, traditional leaders and local patrons. Furthermore, in such condition, citizenship in postcolonial context materialized in terms of clientelism or communitarian form of citizenship. They further argue that marginalized groups often employ a wide range of tactical strategies, applying different constellation of political discourses; rather than follow single linear pathways, in

which involves series of negotiation and compromises. Holston (2008) writes that states depend on attributes like class, social status, race, gender, ethnicity and other dimension of differentiation in translate the idea of citizenship, which he further defines as 'differentiated citizenship'. This means that people of different class (or ethnicity) have different engagement modality with the state and other power holders through diverse ways of channeling resources thus materialized in assorted form of actions in claiming entitlements. The case of Indonesian Chinese descendent in practicing day-to-day citizenship, especially during the 32-years of authoritarian regime, spanned over a wide range of particular dimension such as: the requirement to present their Indonesia citizenship certificate in occasions like renewing identity and family cards, obtaining marriage certificates, or applying for jobs (Anggraeni, 2011); marked by particular coding system in their identification cards (Aguilar, 1999); vulnerable objects as 'petty-bribe' target by local bureaucrats; or religion conversion.

Adding to Holsten's definition, Ito (2017) argues that everyday form of citizenship at village level in Indonesia is not determined by institutional arena, but rather personal connections with convenient local power holder. Unlike the occidental discourse that focus in individual-legal affiliation, where democratic institutions focus on giving arena for citizen to use their rights to participate in decision-making processes; day-to-day citizenship experience in the global south show that such practices of democratic individualism do not agree with local logic that contextualized by particularities. His study in one Javanese village in Indonesia shows that practiced day-to-day citizenship is mediated through hybrid model of new democratic institution and existing institutions of local power, which created layers of power where local logic and institutional domain intertwine. Through this study, he found that poor villagers feel less benefit from formal institutional model of citizenship, whereas their everyday citizenship are mediated by layers of power at the local level. This condition further informs how practiced everyday citizenship in Ito's study portrays political strategy of the poor in defining their citizenship including maintain patron-client relationship with local power holder. This shows how the notion of everyday citizenship is perceived, practiced, and experienced by people in the global south, which is distinct from the occidental model that focus on individually engaged citizens towards rights-claiming action.

Aretxaga (2003) argues that state failures in fulfilling the rights of its citizens lead to a condition where there is too much agent that want to play role as the state. She further criticizes such nationalist discourse, especially when the social imaginary of the state clash with actual experience of marginalization, disempowerment, and violation (Cornwall et al., 2011). Adding to that, political consortiums emerged as form of collusion between politicians, bureaucrats and corporations, in which Winters (2011) calls as 'untamed ruling oligarchies' and 'predatory elites' as Hadiz (2010) defines, which have been able to engineer policies for their own benefit (Berenschot et al., 2017). Therefore, clientelistic citizenship in the global south that relies on informal mechanism through securing immediate win-win relationship with local power holders such as prominent religious leaders, well respected headmen, or even local gangs, usually seen as a common model, where the need to maintain security occurred as a form of practicing day-to-day citizenship.

Distinct colonial experiences faced by postcolonial societies call for the necessity to include the political aspect, rather than just the legal formal aspect of citizenship. Study by Mohanty (2007, 2012) about women participation in India reveals although that women have been included in the official political bodies, but rights-based claim to gender equality remain limited. She argues that even women participated in local committees, their participation was attached with gendered norms and values as mother that portray their domestication. She then concludes that the institutional spaces that created by the states are empty where women continuously struggle to claim their spaces of inclusion. This study is also concordant what Isin and Wood (1999) argue as 'political character group-based citizenship claims', of which recognize emerging new identities and group-rights claimants, as oppose to individual liberal based claimants.

In her research about Chinese Indonesian women identity and citizenship, Khanis (2010) rejects the single conceptualization about legal aspect of membership, as dominating discourse of citizenship. She further seeks to include the experience of misrecognition and marginalization within the history of oppression experience by these Chinese Indonesian women throughout different incidents of political fluctuation in the country. She follows what Lister (1997, 2003) has offered about compromised alternative to the dominant view on citizenship. In

this context, Lister defines citizenship as membership of a community, between individual, state and community, where it is fluid, negotiated, contested and contextual. She further notes that in order to obtain equality and full citizenship, agency is needed. Moreover, like Lister that underlines the idea of membership when describing citizenship, Turner (1993) also echoes similar view, which citizenship is understood as set of practices that include judicial, political, economic or cultural, of which use to determine whether a person is a competent member of society. Additionally, such practices are also seen as a consequence that governs the flow of resources to individuals and communities/groups. For a more radical conception and contrast with the previous authors, Ong (2006) does not underline membership and agency, as mostly promoted by liberal thinkers. She further associates citizenship resulted from development of market and political liberalism. Ong then added, in the context of East and Southeast Asian, citizenship often referred with social obligation to build the nations.

III – METHODOLOGY

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3.1. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

Research about Chinese Indonesians and their relationship with Indonesia's nationalism as nation-building project have been widely well written by various scholars (Blussé, 1986; Budianta, 2000; Go, 2008; Gondomono, 2002; Hoon, 2006b, 2008; Lohanda, 1996; Ravando, 2014; Setiono, 2003; Siddique and Suryadinata, 1981; Somer Heidhues, 2009a, 2017; Suryadinata, 1992, 1999; Tan, 2001, 2005). These studies explore wide range of themes that highlight multitude of engagement in socio-political, cultural, and economical aspect of Chinese Indonesian communities across the country which continue to be marginalized, especially during Suharto's New Order regime (1966-1998). Having said that, research about Chinese Indonesians that dedicated its main analytical foci on the women remain rarely explored. Therefore, the focus on Chinese *Benteng* women in this study become *atypical* representation of Chinese Indonesians – especially the women – which often portrayed as apolitical and ahistorical subject of Indonesia's nation building journey. Moreover, it is crucial for this research to obtain a holistic picture about Chinese *Benteng* women, as agents of constant struggle and resistance as broadly experienced by majority of Chinese descendants in contemporary Indonesia. For that reason, by employing qualitative method, this study echoes what Nelson et.al. (1992) explain about the use of qualitative study that explores crosscutting issues where it spans over various disciplines and multiple paradigms, whether naturalistic and interpretative understanding of human world. Following to that, these are then translated into broad and interpretative; and at the same time also humanistic and naturalistic (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

Unlike the quantitative approach, qualitative method is primarily selected due to its ability to obtain in-depth understanding about Chinese *Benteng* Women themselves and their multifaceted relationship with other community groups. Through establishing intimate relationship with these women, including their family members and relatives, this method allows me to greatly explore different dynamics, pattern of relationship, cultural meaning and values, as well as intrinsic

gender relation and power dimension. This also enables me to continuously interpret and construct information as the research moving forward. In addition to that, by personally engaged with the Chinese *Benteng* Women group, this facilitates me to unravel convoluted relationships, including its overcast on daily realities that seems taboo and inappropriate to talk about, such as family conflict and disputes, emotional and physical abuses, unaccustomed practices (Olson et al., 2007) and perhaps sexual harassment (Scarduzio and Geist-Marti, 2008). Besides understanding the individual/personal part of the relationship among the people studied, qualitative research also has opened my access to understand continuous dynamics among Chinese *Benteng* women groups, through attended more formal meeting with government authorities and participated in day-to-day informal activities with these women, their families and relatives.

To study the specific context of Chinese *Benteng* women, the decision to employ qualitative method also derived from its ability to help me understand wide range of complex societal issues that emerged from their particular context; social, economic, cultural, political, and historical. I am in agreement with Trethewey (2001) that highlights particular feature of qualitative study which enables me to comprehend crosscutting contemporary issues, such as gender, ethnicity, and race; through which they could be criticized and contextually located within deep examination of demographic categories that continuously changing and socially constructed (Tracy, 2013). Besides that, by taking holistic approach in understanding culture, qualitative research allows me to put pieces together within an integrated system of particular culture. Moreover, to pursue such integrated perspective, I am in agreement with Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2016) that suggest to treat people and group as a whole and engaging with the subject in a natural way, so it does not detach the research subject with the structure they live in.

Unlike quantitative model, that often follows positivist tradition, qualitative research is contextual and interpretative. Denzin & Lincoln (2011) refer qualitative researchers as quilters (p.4) that borrow and interweave various vantage points, in a processes called as *bricolage* (p.4). Their 'crafting' skills are essential to employ various data to assemble a coherent, satisfying and valuable synthesis within the research process. According to Becker (1998), qualitative study enables researchers to use aesthetic materials and tools in order to execute strategies, methods and

techniques to construct representation and at the same time also articulate subjective interpretation; depending on research questions which to be asked according to context (Nelson et al., 1992). This explains why qualitative study is inherently multi method (Flick, 2002), which required researchers' meticulous ability to simultaneously interpret series of associated realities and events of the subject research into inseparable footages by employing multiple voices and various textual formations. Moreover, the role as cultural interpreters, using Geertz's terminology of "thick description", qualitative researchers are demanded to provide eloquent illustration that unpack values, belief and action in a group, society, and organization where the study takes place (Geertz, 1973). And to elicit such contextual information, ethnography is often employed as pathway to construct meaning through specific contextual attachment that comparable to settings of scientific experiment (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

Growing up as Chinese minority in contemporary Indonesia, where misrepresentation of Chinese Indonesians is continuously reconstructed and reproduced by the dominant regime, I share partial of my identity as Chinese *Peranakan* Indonesian woman with the Chinese *Benteng* women as the locus of my study. Based on this personal account, I realize that it is important to create a space, which allow voices of Indonesian Chinese community that were silenced to be heard. In addition to that, to realize the creation of such space, it is important to ensure that this research has reflective element to take into account of their experiences, as also my experience as a researcher and member of Indonesian Chinese community, in a larger social phenomenon of continuous process of *othering* in contemporary Indonesia. Therefore, the use of qualitative research is deliberately selected, as it attempts to understand people with the point of reference of themselves that brings the reflexive element of the research subject as well as the researcher. Through this, qualitative research enables greater consideration of researcher' past experience that influences the interpretation and interaction. This makes the researchers as crucial instrument in absorbing, interpreting the world through techniques such as participant observation and interview, just as Louis (1991) says "*I am an instrument of my inquiry: and the inquiry is inseparable from whom I am*" (p.365). And finally, following phenomenology line of thought, by doing qualitative research, it is essential to experience the reality of

other people, identify themselves with the people they study to understand how they see things (Taylor et al., 2016).

3.2. PARADIGMATIC APPROACH AND THEORY

Guba and Lincoln (1994) argue that research paradigms that we use is considered as a set of basic belief system that guide us researchers to fundamentally select appropriate method, ontologically and epistemologically to understand the representation of the world view. Furthermore, implication of selecting appropriate paradigm is not only philosophical differences, but also technical implication, whether explicitly or implicitly. In addition to that, selection of pertinent research paradigm has critical consequences for practical conduct of inquiry as well as interpretation of findings. Flick (2002) defines three basic positions that the qualitative researchers have to understand in defining their methodological focus. First is the tradition of symbolic interactionism, promoted by Herbert Blumer (1938) that concern with studying subject meaning and individual attributes. This approach works based on 'three simple premises', which are *"that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them; that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows; and the third is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters"* (Blumer, 1969: 2; Flick, 2002). In explaining this approach, Denzin (1989) that see the use of this method only to *'examine the relationship between personal troubles and the public policies and public institutions that have been created to address those personal problems.'* (Flick, 2002: 10). Realizing the importance of subjective point of view, proponents of this approach start from the research subject's daily activities, which will elicit information about what realities do they experience and how their world functions. From such rich information, theories are developed, organized, and revised in an interdependent way, in such a way to seek to reconstruct the subjective theories (Flick, 2002).

The second methodological focus according to Flick (2002) is ethnomethodology, popularized by Harold Garfinkel (1991) that questions of how people produced social reality within and through interactive processes. Heritage (1985) describes its basic assumptions, that are: (1) interaction is structurally

organized; (2) contributions of interaction are shaped and renewed by context; and (3) *thus two properties inhere in the details of interaction so that no order of detail in conversational interaction can be dismissed a priori as disorderly, accidental or irrelevant* (p. 1). Proponents of this approach believe that interaction is produced and reproduces through interaction at the same time; and thorough analysis of interaction shall define its importance that is not taken for granted (Flick, 2002). Unlike the previous approach that focuses on subjectivity, the ethnomethodology seeks to understand how the interaction is organized. And the third theoretical approach according to Flick is cultural framing of social and subjective reality through structuralist model. This model emphasizes on cultural system of meaning that are assumed to somehow frame the perception and construction of subjective and social reality. Basic assumptions of this approach include the surface of experience and activity in one hand, that accessible and subjective in nature; and deep structure in the other hand, that does not always accessible to daily reflection. Through structuralist approach, which can be achieved through hermeneutics objective, Erdheim (1984) found that by analyzing these two dimensions, it would help to discover how “societal production of unconsciousness” work (Flick, 2002).

Building from Denin and Lincoln’s work, Tracy (2013) associates research paradigms as the type of lenses that researchers use to see things, in which reflect their preferred ways of understanding realities, building knowledge and gathering information around it. Referring to Kinchloe and McLaren (2000), data cannot be separated from ideology, albeit it is fundamentally shaped by power relation. They further argue that a set of doctrines, myth and belief that guide and have power over individual, group and societal. This idea is particularly relevant to understand the idea of social inclusion, citizenship, empowerment and participation that become key concepts in this study. Originated from Frankfurt School, Marxist or Neo-Marxist background, critical theory often brings hierarchical power relation into constant conscious dialogue and continue to allow space for contestation and question toward transformation. For instance, Habermas (1979), as one of the critical theorists, blamed capitalism for many of today’s social disadvantage and suggests that society should create structure and spaces where everyone have equal access, voice and opportunity. This brings to the central of critical thinking argument that commonsense face-value assumption must be contested, because

things are not always what they seem and therefore, such research may challenge taken-for-granted assumption (Tracy, 2013).

According to critical paradigm, the idea of oppression is most forceful when the least powerful does not consciously understand their subordination. Often people see hierarchical relationship as normal and permanent, rather than product of social construct. Therefore, unequal power relations are likely most destructive when people view their own powerlessness as natural, necessary or inevitable (Tracy, 2013). Laclau & Mouffee (1985) underline the concept of hegemony where people accept, agree, internalize, thus voluntarily reproduce values and norms that are not necessarily support their best interest. By employing critical paradigm, this research is oriented towards elaborating how exploitation, unfairness and construct communication, including how cultural participants assert, question, challenge or comply their subordination within the framework of existing asymmetrical power relation (Alvesson and Deetz, 1996). On similar note, Guba & Lincoln (1994) define the ultimate objective of research with critical theory paradigm is to criticize and transformation of the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender structure that constraint and exploit human kind by engagement in constant resistance.

3.3. POSTCOLONIAL FEMINIST APPROACH TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Considering complex relationship between national conceptualization of womanhood in Indonesia and structural oppression as their colonial experiences, I consider the use of postcolonial feminist approach to this research is well-suited; as Gilligan (1982; 1988) said that feminist researchers are able to respect female voice through treating subject research as ethic of care (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Citing Meis (1983), Flick (2002) also argues that feminist research is often associated with qualitative method, as oppose to the quantitative ones that often convert women's voice into neutral-value object. Adding to Gilligan, Steiner (1989, 1997) emphasizes that feminist researchers ask questions on whose interests are valued, which brings to point of feminist ethical consciousness that underline form of oppression and imbalances, that makes this approach as morally desirable alternative (Christians, 2011; Steiner, 2009).

Having said that, it is important to understand that feminist knowledge is not free value. Instead, it is other form of knowledge construction that according to Kim (2007) is produced within the matrix of power that embedded in unequal relation and hegemonic transfer of ideas (Ali, 2007; Grewal and Kaplan, 1994; Kim-Puri, 2005; Mani, 1990; Mohanty, 2005; Ong, 1988, 1999; Radcliffe, 1994; Tyagi, 2014). Countering western discourse of feminist theories, third world feminists like Narayan (Narayan, 1997a, 2000), Spivak (1988; 1990), Grewal & Kaplan (1994) and Sandoval (1991, 2000) criticize such theories, concepts and methods that are disseminated through a 'one-way vision' model, from the Anglo-European nations to the rest of the world, which often referred as the *peripheries*. These scholars argue that local socioeconomic and cultural production cannot be understood without looking at the larger picture of globalization discourse and practice that perpetuate unequal power relation through capital movement, labour mobilization and financial circulation.

The birth of postcolonial feminist thinking stems from strong criticism towards the hegemonic view of western feminists that impose its 'narrow' perspective in understanding complex dimensions of power relation that intertwine with race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, and religion under particular colonial or postcolonial experiences. Collins (1990), for instance, points out that black feminists experience triple oppressions, which stem from cumulative experience of subjugation and discrimination on the basis of race, class and gender. This history is thus embedded in longstanding experience that established specific knowledge about their struggle, pain, and marginalization as a result of slavery, colonialism and continuous discrimination (Kim, 2007). Moreover, postcolonial feminists challenge the Western feminists' assumption on homogenous representation of Third World Women as singular entity, thus neglect the distinct experiences of their oppression, injustice, and inequality that reproduced through colonialism and neocolonialism. Since postcolonial feminism proposes indigenously-localized and contextualized understanding of the aforementioned elements, this point of view enables me to analyze the experience of Chinese *Benteng* women through paying significant attention to their socio-political and cultural history as well as different dimension of structural constraints that they experience. Additionally, this approach will facilitate the researcher to elicit specific

experiences about struggles, negotiation against subordination and domestication, and resistance on ethnicity-based exclusion as well as social class and political history. Borrowing De Vault's (1996: 42) account about black feminist theory that proposed 'ways of knowing the world' and 'measure knowledge' against concrete experience, I attempt to test such understanding through dialogue and make judgment based on an ethic of personal accountability (Kim, 2007).

The most important feature of postcolonial feminist perspective is its ability to identify philosophical loophole in Western feminist thinking, which produced monolithic representation of Third World women, by '*endarken*' feminist research to diversify its agenda (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Olesen (2011) criticizes the whiteness of Western feminist researches that define feminism itself as construction of color through '*othering*' where occidental conceptualization is not appropriate to understand women in postcolonial sites. Notable postcolonial feminist writers, including Mohanty (1988, 2005), Spivak (1988, 1998; 1990), Narayan (1997a, 2000), Ong (1988, 1999; 1996), Trinh (1998) have produced a number of critical works that address such blind spots where Western feminists research failed to address. Mohanty (1988), for instance, problematizes singular and composite representation of the Third World women as 'average Third World Woman' that epitomized the characters of the Third World nations. These characters resulted in Third World women as ignorant, poor, uneducated, traditionally oppressed, domesticated and family oriented, victimized and so on.

Derived from their critiques to the first world counterparts, postcolonial feminists underline that interlocking dimensions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and religion which connect the inseparable notions of oppression and domination; both analytically or politically (Crenshaw, 1991; Kim, 2007; King, 1988). Homogenized conceptualization of Third World women as produced through First World philosophical epistemology has proposed globally agreed notion of *gender* and *sisterhood*, which many postcolonial feminists reject. Oyewumi (2001) argues that these two broadly popular concepts are grounded in Anglo-European centric interpretation, where those are based on Western feminists' particular history that stem from the Anglo-American model of nuclear family structure. Through hegemonic Western feminist discourse, these ideas are universalized through occidental standards, where traditional cultural or religious practices are seen as backward, uncivilized and oppressive. This brings to what Rajan & Park (2005)

argue that postcolonial feminism studies address concerns of “*the most ‘backward’ parts of the world*” and offer “*the most advance understanding the contemporary ‘realities’*” (p.66) through exposing the issues of subjectivities and subaltern that embedded in patriarchies, nations, states, empires, political economy and (neo) colonialism (Kim, 2007).

Postcolonial feminist scholars argue that such monolithic representation depicts women from the third world as being victims of masculine control and repressive objects of traditional culture and religion, without localizing and contextualizing their experiences on colonialism and post-colonialism. The global idea of ‘oppression’ which promoted by the Western feminist is indeed ‘colonizing’, where the political and historical agency of the Third World Women are disrespected. Therefore, ‘*situatedness*’, as Mohanty (2005) argues, becomes important to forgo postcolonial feminism approach where their particularity and diversity should be taken into account when locating women. In her earlier work, *Under Western Eyes* (1988), Mohanty wrote “*the assumption of women as an already constituted, coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location or contradictions, implies a notion of gender or sexual differences that can be applied universally and cross culturally...*”(p.336-337). She further classified that there are five ways of which Third World women are treated as a composite category of analysis by Western feminist as homogenous powerless group that are victimized of particular socio-economic system. These include victims of male violence, of colonial process, of Arab familial systems, of economic development process, and of Islamic codes. She also added that universal application of feminist theory assumes that all women, despite their cultural coherence, socio-economic status in their society, class and ethnicity; are always seen as dichotomous terms opposite to men.

Postcolonial feminist scholars underscore specific importance of colonial and post-colonial experience that shaped the history of Third World, where the intersections of factors such as class, geographical location, modern state policies and local-global relationship are inevitable. These intersections further construct women’s subjectivity and identity in many different ways in any historical moment, which undermine the concept of women (Kim, 2007). Although women are always placed within ‘culture’ in a way that men are not located in the same

way (Alwis, 2002); Mohanty (1988) emphasizes that being a Third World woman is not automatically oppressed. When originated from powerful class or family, she may have more power and agency than a working-class woman or even man in 'the West'. Furthermore, postcolonial feminist scholars continuously advocate the importance not to see women as ahistorical, monolithic, and apolitical subject and they should not be differentiated in dichotomy with Western women that often portrayed as 'secular, liberated, and having control over their own lives' (Mohanty, 2013).

As postcolonial feminist concern with cultural and religious values, Okin (1999) and Aguilar (1997) argue that neglecting such values on the basis of women's right can be seen as feminist' replication of intellectual colonization, where the conceptualization of women is continuously reconstructed, where it intersects with multifaceted forms of oppression. As Grewal and Kaplan (1994) emphasize that feminism is not free from asymmetrical power relations, therefore Mohanty (2005) urges the importance to think about power, equality and justice within context, which resonate with particular historical experiences. This constructs social division between sexes that contributed to women's oppression and situated women as second-class category. Failure to recognize the diversity of their cultural values and homogenization of historical experience of the Third World women, the idea of '*strategic sisterhood*' are somehow precarious where it might make women unaware to pursue other more radical alternatives against global capitalism (Bergeron, 2001).

Numerous works from postcolonial feminist scholars have shown complex interaction between economic, political, cultural, social, and religious dimensions with the role of local and transnational history that shape women's life experience. The process of *othering* the southern and eastern women has constructed the idea of 'oppression' as an identical experience where all Third World women experience the same regardless their caste, race, religion, ethnicity, class, and colonial history, in contrast to the reality of liberal Western women. This has authenticated the result of (neo) colonial missions that fabricate the need to liberate these women from oppressed traditional structure and religions. For instance, Chatterjee (1989) in her work founds that elite Indian women were produced as incubator and nurturer of communal identity and guardian of cultural traditions, during the British Colonial rule in the 19th and 20th century. Their domesticated roles as wife and mother were

seen as critical to struggle for independent and modern Indian state. Or when veils often perceived as a form of oppression to women in Muslim society, Mohanty (1984) notes that historical context of different political regimes in Iran showed different meaning on how women's veils were reconstructed as a form of agency, through sisterhood solidarity and resistance. On similar note, Candraningrum's (2013) work on *Negotiating Women's Veiling* shows that throughout Indonesia's history, the meaning of veil has constantly changing along with women's movement across Southeast Asian countries. She further argues that under New Order's authoritarian regime, head veil represented freedom and women's resistance against the oppressive government. On the contrary, as the democratic government step into power in which expected to shed some lights to the country, the mushrooming of Islamist hardliner groups started to impose Islamic way of living by controlling women to wear veils. Interestingly, men are not the one that in control but women are policing other women that do not wear veil.

Colonial and postcolonial history experienced by the Chinese *Benteng* women in Indonesia were shaped by longstanding socio-political exclusion as well as structural discrimination faced by the large majority of Chinese Indonesians, although the degree of such experienced were varied according to their social class, economic power, ties and relationship with Indonesian natives, religion, or places where they live. Throughout the Indonesian history of nation building, specifically during the pre-independence war and post-independence state development era, other than their contribution to the macroeconomic dimension, the role of Chinese Indonesians was ignored and silenced by the oppressive authoritarian regime although later it has gained increasing attention during the 1998 political reform. Adding to the process of *othering* the Chinese Indonesians, which were singularly represented as monolithic ethnic group, Chinese Indonesian women are continuously depicted as apolitical and ahistorical being. Chan's (1991, 1995) works were among the rare literatures that speak about how Chinese Indonesian women saw themselves during pre-independence era through the publication of emancipation journals, namely *Maanblad Istri* and *Panorama Weekly*. These works have shown, although somewhat available, there were very limited spaces for Indonesian women of Chinese descent to play key role in political-social activism in which could contribute to overall independence movement. She also highlights

that compared to Indonesian native women movements which were far more advance at that time, efforts built by mostly elite and educated Indonesian women of Chinese descendants to engage in social-political activities did not attract wide responses.

By employing postcolonial feminist approach, this research aims to deeply understand the politics of racial relations and gender injustice that contribute to the exclusion of Chinese *Benteng* women. As the category of women is continuously shifted and reconstructed, postcolonial feminist approach constantly challenges modernist universal thinking and essentialist classification that represent women and culture in simple binary categories (Bulbeck, 1997; Nash, 2002), through deconstructing boundaries that are understood as normative (Kim, 2007). Furthermore, this approach also able to address critical stumbling blocks of ahistorical universalist framework by focusing its analysis on the 'other' as subject research and the process of *othering*, through rich elaboration of agency, subjectivity and representation. Mohanty (2005) and Trinh (1998) argues that patronizing western view confines the image of Third World women in temporal, spatial and historical border where people are portrayed as having little agency, lack of freedom, oppressed, and victimized which need to be rescued; and those who are pushed away, marginalized, or outcast as the 'problematic' others (Radcliffe, 1994: 27; Trinh, 1998).

3.4. UNDERSTANDING SELF AND OTHERS THROUGH AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC INQUIRY

Unlike quantitative work, qualitative research requires holistic understanding about different dimensions that contribute in shaping the social world. Adler and Adler (2008) clearly state that ethnography has proven to be the best way to learn about a wide range of complex social phenomena (O'Reilly, 2012). It involves empirical work, particularly observation in which intended to develop holistic, nuance and non-reductive text (Taylor, 2002). Scholars, including Hammersley & Atkinson (2007), define ethnography is overlap with wider qualitative research types that often use 'fieldwork', case studies or even life history; and the data collection processes that usually require the researchers to involve in daily lives of the research subjects for long duration of time. Such

processes range from observing what happens, asking questions through formal and informal type of interviews, or collecting documents also historical artifacts. In this way, researchers need to gather whatever data available to shed the light on specific issues to obtain emerging focus of inquiry. Adding to that, Willis & Trondman (2002) describe ethnography as *“a methodology that draws on a family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents, and on richly writing up the encounter, respecting, recording, representing, at least partly in its own terms, the irreducibly of human experiences”* (p.394). As an ambitious journey, ethnography is a complex world of social interaction that encompasses of *credible, rigorous and authentic* stories from the perspective of the research subjects, where researchers play crucial role in interpreting those stories in the context of people’s daily lives (O’Reilly, 2012) through phenomenological and hermeneutic interpretation. According to ethnographers like Hughes (1993), Geertz (1989), and Hammersley & Atkinson (2007), ethnography itself is a study of social interaction, practices and events in which ethnographers intensively involve through fieldwork, observe and also participate in everyday practices, including pay attention to social expression, what people do and say, which to be interpreted and assigned meanings. In short, Richardson (Richardson, 2000: 254) describes that good ethnography should provide *“credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the ‘real’”*(Tracy, 2013).

There are two critical elements of ethnography according to Willis & Trondman (2002). First is the understanding and representation of particular experiences; and the second is presenting, explaining and acknowledging the culture, where such experiences are located and entrenched in contextual history. Therefore, to achieve such objective, O’Reilly (2012) notes that ethnography should be informed by a theory of practice that helps the researchers to comprehend social life as inevitable consequences of contextual and continuous interplay between structure and agency through day-to-day practices. This examines social life as it unravels, including looking at how people feel, in the context of their community groups and with thorough analysis of how wider structure changes over time. Additionally, it also attempts to seek for a reflexive manner about one’s own role in the construction of extended social world as the ethnography continues. In a broader sense, ethnography gains understanding of social world through daily

practice of its human agents in continuously changing context, which involve ethnographers' immersion to build legitimate trust and rapport with the research subjects. This would be done through both phenomenological and hermeneutic interpretation, including recognition of complex and dynamic changes in social world (O'Reilly, 2012).

The study about Chinese *Benteng* women in Indonesia shares great and deep meaning on the issue of self-identity, exclusion and inclusion experiences that are very personal to me. Because of that, this is also the reason why, rather than utilizing full fledge traditional ethnographic inquiry, it would be more suitable to carry out this research through autoethnography approach in order to obtain deeper insight with personal nature into the problem that often unnoticed in the culture. Considering that I share partial experience, including political history, culture, and values, being an Indonesian Chinese woman that grew up during the authoritarian regime, the idea to elaborate autoethnography method appear to be more suitable compare to traditional ethnographic method of inquiry. The choice to employ this method is coincide with Hayano's (1979) account on autoethnography, which he refers as conducting and writing ethnography about the researcher's "own people" that involves the work of social scientist who carry out research through intensive participant observation in its natural environment. In his work, Hayano mentioned that current contemporary ethnographers, who are mainly minorities and foreign (non-colonial) anthropologists, have clear priorities to do ethnography in their home territories, either by choice or social restriction (Bracey et al., 1973). He also added that emerging new specialization within anthropological field has made these contemporary anthropologists do their study in their backyard. Marcus & Fischer (1986) note that as native researcher, the information presented, triangulated and confirmed in the study are emerged from what they understood. Such complex information should take into account various contextual dimension, including individual actors, social structure, cultural idioms, and social dramas that intertwined, which can be presented in a complex set of narrative based on real-life events. These are some of the reasons why autoethnographic method of inquiry has gained increasing use in anthropological studies.

My deliberate selection to employ autoethnographic method as a way of knowing through articulation of subjectivity aims to reproduce the whole being by

offering alternative narrative that counter the dominant representation of Chinese *Benteng* community in particular and broader Chinese Indonesian community in general. By engaging with day-to-day routine of these Chinese *Benteng* women, this experience reminded me for the significance of my everyday practice which I often took for granted, the *kampung* life in where I was raised. Moreover, through autoethnography, it enables me to discuss and reflect about “personally political identity construction” (Spry, 2001: 713) and allow me to live the experience of such construction. Wall (2006) describes autoethnography as “*an emerging qualitative research method that allows the author to write in a highly personalized style, drawing on his or her experience to extend understanding about a societal phenomenon. Autoethnography is grounded in postmodern philosophy and is linked to growing debate about reflexivity and voice in social research. The intent of autoethnography is to acknowledge the inextricable link between the personal and the cultural and to make room for non-traditional forms of inquiry and expression*” (p.1). Because of that, element of reflexivity is one of the particular characteristics that distinguish autoethnographic writing from ethnography that makes the personal political (Holman Jones, 2005) through elaborating the “*social world from the perspective of the interacting individual*” (Denzin, 1997: xv). As Holman-Jones (2005) states that autoethnography creates a scene through narrating stories that assemble intricate and complicated relationship between “*life and art, experience and theory, evocation and explanation ...*” (p.765) for their readers to understand and hope would bring the same attention in the context of their own realities.

Despite there is no significant departure from traditional ethnography, autoethnography slightly gives more flavor to it, especially in projecting multiple voices, i.e. the researcher and the research subjects, through multifaceted identities that embraced by the researchers themselves. This is what Geertz (1988) refers as the importance of articulating features of dialogic and polyphonic voices, as a form of depiction about real experiences, interpretation, and continuous dialogue. Alvesson (1999) differentiates ethnography as *breaking into a group* done by ethnographers that are outsider and stranger, while self/autoethnography is understood as *breaking out of a group* done by the researchers that are familiar one-self. Echoing Alvesson, Chang (2016) adds that autoethnographers enter the research field with a familiar topic (*self*), in contrast with the ethnographers that

intrigued by foreign topic (*others*). Such proximity with the familiar topics often associates autoethnography with autobiographies, like Ellis and Bochner (2000) describe as “*autobiographies that self-consciously explore the interplay of the irretrospective personally engaged self with cultural description mediated through language, history and ethnographical explanations*” (p. 742). Despite the term of autoethnography firstly introduced by Heider (1975) on his work about Dani People of Papua, Indonesia, which referred *self* as the study informant; Hayano (1979) on the contrary, refers *self* as himself whom he identifies intimately with the casino culture and professional gambling community group that he studied. Hayano’s attempt has connected the autobiographical writing with ethnography (Chang, 2016), which broadly understood nowadays.

Pratt (2008) articulates autoethnography as a concept of *transculturation*, which traverses between the *colonizer* and the *colonialized* ones. Pratt refers autoethnography as reading the interpretation of those who have been colonized by writing, “*A third and final idiosyncratic term that appears in follows is ‘autoethnography’ or ‘autoethnographic expression’. I use to refer to instances in which colonialized subject undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer’s own terms. If ethnographic text are means by which Europeans represents to themselves their (usually subjugated) others, autoethnographic texts are those the other construct in respect to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representation*” He then continues, “*Autoethnographic text are not then what are usually thought of as ‘authentic’ or autochthonous forms of self-expression ... [Rather] autoethnography involves partial collaboration with and appropriation of the idioms of the conqueror.*” (Pratt, 2008: 7)

The emergence of autoethnography as alternative method responded to criticisms toward traditional ethnographic method of inquiry, like Ellis et.al. (2011) wrote that this new mode has challenged the colonialist approach which often “*authoritatively entering a culture, exploiting cultural members, and then recklessly leaving to write about the culture for monetary and/or professional gain, while disregarding ties to cultural members*” (p. 274). Adding to Ellis’s note, Alcoff (1991) believes that autoethnography has also been inferred as a critical approach that requiring a privileged speakers who seem want to study everybody’s social and cultural construction but their own (p. 21). Therefore, for these scholars, autoethnography is not only a method, but also product of research and writing about personal lived experience and their relationship with culture (Ellis, 2004; Ellis et al., 2011).

Similarly, Krizek (2003) argues that there is increasing trend that ethnographic writing encompasses reflexive feature, marked by emerging use of personal narrative and life stories as technique of inquiry, which strongly focus towards the ethnographer's experience as part of the studied communities. As a method, autoethnography can serve as communication vehicle across borders of discipline and identity locations (Burdell and Swadener, 1999: 25) as well as provide spaces of resistance between *self* (auto) and *society* (ethno), where writing (graphy) of singularity cannot be excluded (Lionnet, 1990: 391). Therefore, in this sense the idea of *auto* brings supplementary meaning to traditional ethnography that involves the *"turning of ethnographic gaze inward to the self (auto), while maintaining the outward gaze of ethnographic looking at the larger context wherein self-experiences occur"* (Denzin, 1997: 227). Furthermore, its flexible inward-outward lenses made autoethnographic writing as ethnographic in methodological orientation, which interpreted in cultural way and encompasses its content as autobiographical (Chang, 2016: 48). This makes autoethnographers follow similar ethnographic process by systematically collecting data, analyzing pattern and phenomena, followed by interpreting the result in order to produce scholarly writing pieces. And just like ethnography, autoethnography also aims to achieve cultural understanding through deep analysis and interpretation through focusing its locus to self and to the broader society through the self, as Ellis, Adam and Bochner (2011) explain as *"an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)"* (Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005).

Despite vast criticism towards autoethnography as inquiry method, Guba and Lincoln (1994) emphasis on its rigor and trustworthiness by focusing that it needs to be acceptable and subjected to certain standard. Here they highlight truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality which in the nature of qualitative research those are the same aspect of rigor that is explained as credibility, fittingness, auditability and confirmability. On similar advice that by clearly explaining the design and method including by stating how the raw data will emerge sufficient evidence to justify interpretation, also keeping field transcription and personal notes, the canon and standards are maintained and set down clearly (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). Mertens (1998) adds that authenticity refers to the

questions of fairness or whether different construction and value structures are represented in the process of uncovering assumption and providing information. Mertens continues that “*researchers should acknowledge that all texts are incomplete and represent specific position in terms of sexuality, ethnicity and so on*” (p.185) which means that the voice of the researchers is an important aspect related to location position and perspective. For that reason, I am in agreement with Morrow (2005) that asserts that the narrative produced using autoethnographic voice led by theory should be a faithful and comprehensive interpretation of the author’s experience, transform the author through self-exploration and self-explication in order to inform the reader about other type of realities that they may have never encountered.

Autoethnographers develop different categorization on grouping the writing products. For instance, Reed-Danahay classifies autoethnographic writings into three broad types that include: (1) Native Anthropology, that written by those who were formerly the subject of ethnography and become the author of study of their own group; (2) Ethnic Autobiography, is personal narrative written by member of ethnic minority groups; and (3) Autobiographical Ethnography, an ethnographic writing in which anthropologists inject their personal experiences (Reed-Danahay, 1997: 2). Similarly, Ellis (2004) also develops other classification of ethnographic writing as: (1) Indigenous or Native Anthropology that coincide with Reed-Danahay’s account, with additional emphasis on the authors that share a history of colonialism or economic subordination, including conquest by ethnographers who made them research subject; (2) Bicultural Insider/Outsider, where autoethnographers construct their own cultural stories, attach meaning to those to depict a particular way of life; and (3) Reflexive or Narrative Ethnography, where authors focus on a certain culture/sub-culture and use their life story that embedded in that culture to look more deeply into dialogue and interaction between self and other.

Despite emerged as critical response to traditional ethnography it does not mean that autoethnographic writing is free from criticism. For instance, autoethnography has been criticized as blurring the boundaries between crafting fictions and other way of being true in the interest of rewriting selves in the social world (Anderson, 2006; Denshire, 2013). Having said that, according to Brodkey (1996), albeit such criticism, autoethnographic work is able to show dynamic movement of social and cultural space as “*the currency of contact zone*” (p. 28)

through “*invites writers to see themselves and everyone else as human subject, constructed in a tangle of cultural, social and historical situations and relations in contact zone*” (Brodkey, 1996: 29). Therefore, to undertake this study, I intend to use Anderson’s explanation of analytical autoethnography that aims to connect to the broader set of social phenomena than those provided by data themselves; as oppose to evocative autoethnography that focus on personal stories as the researcher (Anderson, 2006: 387).

As one of the main promoters of autoethnographic writing, Hayano (1979) states that contemporary anthropologists have increasingly moved out of the colonial arena of ethnography, thus would explore more the social world and sub-culture where they become part of. Unlike the colonial anthropologists that maintain significant detachment, these contemporary anthropologists often become either full or partial member of the culture that they study. In the light of such development, the use of autoethnography has increased in an era of methodological innovation (Denzin, 1989, 1997; Richardson, 1994) that characterized as recent “moment” of qualitative inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Responding to Ellis’ note (1997, 2004) about evocative or emotional autoethnography that may blur the way of social inquiry according to traditional ethnography, Anderson (2006) coined the term of analytical autoethnography that depart significantly with Ellis’ term of evocative autoethnography. Referring to Denzin (1997), he once wrote that evocative autoethnographers “*bypass the representational problem by invoking an epistemology of emotion, moving the reader to feel the feeling of the other*” (p. 228). Even though such works have been published quite extensively, especially on the topics around death, victimization and divorce; but these works continue to be marginalized on the social science arena due to significant rejection of traditional social science values and style of writing (Anderson, 2006). Different with evocative autoethnography that focus on emotional aspect, the analytical autoethnography is associated with ethnographic work in which the researcher is a full member in the research group of setting or culture, that often referred as complete membership researchers. Such work should also be visible through researcher’s reproduction of knowledge through published text. Additionally, analytical autoethnography also characterized by commitment

to larger research agenda that focused on improving theoretical underpinning of broader social phenomena (Anderson, 2006).

Citing Adler and Adler (1998: 67–84) Anderson (2006) argues that being complete member often perceive as the most irresistible form of “being there” on the ethnographic inquiry. He continues that autoethnographers’ dual identity distinguishes their position in comparison with other traditional ethnographers. On one hand, by being a complete member, researcher can approximate the emotional stance of the people they study, and at the same time also part of social science circle. Like traditional ethnographers, autoethnographers also required to record events and engage in conversation in the fieldwork through participant observation, and their identity as complete member bring its own advantage of having less pressure to finish everything all at once. However, their dual identities/role also bring interesting dilemma in terms of data processing or interpretation. This dilemma thus required them to be fluent in the two-level of interpretation, which are the first order interpretation that focus on particular context and the second order construction, which is more abstract and involve trans-contextual of social science (Anderson, 2006).

Analytic reflexivity becomes one of the most important elements in conducting autoethnographic works. I cite Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont (2003) that mention “(Auto) ethnographers-as-authors frame their accounts with personal reflexive views of the self. Their ethnographic data are situated within their personal experience and sense making. They themselves form part of the representation process in which they are engaging and are telling.” (p.62) Additionally, Bourdieu (1992) also uses reflexivity to analyze an approach in social science research that highlight the researcher’s critical awareness to locate themselves between constellation of various issues, including contesting the way how social science construct its object; rather than focus on giving privilege to the author. Moreover, reflexivity is used to critically look into one’s own position in knowledge production to better understand the misleading distinction between objectivity and subjectivity (Marak, 1995). To achieve such reflexivity, Anderson (2006) in his description about analytic autoethnography borrows Schwalbe’s (1996) note that articulate all types of information as *doorway* for seeing into one’s experiences and *mirror* to look back in oneself (p. 58). This is one of the reasons that autoethnographers should be visible, active and engage reflexively in text and knowledge production through describing

their own feelings and experiences that are perceived as crucial data to understand social world. Denzin & Lincoln (1995) explains such process as the goal of reflexive autoethnography that is, *“to seek to develop form of research that fully acknowledge and utilize subjective experiences as an intrinsic part of research”* (p. 5).

As I share partial membership of the larger group of Chinese *Peranakan* in Indonesia, my advantages are obviously related to the way in which my identity could smoothen not only the process of data inquiry, but also internal interpretation and reflection towards the process of analysis. In addition to that, the availability of access and entry point that provide the insider meaning, through which the researcher could explore some aspect of social world in a deeper and sustainable way is another advantage of conducting autoethnographic study. Through autoethnography, my own life would be the lens through which the story of the Chinese *Benteng* people linked to the wider social structure in Indonesian society. These personal lenses allow me to tell the story of how identity and race intertwine within those structures. Having said that, by writing autoethnography I pay careful attention not to be trapped into the danger of self-focused and narcissistic writing, as warned by a number of authors such as Atkinson & Hammersley (2007), Charmaz & Mitchell (2001), Coffey (1999), Holt (2003) and Sparkes (2000). Chang (2016) elaborates a number of pitfalls of autoethnographic approach that often overemphasis narration rather than analysis and cultural interpretation. Chang also notes on autoethnographic exclusive reliance on personal memory and recalling as data sources, also negligence of ethical standards regarding others in self-narratives. Albeit such warning, autoethnographic works have its unique perspective that allow the researcher to access the experience of discrimination, exclusion, and despair from the point of view of the research subject. Also, it is important to note that when the boundaries between subjectivity as insider and objectivity as outsider are obscured in autoethnographic writings, it is indeed necessary to maintain certain distance to allow analytical dialogue on reflexive process. And finally, I quote Hammersley (1989) that warns autoethnographers to alert on comfortable space which might jeopardize the inquiry process itself by taking information for granted, as he said *“the comfortable sense of ‘being home’ is a danger signal. From the perspective of the marginal reflexive ethnographer.... There must always remain some part held back, some social and intellectual*

'distances'. For it is in the space created by this distance that the analytical work of the ethnographers gets done. Without that distance, without such analytical space, the ethnography can be little more than the autobiographical account of a personal conversion" (p. 90).

3.5. CRITICAL SELF-REFLECTION AND RESEARCHER'S POSITIONALITY

As a PhD candidate in social anthropology, I came across various ways and methods to stimulate critical thinking about different types of social phenomena. Throughout my exploration, I found autoethnography and critical self-reflection as an important research approaches in undertaking qualitative studies. Having said that, in the context of this research topic that focus around the issues of development aid projects that involved minority group in which I am also part of, these types of approaches are seldomly used. Perhaps, as I observe that researchers about development projects in Indonesia are mostly policy oriented and action research which rooted in positivist and postpositivist tradition, in which Guba and Lincoln (1994) argue as "... *naïve realism, assuming an objective eternal reality upon which inquiry can coverage*" (p.111). Furthermore due to their significant distinction with critical theory and constructivism that open up more interpretative works, several author like Brookfield (1998), Clarke (2004), and McKay (2008) suggest to embrace 'critical' view when conducting reflection. Through critical reflection, it allows the researchers to challenge their own beliefs, their way of thinking of dominating social structure; to question one's set of assumptions that are built from particular social and cultural context; and to contest dominant representation or claims by elaboration other type of discourse and knowledge production.

In this thesis, I deliberately use selective account of my personal experience as Chinese Indonesian women as well as development worker that professionally engage with empowerment project with critical self-reflective inquiry. By providing example of critical self-reflection and reflexive process, I aim to show various insights and provide multitude of perspectives from first-person point of view through which my epistemological shift highlights ongoing nature of the research process which makes allusion to the challenges that I experienced during the research journey. To show the process of reflective thinking and its practical uses for various scholars, I aim to incorporate critical self-reflexive practices as

means of conceptualizing, understanding and incorporating critically and experimental knowledge into research.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) have taught us that the process of truth searching, subjectivity and interpretation are critically important in conducting qualitative study. They describe that epistemologically, both critical theory and constructivism are transactional subjectivist, in which enable researchers and subject research as assumed to be interactively engaged, which “*inevitably influencing the inquiry*” (p.110), so that the “... *'findings' are literally created as the investigation proceed.*” (p.111), in such a way that autoethnographic writing would be the perfect fit. Autoethnographic rich elaboration because of its highly reflexive narratives is capable to tell the reader in a more political and ethical terms through the role of researchers that are being privileged in understanding and proving the research questions in which result in personal narratives that allow greater space for reflexivity (Ellis, 2004; Wall, 2006).

In doing autoethnographic writing, my positionality as a researcher becomes quite critical since I have “*authentic first-hand knowledge of the culture*” (Reed-Danahay, 1997: 7). By including my own experiences and voices as part of the subject of this writing I found argument from Lock and Strong (2010) is extremely relevant, which address how narrative constitutes as a part of social construction of reality might reflect itself in relation of representational power and contestation. This is why political struggle in autoethnographic writing is apparent as a form of resistance over narrative identity against the dominant master narrative in which represent the studies communities and their environment in essentialized manner (Grant and Zeeman, 2012). Moreover, to illustrate the experiences as continuous construction of colonial subject throughout development project, I borrow Goodall’s (2003) account on interpretative ethnography that emphasize one subjectivity through personal experience. Consequently, the case that I choose here is increasingly important to form reflexive experience in a critical way.

In writing my critical self-reflection about the process of knowledge production and development practices that I have involved in, I follow Fook’s (2002) view which says that its main purpose is to discover how as researchers, we participate in shaping existing power relation discursively (p.98), through creating “conceptual space” (Rossiter, 2005: 1) that allow us to step outside the way of our

thinking that restrict avenue for change (Fook, 1996: 99). I then took Fook's advice that suggest "*research should arise from personal experience since the researcher will certainly have the motivation and openness to appreciate the experience being studied*" (Fook, 1999: 15). Adding to that, Dinkelman (2000) and Brookfield (1998) further note that inseparability between researcher's focuses with the world around them allow various dimensions come into play, like sex, ethnicity, social class, religion, skin color, educational attainment and other backgrounds. This then brings additional arguments to my justification in incorporating personal experience as data of my reflection, which I do believe could offer valuable privilege to step out from my own subjectivity and learn the ways how the world around me has influenced my way of thinking and comprehension that always in constant construction.

To guide me in writing critical self-reflection work, I borrow arguments from Brookfield (1995) and Taylor (2001) that commented on the important to critically reflect upon unique personal account in which could enhance researchers' ability to understand their weakness, strength and continuous research interest. This is also the reason why I am drawn to explore the use of autoethnography as alternative ethnographic account to apprehend broader social phenomena. As critical reflection, autoethnography is characterized throughout its introspective nature of inquiry through elaboration of personal experience and at the same time also analytically expose alternative ways of knowing. By reflecting my previous experience as development worker through my current academic lens, I am in constant learning in practicing interpretative work through writing critical self-reflection. Besides that, through critical self-reflection, it allows me to explore and question my own assumptions, which I have never challenged and consequently I internalized them unquestionably. Fook (2002) suggests that this process will be an important part to destabilize dominant discourses due to their power and dominance, which remained unquestioned and unchallenged. Therefore, to achieve what Fook suggests, through adopting a combination of critical theory and constructivism in writing this reflection, in the first instance I would continuously view cultural life as constant tension and struggle between control and resistance (Tracy, 2013), in which language and knowledge are framed and constructed through power relation that maintain different events on historical context. This is also another reason why the use of critical theory become key in this process,

because it often brings hierarchical power relation into constant conscious dialogue and at the same time also create more space for contestation, which seldom to appear in the research area of my interest.

My background as a junior researcher in a community empowerment program that was managed by the World Bank has shaped my research experience to only focus on single objective purpose, finding what are the problems occurred at the implementation and how to best fix such implementation disturbance by providing quantifiable and measurable solution. As the reliable ancillary to the main program, the research team in which I worked was mainly operated as problem solution mechanism and was responsible as the “knowledge generator” to satisfy the needs of overall programmatic intervention. Despite, there were some potentially interesting new research ideas to carry out; unfortunately, epistemologically speaking, the way in which programmatic researches were done was singularized into monolithic positivistic ideal which delimitates subjective interpretation. Furthermore, this PhD chronicle has navigated my epistemological transition that allows me to consider my subjective experience that influence my interpretation and interaction with my research interests.

Through critical reflection which facilitated through the use of autoethnography as my main method of inquiry, this experience enables me to position the *self* as crucial element of my inquiry in such a way that help me to interpret the social world. Through intensive personal elaboration and interrogation, my conjuncture with the Chinese *Benteng* women as my research foci has facilitated intimate interaction between the *self* and other, in a socially constructed environment which is familiar yet distance. Because my academic privilege has shaped the way in which I assign meaning to certain prejudicial stereotypes, I consciously interpret the term “socially excluded” community through the inward gaze as a Chinese Indonesian woman. For instance, the experience of reflection about institutional operation of *othering* the Chinese Indonesians through State instrument was not only personally painful memory to retrieve, but it is also a critically prerequisite step to enter meaningful relationship between the *self* and other. Through my own narrative as Chinese Indonesian woman that grew up in a tightly regulated *othering* operation under Suharto’s authoritarian regime which subconsciously, I had normalized; I intent to use this

reflexive practice to critically look into my privilege position in knowledge production about exclusion/inclusion and women's empowerment to better understand the misunderstood distinction between objectivity and subjectivity.

My dual identity as the objective researcher and as Chinese Indonesian woman while I was carrying out this fieldwork was far than comfortable. Not only the bewildering reality about my research subject that did not conform my earlier assumption about the mainstream application of "women's empowerment"; but also, about being there in the field – alone – as I submerged into the sea of unfamiliarity where things did not appear as clear as I thought. Despite my physical appearance that is rather similar with some of the local Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan*, but obviously my gesture and the way I behave is rather distinctive. Even when my gatekeeper introduced me as 'friend' or sometimes 'distant relative' whenever I was tagged along to some activities; I do not sense that I am part of this community. For me, all of those are completely foreign to my being and my socioeconomic milieu and upbringing which consequently prompt my critical reflection on understanding how these economically disadvantage community of Chinese *Benteng* women are perceived and valued. Some aspects that I shared with these women are mostly material ones that constitute the idea of being a "minority", like religion as non-Muslim groups and partial customs as hybrid population of Chinese-descent in Indonesia. Through such partial identity that I shared with the Chinese *Benteng* women, the selection of autoethnography as my main methods of inquiry allows alternative representation about this community which frequently exploited by the mainstream method.

Prior to my ethnographic immersion into the field with the Chinese *Benteng* women, my then positivistic research epistemology had led me to believe that my PhD project would be manageable, straightforward and "evidence-based" which would confirm my initial hypothesis that "women's empowerment" project had "empowered" these women to voluntarily "participate" and to be socially active in government-sponsored projects. Surprisingly, what I did not expect to happen was my own epistemological shift towards my research process itself and my theoretical departure that leads to critical feminist stance against the disempowering interpretation of market-lead "women's empowerment" that instrumentalized marginalized minority women as productive device for

Development. With this dramatic turn, I re-entered the field as a space of the unknown with a clean slate and started to ask questions that I had not imagined in the first place. For instance, questions about who benefit the most from this “women’s empowerment” operation and the inclusion of these women into Development project were unthinkable previously.

My encounter with the mainstream “women’s empowerment” approach mainly shaped by my professional experience working with donor-driven community empowerment project that massively implemented by Indonesian government. In such project, village women were “empowered” to participate in the project planning and implementation so they are also benefitted from the entire process. For that purpose, revolving loan schemes were one of the main techniques to gain women’s interest to engage in the project activities. With the basic argument of women’s efficiency in tackling poverty by highlighting their productive capacity that contribute to family’s earning, activities that provide explicit financial incentive to low-income women were extremely popular. This self-help model aims to increase women’s participation in mostly male-dominated decision-making arena. Unfortunately, the pseudo “positive” impact of improved women participation appeared only focus on pushing women’s capacity as productive subject to supplement income shortage from the main breadwinner and ignoring imbalance power structure that oppresses women in the first place.

My theoretical elaboration on feminist view on development has paved my way to predominantly focus on the feminist critique to the mainstream model that depoliticizes the notion of “women’s empowerment” into a singular technical intervention to implement projects. From a more mainstream language of women’s empowerment” that is often used to automatically indicates “gender equality” in many projects that I previously engaged in; my research paradigm has significantly shifted to take on more radical turn to interpret and to understand what “women’s empowerment” really entails, especially for the marginalized minority population like the Chinese *Benteng* women.

My professional exposure to donor-driven “women’s empowerment” model that focuses on their productive capacity has shaped my pre-fieldwork view and understanding about the apolitical notion of “women’s empowerment” which was implemented upon the Chinese *Benteng* women as a form of correction. Imbued

with the gran narrative of “gender mainstreaming” and “gender equality” in participatory local development, poor and disadvantaged women like them are always portrayed as ideal subject of corrective mechanism that transformed as ideal agent and champion of government programs. In the first few weeks of my fieldwork, I was tailing a few prominent Chinese *Benteng* women that have been participated in the cooperative project. They were kindly enough to let me tag along to their activities, whether it was cooperative-related events of their family-related activities. Not seldom, they ‘adopt’ me as one of them whenever we visited district governments where I can easily camouflage.

Witnessing this “women’s empowerment” model that operates upon the disadvantage minority, it leads me to question what “power” does these women strive to claim? Do they really have the “power” to raise issues that are important for them? Do the empowered woman leaders able to mobilize their fellows to voice collective interest and be strategic about that? All these questions were starting to pop up in my head along with my intensive interaction with these women. But some realities that I witnessed were indeed disheartening. It was not only because the encountered reality does not satisfy my hopeful expectation about how these marginalized minority women are really “empowered” and make a change; but it is also a constant reminder that the mainstream discourse of “women’s empowerment” in Development projects that we highly praise is less likely to bring women somewhere more progressive. My reflection is obviously not new and the practice of neoliberal development-mode of “women’s empowerment” has been constantly criticized by feminist, especially from the southern hemisphere ones.

As a “naïve” researcher, coming from “outside” of the Chinese *Benteng* community, although I am also Chinese Indonesian, I was encountering an unexpected reality that existed among these Chinese *Benteng* women in their natural environment. Through their high level of acceptance on my presence and their openness to my questions, it brought to the core “insider-outsider” debate in ethnographic studies (Aguilar, 1981; Garfinkel, 1991; Pollner and Emerson, 2001). However, this advantage of being “native” autoethnographer is not without dilemma, especially when I assume that my familiarity with the research context would secure my process. In fact, it was more like what Gokah (2006) has experienced when contextual familiarity is not automatically a guarantee; especially when I was dealing with own positionality as Chinese Indonesia that

remained prone to racial profiling which sometimes leads to unanticipated events. For that, reflection on challenges and dilemmas in unfamiliar domains are an inevitable part of the research process, which also means to appreciate the subjectivity while interacting with my researched subject.

My own ignorance reveals intense contradiction about what I thought I know during my fieldwork preparation and my professional experience working with “women empowerment” in development projects, in comparison with what I encounter in the field as part of my journey of knowing. My confusion in dealing with my own naiveness, prejudice and judgement about this community as represented by the others often lead me to “help” them by giving my “expert advice” that I thought would empower them. In fact, I was ignorant about intrinsic gender relation and injustice in the society of Chinese *Benteng* people and how they are being constructed by other. In this conclusion, I continue to highlight the importance of what Brokerfield (1998) and Taylor (2001) which commented that critically reflect upon unique personal account which could enhance my ability as researcher to understand my own weakness, strength and continuous on long term endeavour to re-politicize “women empowerment” as initially advocated by feminist thinking. For that, it is important that I go back to Fook’s advice (1996) that remind us about self-reflection as methodology that is readily applicable in every day practice, which encourages me further to appreciate the multitude of complex elements that shape this research in which always been informed by continuous use of critical reflection.

3.6. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Following the traditional qualitative research data collection, Foster (1995) describes key sequences that researchers might want to follow. They are (1) Formulation in general research question(s) that encompass different degree of explicitly; (2) Selection of relevant site(s) and subject(s) that include defining research participants; (3) Collection of relevant data that incorporate techniques such as: participant observation, interviews, focus group discussions, and literature review; (4) Interpretation of data; (5) Conceptual and theoretical work, which include refinement/sharpening the research question(s) and collection of further

supplementary data; and lasty (6) Writing findings. Despite these sequences, qualitative research tends to be more open-ended strategy, which does not necessarily follow particular contour of linear steps. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) illustrate that in qualitative study, a strategy of inquiry closely connected with skills, underlying assumptions, and materials that researchers apply; as we start with theoretical paradigms and research design to collect empirical data. For that reason, research strategy places researchers and paradigms in particular empirical, material sites and in specific approach to elicit information. For this study, I focused on participant observation, interview, and focus group discussion, in addition to document analysis on available literature. Unlike quantitative work, qualitative research requires holistic understanding about different dimensions that contribute in shaping the social world.

Despite the Chinese *Benteng* people know that I am also a Chinese Indonesian from Jatinegara, which they know more as *Mester*, there are some occasions that they introduced me as distant family member. As Chinese Indonesian, I could be taken as just any other Chinese Indonesian, despite my physical complexion might be different from theirs, which I find myself somewhat like a native anthropologist. Particularly when dealing with government bureaucrats, for instance when attending workshops or meetings, these women took me as one of their own kind. Since these women were aware about my research project which often times open lucrative space for 'illegal taxing' by the street government officials, they took the initiative to introduce me as distant family members that are visiting their *kampung* in order to protect me from being target of this extortion. As a result, this allowed greater access to their daily lives and easy mobility around the *kampung*.

Due to financial and time constraints, fieldwork was conducted from May to October 2018. Prior carrying out the full fieldwork, relationship with some members of the community has been built since end of 2016 as a result of my initial mapping exercise. Access to the community was obtained through personal contacts whom I had worked before in the previous community empowerment project in Indonesia. During the course of the fieldwork, generally, I spend more time with the women at their house which include helping them with domestic chores like cooking or tidying up the house. As I was able to secure lodging in the same area, I have also involved in some local activities with these women. Most activities that I participated were generally initiated by the cooperative such as

weekly saving and lending session, monthly *posyandu*²⁵ sessions, vegetable picking, also assisting them in baking cookies and cake for their home business. Details about data collection process will be elaborated further in this part.

3.6.1. Sampling Strategy

Since this research employs autoethnography method, the sampling strategy is purpose theoretical sampling. Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe that theoretical sampling is “*the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, code and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges. The process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory, whether substantive or formal.*” (Bryman, 2012: 419). Therefore, this process emphasis not a single stage, but multiple repeated processes. To add, Strauss and Corbin (1998) emphasis that what data should be collected is driven by evolving theory and based on the concept of *making comparison*, in which the researchers should go, meet people, involve in events and activities, in order to widen their opportunity to discover variations among concepts.

As previously mentioned about marginalization that experienced by Chinese Indonesians which I extensively elaborate in the following chapter; the focus to take Chinese *Benteng* community as case is contextualized within the narrative of Suharto’s propaganda about “enforced assimilation” approach, an engineered nation building project to correct and eliminate cultural incompatibility of Chinese descendants, versus the natural amalgamation among the Chinese *Benteng* people. Furthermore, dominant narrative that derogatively stereotypes Chinese *Benteng* people also lead to rather negative image of this community, particularly to the

²⁵ A short for *pos pelayanan terpadu* or integrated health post – is generally understood as ‘community-based’ public health facilities that relies its operation on voluntary work done by community members. Activities in *posyandu* are carried out by the local cadres that appointed by the village head (in rural area) or the *lurah* (in the case of urban setting). These cadres are led by a coordinator which often perceived as the most reliable ones among them and are supervised by midwives that usually travel across area to check every implementation.

women. Access to the Chinese *Benteng* community was obtained from a national NGO, “Partnership for Governance Reform” (herewith will be called as “PfGR” throughout this thesis), which was part of the World Bank-funded community empowerment project that I previously administered (2012-2014), namely *Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Peduli* (herewith “PNPM Peduli”). Through this national NGO, I was in touch with smaller local NGO, “Women Resource Development Centre” (herewith will be called as “WRDC” throughout this thesis) which apparently was also part of the very same “PNPM Peduli” project that I administered. Through them, I was able to reach the Chinese *Benteng* community in *Kampung Wetan* and developed my rapport from there.

3.6.2. Participant Observation

In doing autoethnography, participant observation is one important technique. Indeed, in a good ethnographic work, the researchers should be able to directly experience and immerse themselves into a group of research subjects. Malinowski (1922) illustrates that ethnographers should get out there and spending time learning about different people from within their own natural surroundings. Building from Malinowski’s account on ethnography, O’Reilly (2012) highlights the importance of participant observation, in which the researcher becomes part of the daily routine to understand as an insider. Other than that, key idea of participant observation is reflexivity where contemporary ethnography attempts to be reflexive, that is to carry out in full awareness of the limitation as well as what advantages that it may bring, in which associated with human lives. In doing participant observation, Grimshaw (2001) writes that the researchers should observe what’s going on, longing detail of every aspects of the study objects’ lives; observe what Malinowski refers as *impoderabilia* of actual life, including daily routine, conversation and social life.

Through observing their daily activities, I had the access to experience the Chinese *Benteng* women’s life first hand by focusing on their day-to-day interaction among members of the saving and lending cooperative which became regular organizing platform. Besides participated in the regular weekly sessions, where the Chinese *Benten* women gathered; I was also tagged along by these women to join various activities. Because of their generous invitation, it granted me access to

engage in wider activities such as attending workshops that hosted by the district government on art-performance management or public socialization on district election. Besides that, I also look into interaction between Chinese *Benteng* men and women, especially across generations to understand the gender relation at various level, including household and neighbourhood level. While attended more formal activities like those that hosted by the government, both national government and district government, I also involved in community-led social activities such as local cultural and religious celebrations or more personal family events of these women, like birthdays or weddings. Besides that, the notion of citizenship and its relation to social inclusion is crucial to this research; therefore, I also elaborate different relationship that occurs on the interplay between the State and its citizens which was done through observing the interaction between members of the cooperative in comparison with non-member with local government at various level. Events and activities such as annual village-planning meeting and ad-hoc/irregular events like visits to government facilities to access citizenship documentations and formal meeting with sectoral office become important milestones for these Chinese *Benteng* women who are active members of the cooperative. In addition to that, although the Chinese *Benteng* women are my main principal research subject, but I continued to expand my horizontal network with other Chinese *Benteng* groups that I have met during the fieldwork. Through other Chinese *Benteng* groups, it enables me to obtain different point of view about their community as well as more holistic picture about how various context of Chinese *Benteng* population produce distinct realities.

Often participant observation implies simultaneous emotional involvement and objective detachment. Tan's (2016) field experience introduces me into Tedlock's (1991) concept of 'observation of participation'. In spite of being low profile about my status and personal background, I have been frequently asked about my personal life which often provoke a certain level of discomfort. Such personal experience further led me to rethink the question about how women should be empowered, if their surrounding environment does not enable them to obtain such power. Likewise, my experience carrying out some studies about women in other settings sometimes blinded me that what these women understood of empowerment experience is completely different from what I had expected.

These led me to rethink the question of the empowered 'self' versus the anthropological 'others'. On the same note, my privilege status as urban-middle class and foreign-educated woman frequently shapes the way how I understand the reality of Chinese *Benteng* women versus the predetermined assumption that I have developed about them. Consequently, I used my personal and intimate connection to the identities of my respondents in a reflexive way to explore the nature of such identities.

3.6.3. Interviews

Besides participation observation that enables me to navigate relationship with the Chinese *Benteng* women, I also used interview both to individual informants and to a group of informants, to elicit information. Bryman (2012) describes that unlike quantitative interview that is deliberately built to measure key concept, qualitative interview is more focus on soliciting general formulation of initial research ideas and on respondent's own perspective. Atkinson and Hammersley (2007) in their book on Ethnography discuss the importance of interview as key data collection method, which emphasis on 'natural' environment. However, they also warn that it cannot be assume that access to interview respondent is automatically granted when researchers are on the field; good rapport have to be established and identities constructed.

In qualitative study, in particular ethnography, most researchers follow two broad types of interviews, unstructured and semi-structured, which both often referred as "qualitative interview". In doing qualitative interview, Bryman (2012) argues that sometimes long-winded conversation is encouraged to obtain what the informants see and think as relevant and important information. In the case of unstructured interview, such elaborated conversation is often needed to obtain trust from the informants as well as to allow researchers to understand the way in which informants as well as to allow researchers to understand the way in which informants perceive their social world. Generally, unstructured or informal interview is characterized by total lack of structure and control. As described previously about sampling strategy, Atkinson and Hammersley (2007) here further clarify that decision about whom to interview, when and where, will be developed over time during the fieldwork. Similarly, Burgess (1982) added that in

unstructured interview, it might only be single question to be asked, that rather similar with conversation. Bernard (2006) then completes this description by describing that unstructured interview often used at the beginning of participant observation fieldwork, especially when the researcher settling in. In addition to that, this method also very useful to build greater rapport and to discover emerging issues that might have been overshadowed, over the course of ethnographic fieldwork. Bernard added, for some cases unstructured interviewing could be used to elicit information on sensitive issues.

Other interview method that I used is semi-structured interview, which is more effective in answering 'why' and 'how' question (Woodhouse, 2007). Such method enables that researcher to explore issues with informants in a more flexible way compared with structured model. This method encompasses supplementary questions to clarify complex responses and developing new category for enquiry that emerged during the course of the interview. Woodhouse also added that semi-structured interview also come as handy to answer 'what' question, especially for researchers that are foreign with the social situation, where they are working. On the same note, Atkinson & Hammersley (2007) added that in semi-structured interview, researchers have a lot of questions or specific topics to be covered, which referred as interview guide; and through flexible interaction, the focus of this process is to emphasize on what the informant understand about issues and events. Other than that, semi-structured interview is suitable for the researchers that intend to develop theories of hypothesis about social relation in naturalistic way, due to its open-ended questions that researchers are free to follow up according to what they need. The flexible nature of semi-structured interview also allows questions and topics can be tailored to specific informants and different stages of inquiry; which will be validated through triangulation with other informants.

In this study, I used both unstructured and semi-structured interviews that will be employed based on different types of informant category. Along with the participant observation process, which I also employed, unstructured interviews were carried out to build rapport with my main informants namely the Chinese *Benteng* women members of the cooperatives, including their family members as well as with the NGO's support staff and field workers that facilitated the project on day-to-day basis. Moreover, to follow up in great detail, in-depth semi-

structured interview were carried out with these key informants, in addition to their community members, local government, and NGO personnel that play key role in facilitating the establishment of the cooperative. Besides that, group interviews were also conducted in an unstructured way to elicit general information prior to more specific and targeted focus.

**IV – THE CHINESE
INDONESIANS – LIFE’S
DYNAMIC WITHIN THE
CHANGING POLITICAL
REGIME: CHINESE
BENTENG COMMUNITY
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“SOCIAL EXCLUSION”**

IV – THE CHINESE INDONESIANS – LIFE’S DYNAMIC WITHIN THE CHANGING POLITICAL REGIME: CHINESE *BENTENG* COMMUNITY AND THE STORY OF THEIR “SOCIAL EXCLUSION”

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I aim to show what it constitutes as Chinese *Benteng* in the broader context of how the history of Indonesia has excluded its citizens of Chinese descendants from the nation building project. It is important to acknowledge that the evolution of Chinese *Benteng* community in Tangerang City, Banten province is inseparable from multiple historical trajectories of racial segregation operated by the Dutch colonial government which was maintained by Soeharto’s New Order regime for more than three decades in forms of discriminatory policies and practices based on the constructed idea of Chineseness. Furthermore, the creation of single and monolithic narrative about Chinese Indonesian has led to an establishment of universal identity that essentializes what constitutes to be ‘Chinese Indonesian’. As a result of this homogenization, Chinese *Benteng* in Tangerang always represented in contrast to the normalized representation about ‘Chinese Indonesian’. The Chinese *Benteng* people are described as physically dark-skin, poor, uneducated lower class, remain true to their Chinese ‘tradition’, and well blend in with the native Indonesians. This particular representation contradicts with recurring image of what it ‘normally’ entails as Chinese Indonesian which are fair-skinned, wealthy (read: rich), educated middle class, ‘modern’ community, and exclusive. Here, I will start by contextualizing Chinese community and their descendants in Indonesia, including how this community was greatly benefit economically during the colonial era and excluded from the nation building project, especially in the critical period of contemporary Indonesia.

Many literatures on Chinese Indonesians argue that the period of 1966 until 1998 known as its darkest history due to serial of state’s structural discrimination (Aguilar, 2001; Budianta, 2000; Chua, 2004; Coppel, 1983; Dieleman et al., 2011; Giblin, 2003; Heryanto, 1998; Purdey, 2003; Reid, 2001; Suryadinata, 1999, 2003; Tan, 2003; Turner and Allen, 2007). At the same time, a few Indonesian

conglomerates of Chinese descendants who maintained intimate relationship with the authoritarian regime were greatly benefited from such situation (Dieleman, 2007). Since the colonial era until the fall of Suharto's regime (mid-1998), Chinese Indonesians always rendered as 'The Other' and were completely isolated from the formation of Indonesia's nation project. For more than three decades, Suharto's administration has successfully rendered Chinese Indonesians as problematic population which was termed as "*Masalah Cina*" ("Chinese Problem") – an imagined common problem – which then perceived might threaten the national unity. Heryanto (1997) mentions that Chinese Indonesians often equated with the European Jew community that stereotyped somehow positively, such as 'industrious', 'reliable', 'skilled' and 'efficient' (p.29). These stereotypes are contrast with the native Indonesians that portrayed as 'lazy', 'irrational', 'corrupt', 'hedonistic', and 'unskilled' (p.29). However, more contemporary stereotypes of Chinese Indonesians tend to indicate negative connotations, like 'unpatriotic', 'selfish', 'materialistic', 'stingy', 'opportunistic', 'philistine', and the worst was 'communist' due to their ideological association with China's patriotic resurgence in the early 20th century. Heryanto concludes that the construction of "Chinese problem" by New Order regime originated from the cultural aspect that transmitted through family ties, in which should be 'corrected' logically and formally through cultural intervention and marriage.

It has been widely argued that Chinese Indonesians generally have been 'liberated' aftermath the political reform era in terms of expressing their 'cultural' identity. This was marked by the removal of various discriminatory policies that explicitly target the Chinese Indonesians as the "problematic citizen" according to New Order's rendition. Having said that, despite such progressive move taken by the reformed government, Chinese Indonesians' freedom remains no more than a symbolical glorification of 'Chineseness' and its material meaning. For example, formal acknowledgement of Chinese New Year in Indonesia and granted the status of public holiday; formal prohibition to formally use the word "*Cina*" that considered derogatory and to be replaced with "*Tionghoa*" that is understood as a more respectable and polite word; the inclusion of Confucianism as one of Indonesia's formal religions; and the removal of bans against the celebration of 'Chinese' cultural related activities in public spaces. However, at the practice level – away from the formal discourse and policy talks – anti-Chinese sentiments

remain alive, although it can be said that it is in 'sleep-mode'. However, during every political contestation, anti-Chinese sentiment is often capitalized to mobilize the mass in order to win certain candidate in the political battle.

A survey conducted by ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute about Indonesia's Political, Economy and Politics in 2017 specifically elaborates people's perception and attitude towards their fellow countrymen with Chinese background. It shows unsurprising results that confirm longstanding perception and stereotypes about Chinese Indonesians. The report shows that 68.1% from the respondents think that Chinese Indonesians have natural talent for success in making money. While 60.1% agree that Chinese Indonesians are at least middle class, this also supported by 59.8% respondents that perceive the Chinese Indonesians are wealthier than the native Indonesians. The results also highlight 62% of the respondents believe that the Chinese Indonesians have excessive influence in economy, exceeding those 41.9% that believes Chinese Indonesians' excessive influence in political realm. Interestingly, despite longstanding assimilation with the natives, Chinese Indonesians remain perceived as the outsider, as 42.6% of the survey respondents agree that Chinese Indonesians' culture does not fit with Indonesian values and 42.4% that say likewise in regards with their religion. This also brings 47.6% respondents to believe that Chinese Indonesians may still be loyal towards China. In addition to that, stereotypes towards the Chinese Indonesians that Heryanto (1997) have mentioned earlier remain preponderated, as 46.3% of the respondents view that the Chinese Indonesians are too greedy and ambitious also 48.4% respondents think that the Chinese Indonesians only care about their own kind. Finally, the report conforms predictable strong tendencies of public disagreement and discomfort if Chinese Indonesians hold high political positions, as 64.4% respondents express their displeasures of having Chinese Indonesians in political leadership. This result is slightly equally distributed across income level and more prevalent among respondents with low-medium education level (Fossati et al., 2017).

Diverging representation of the Chinese *Benteng* people that far from the generic image of Chinese Indonesian shows that homogenized picture of Chinese Indonesia does not represent the reality. The Chinese *Benteng* people are often framed as the idealized representation of how 'alien' Chinese should assimilate well with the native population where they settle in. In this chapter, I intend to

illustrate their uniqueness as one of many creole groups of Chinese Indonesians that well assimilated with the native cultures, which 'far' from the essentialist imagination of what are constituted as Chinese Indonesians. To do such, I attempt to show that multiple factors around colonial trajectory, the rise and fall of authoritarian regime, and political reform that were intertwined together, in which have contributed to marginalization of the Chinese *Benteng* of Tangerang. As it always be in the patriarchal society, women in this community experience more marginalization – despite this not always be said as exclusion – than their men counterpart. Their lack of bargaining power in the family as well as in the society, often place them in a vulnerable and disadvantage position. This chapter shall tease out some thinking that their exclusion is not only driven by racial or religious distinction per se, but also social and economic condition, low level of mobility, national and local political dynamic, and other factors such as corrupt behavior of street level bureaucrats.

4.2. CHINESE INDONESIAN – THE NARRATIVE OF OUR HISTORY

Growing up as Chinese Indonesians, almost twenty years before the New Order regime collapse, was a personal experience. As a young girl, I vividly remembered how our family gathered quietly during the Chinese New Year in my grandparents' house, where my mother and her six other siblings grew up. Once I asked to my parents about why we had to celebrate New Year twice in a year, which was odd for me. Didn't we just celebrate New Year less than two months ago, on the 31st of December? I recalled at that time, other New Year celebration came sometimes in February, with no precise date, unlike the regular New Year. As my mother explained that it was Chinese New Year's Eve and she continued, "*We, Chinese people, celebrate Chinese New Year too tomorrow...*" *But wait?* I thought we are Indonesian? I then started to question myself... Are we also Chinese? *Why?* And I had to wait until I would be older enough to understand such complication.

Of course, Chinese New Year's night was one of those nights that I always waited for, beside Christmas night, which I always got my presents. On the Chinese New Year's night, all children get their *angpao* – a tiny red envelope, decorated with animals that represented the welcomed year and filled with money – from the adult relatives who have been married or at least have earned their own income. My

cousins and I always lined up before those married relatives, put our palm hand together in front of our chin, moved those hands forward and backward and said “*Kionghi, Kungkung*²⁶... *Kionghi, Popo*²⁷... *Kionghi, Yiyi*²⁸... *Kionghi, Akhiu*²⁹...” After said that magic word, they would give us the red envelope in return. It was long time ago, when my family still followed the traditional way how to pay respect to older family member, by called them with particular pronouns, depends from which side of the parents are they. Afterwards, I don’t really remember exactly when we started to call our *yiyi* with *tante* – Dutch word for aunt or *auntie* – and replace our *akhiu* with *Oom* – Dutch word for uncle.

I remembered once, a cousin straight opened the red envelope upon receiving and my aunt screamed loudly; her face blushed, as red as the *angpao*; it was full of embarrassment, “*Open those later!*” she yelled. Indeed, it is shameful for the parents when their children directly open the red *angpao* in front of the givers. This means that everybody will know how much money the givers put inside the *angpao*. I remembered that on average, one *angpao* filled with five thousand rupiah (at that time, it was about two dollars), which was quite a big amount back then. Richer aunts and uncles could give more, like ten or twenty thousand rupiah. The biggest amount always came from my mother’s brother. He used to give me fifty thousand or more. He was the richest among my mother’s siblings and was a colonel in the army. I wondered maybe he made so much money by working in the army. I used to give the *angpao* that I collected throughout that night to my mother. She was my treasurer; I didn’t keep the money. Later, I used that money to pay my very first travel abroad, in 1992 to Hongkong.

Beside the *angpao*, as the most wanted items from every Chinese New Year celebration; I was also longing for other items. The food. The dinner table was fully covered with assorted foods like *asinan betawi* – Jakarta style sour salad, sea cucumber, steam fish, fried meat pork meatballs, noodles, stir-fried vegetables, frog, chicken, seafood, and many more, including various fruits that we didn’t usually eat on a daily basis. Every family that came to my grandparents’ house contributed to the dinner table, with their own specialties. I also recall that on

²⁶ Grandfather – Hakka dialect

²⁷ Grandmother – Hakka dialect

²⁸ Auntie from mother side– Hakka dialect

²⁹ Uncle from mother side – Hakka dialect

Chinese New Year's Eve, all of us should wear something new. My mother used to say that wearing new clothes signified welcoming the new year with a new beginning, expecting that next year would be better than the previous year. At about dinnertime, around 7 p.m. the house just filled with more than 30 people, including the children and the maids that we brought along with us. At about 10.00 pm, it was all over, everybody should return to their houses; tomorrow would be a normal school day and working day. Quietly, we went home with great happiness. I got a lot of *angpao* and enjoyed good food.

Above anecdote is an example of many scenes in Chinese Indonesian families that silently celebrated Chinese New Year's festivities in Jakarta, during the 1980s and 1990s. As the Chinese New Year celebration was forbidden by Indonesian President, Suharto, most of us, Indonesian of Chinese descents did not have any choice beside celebrated such important moment quietly and in domestic/family sphere, as mandated formally through the Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. It was obviously different with Chinese New Year celebration in Singapore, where it involved dragon dance, festive decorations and joy that spread across the country. Not only Chinese New Year, such Presidential Instruction also banned all types of Chinese cultural expressions; including the use of Chinese language, Chinese characters in any publications, Chinese religions (Confucianism), and closed down all Chinese-based schools. For more than 32 years, the Government enforced so-called "assimilation program" (*pembaauran*³⁰) in order to re-program the Chinese Indonesians to be fully 'Indonesian' by deliberately curbed, or even erased, their Chinese identity, as sociocultural and political being; and at the same time, they were also promoted as economic being. As a child, I might not aware of what the Government has done to us might bring deleterious consequences to the life of many Indonesians of Chinese descents. However, as I get more exposure to abundant literatures and research about Chinese Indonesians, it was crucial for me to understand that the history of discrimination and oppression towards Indonesians of Chinese descents that has been done a way before Suharto took the power. It was all started since the Dutch colonial era and continuously reproduced by the newly nascent Indonesian state.

³⁰ *Pembaauran* comes from the bare form "*baur*" which means to mix

4.2.1. Huaqiao or Sojourner: The Early Chinese Settlers in Pre-Colonial Indonesia

Historical notes about the Chinese immigrants in the archipelago unanimously agreed that they had settled in long before the Dutch arrivals (Coppel, 1983; Knörr, 2009; Lohanda, 1996, 2005; Ongkhokham, 1983; Reid, 2010; Setiono, 2003; Skinner, 1996; Somer Heidhues, 2009b; Suryadinata, 1992, 1980; Tan, 1991). When exactly, the Chinese had first arrived in the archipelago remains debatable, since various historical writings noted variegated evidences. Skinner (1996) for instance, argues that the influx of Chinese migrations to the archipelago dated since late 13th century, which presumably around the voyage of Cheng Ho. Wang Gung-Wu (1994: 22) found it even earlier, which says that the Chinese has been sailing towards the southeastern part of Asia since the Song Dynasty (circa 960-1279), through four patterns of migrations, i.e. traders, laborer, sojourners, and re-migrants. Similarly, Pigeaud (1967) and Robinson (1998) note that China was mentioned in Javanese Negarakertagama book, as land from where many pilgrims came to Java.

Groeneveldt (1877) in his work titled *Historical Notes on Indonesia and Malaysia: Compiled from Chinese Sources* (Groeneveldt, 1960) portrayed Indonesia from the Chinese perspective. It shows about how society was composed back then in Java. He noted Ying-yai Sheng-lan that described Java in 1416. It says *"In this country there are three kinds of people: First the Mahomedans (Arabs), who have come from the west and have established themselves here; their dress and food is clean and proper; second the Chinese, being all people from Canton, Chang-Chou, and Ch'üan-chou (the later two places situated in Fukien, not far from Amoy) who have run away and settled here; what they eat and use is also very fine and many of them adopted the Mahomedan religion and observe its precepts. The third are the natives, who are very ugly and uncouth; they go about with uncombed heads and naked feet and believe devoutly in devils, theirs being one of the countries called devil-countries in Buddhist books. The food of these people is very dirty and bad, as for instance snakes, ants and all other kinds of insects and worms, which are kept a moment before the fire and then eaten: the dogs they? have in their houses eat and sleep together with them, without their being disgusted at all."* (p. 49-50). Other works by Anthony Reid (2010), a prominent Southeast Asian scholar cited an old journal of a Dutch traveler, Willem Lodewycksz (1598, p. 121-123) who found that

Chinese communities in Banten were extremely distinctive. He wrote *“The Chinese live at Banten in a separate quarter (outside the walled city), that is surrounded by a strong reinforced by a moat where they have the finest houses which there are in the city. They are a very subtle people, in all their dealings very eager to make money, and thereby they keep a good table. When they first come from China, they do as I have explained for other merchants and buy a wife, who serves them until they want to return to China. They then sell her again, taking the children with them if the union has produced any”* (Reid, 2010: 55).

Some experts theorized that the Chinese, which originated from various districts in China, came to Indonesia in several waves. According to Reid (2010), around 1567 Ming Dynasty decided to expand trade to Southeast Asia. Because of the increased trading activities to the southeastern region, this area then continuously filled by people from Canton and Fujian region of China. Furthermore, they established Chinese quarters in several Southeast Asian ports, which in turn gained its significant importance. This could be then assumed as the first migration wave, the Chinese mainly focused by increased trading activities by expansion. Due to this trading activities, many Chinese, which were mostly men decided to settle in, adopted local religions and customs and *‘became Malay, Thai, Javanese, or Acehnese’* (Reid, 2010). And, as a symbol to accept local customs including religion, these Chinese changed the way they dress, abandonment of pork, and cut their Ming-hairstyle braid, which often marked by public rituals that documented by Scott (1606: 176) that wrote, *“if once they cut their hair, they may never return to their country again”*. Peter B. Carey (1984), a prominent historian on Indonesia, added that there were evidence showed that a number of mixed blood descendants, in the late 17th, where the Chinese immigrants have merged well into the Javanese society. He cited the works of Ong Tae-Hae (1849) that says, *“When the Chinese remain abroad for several generations without returning to their native land, they frequently cut themselves off from the instruction of the sage; in language, food and dress, they imitate the natives, and studying foreign books (? Qur’an), they do not scruple to become Javanese when they called themselves Islam (Sit-lam). Then they refuse to eat pork and adopt altogether native customs...”* (Carey, 1984). As a result of that, Reid (2010) then explains that there could have been little incentive for these Chinese to retain their language and hairstyle, since before the trade expansion many returned sojourners faced persecution. Furthermore, without their braid, the expression of

'shorn Chinese' was used in the 17th century, which sometimes associated with those Chinese that had changed their religion, identity and loyalty (p.55).

The descendants from the union between Chinese men and native women referred as *Peranakan*. Tan (1963) explains very well what does *peranakan* mean, "(it) is an Indonesian term consisting of the rootword anak (child), with the prefix per and suffix an, generally used to refer to those Chinese born in Indonesia whose home language is not Chinese but a mixture of Malay and of the local dialect (in this case Sundanese) and what in their diet, clothing and belief system have adopted elements of the local indigenous culture" (p. 11). As time evolved, these *Peranakan* Chinese in Indonesia, were considered an important group that contribute to the nation's history as well as culture. Knorr (2009) called them as one of Indonesian's 'creole' due to their mixed heritage, which in turn have shaped the uniqueness of their cultural hybridity. In much later stage, the *Peranakan* Chinese will always be juxtaposed as analytical category with the *Totok* Chinese that refers to the descendants of Chinese couple, upon the arrival of Chinese women in the 19th century.

4.2.2. The Middleman Minority – Chinese Settlers in the Dutch East Indies

Many Indonesian history books rarely distinguish that the Dutch East Indies (as the archipelago was named after the Dutch arrival) was govern by two distinct Dutch entities, which had very different motives. They were, the VOC (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*) – Dutch East India Company, which was founded in 1602 that established its first port in Jayakarta (which later become Batavia, now Jakarta) in 1619. This company focused its operation in the archipelago was purely based on economic motives, where they implemented monopoly over resources, slavery, and racism practices. The other was the representative of the Queen in Dutch East Indies, which officially marked colonial border over those areas. The significant success of VOC brought by JP Coen, as the most prominent VOC General (the 4th) that assumed his position from 1618 to 1623 who aimed to create European society in Batavia (Anggraeni, 2011; Coppel, 1983; Reid, 2010; Salmon and Lombard, 1977). To realize this vision, he decided to ship Chinese laborers, the *coolies*, from the southern coast of China to Batavia, because most Chinese who sailed southeast during the Song Dynasty were mostly skillful artisans (Anggraeni, 2010: 205) and not what the VOC needed to develop European metropolitan.

Reid (2010) notes that around 1641-1824, Dutch Malaka (in present day are the area of Malaka Straits) became such an attractive new place for new Chinese immigrants to come, including Batavia and Manila (the Philippines), which especially became important in 1740. To maximize the trade activities, the Dutch officials established mutual symbiosis system with the Chinese merchants, who later referred as 'middleman minority' (Bonacich, 1973) model, that usually sit in intermediary niche of the economic system at that time (Kwartanada, 2012), to fill the commercial spaces between the colonizer and the colonized native society (Skinner, 1996; Zenner, 1991). Due to their fluency in local language, in particular *Melayu Pasar* (Baazar Malay) or *Melayu Rendah* (low Malay) as the *lingua franca* of local trading activities, the Chinese appeared as significant brokers to help the Dutch capitalist mission. To characterize the Chinese in Southeast Asia, in particular Dutch East Indies at that time, Reid (2010) analogized them as the 'Jews of the East', which was first used to castigate the Chinese in the 1940s. At that time, Dutch officials granted them various licenses, including running gambling houses, money lending businesses by supplying rural credit to the native populations, as well as collecting tax (*pacht*) from the native rural peasants in terms of money, kind or labor. Additionally, the Chinese also had significant shares in opium trade (Skinner, 1996; Somer Heidhues, 2009a), operated by the Dutch. In her work, Anggraeni (2011) argues that the native populations disliked 'the intimacy' between colonial administration and the Chinese, which they assumed of being privilege due to the Chinese's higher position in the colonial-construction of social class. Many Chinese did the colonial's dirty work by extracting tax payment from the native populations often with coercive measures. As a result, this triggered accumulated jealousy not only by the native, but also by the non-elite Chinese. Anggraeni (2011) further describes that their closeness with the colonial elite was perceived as equated with superior social position towards the native. Such behavior only then aggravated the social and economic gap and jealousy among different populations in the Dutch colony, which associate the Chinese as the main obstacle of the native's economic advancement.

The year of 1740 marked the initiation of series violent attack towards the Chinese in the archipelago. It was all started when the price of sugar plummeted which caused significant lost on the trading side. As sugar was the main trading commodities at that time, the Chinese who owned majority of sugarcane

plantations and factories were forced to close down their operations. For that reason, many working class Chinese were left without job. Increased number of unemployment, rising poverty level and criminal rate, brought fear to the Dutch government. In a situation of chaos, unverified rumors were rapidly spread that led to bloody massacre in October 1740. It was perpetuated by some Chinese outlaws and unemployed peasants, which known to be rebelled against the Dutch ruler that wanted to attack them (Sommer Heidhues, 2009b). Spreading rumors and fear in Batavia made returned attack to the innocent Chinese inhabitants with the assumption that they might join the rebellions (Sommer Heidhues, 2009b). Blusse (1986, 2017) notes that within a week time, approximately eight thousands Chinese male, female and children were butchered. This bloody event suddenly changed the landscape of social, economic, and political relationship amongst different groups that populated the Dutch East Indies at that time, which in the later years similar orchestration continued for the same motives.

Following the 1740s bloody incidents, VOC ruler introduced *wijkenstelsel* known as 'The Ethnic Zone' or clustering policy, which enforced through *passenstelsel* system or known as permit to travel outside of their dedicated zone. This ethnic zoning policy forbade any Chinese to reside in the inner city, which apparently pushed them to concentrate their settlement area outside the Dutch walls thus created *Chineesche Kamp* or Chinese ghetto. However for the native population, these policies did not make significant differences, since they already lived outside of the wall anyway (Coppel, 2002; Lohanda, 2005). In her extensive writing about *wijkenstelsel* and *passenstelsel*, Lohanda (2005) argues that although the archipelago was ruled by two different Dutch entities, the VOC and the representative of Dutch government, they both employed the same ethnic-based policies for somehow distinct motives. She further stresses that VOC introduced these policies based on economic motives, whereas the official Dutch government used such policies for political reason, with a slight tweak as it was reactivated in 1818. Lohanda's work has marked significant contribution in separating the economic motives versus political motives of different rulers, which often assumed as single representation of the Dutch colonizer.

Within the *wijkenstelsel*, the VOC have also started to develop ethnic categories that psychically segregate where people should and should not reside. This categorization resulted in three distinct groups i.e. *Europeanen* that referred to

the Europeans; *Vreemde Oosterlingen* (which means Foreign Eastern) that referred to all non-natives of Batavia that included Balinese, Bugis, Ambonese, and Javanese that mostly originated from the eastern part of Batavia (Lohanda, 2005); and the native of Batavia, the Betawi people. These key ethnic based-policies were not only segregating people in separate physical locations, but also applied to their legality as colonial subjects. Under this regimen, the populations in the colony were segregated into the aforementioned categories, which eventually reflected ethnic-based populations pyramid thus defining their respective social class and economic capacities. Unfortunately, without differentiating the *Peranakan* and *Totok* Chinese, the colonial Dutch treated these two culturally different communities into a single and distinct socio-legal category (Aguilar, 2001; Reid, 2009). Somers Heidhues (1974) compared the situation of Chinese mestizos in the Spanish Philippines with the *Peranakan* Chinese. She argued that in the Chinese mestizos were treated as 'special kind of native'; whereas the *Peranakan* were treated as 'special kind of Chinese' (Aguilar, 2001).

Lohanda (2005) further continues that Dutch Indies Government eventually learned from VOC's failure, which focused on economic gain over political stability. They then re-issued the previously abolished *passenstelsel* in 1818, which was in particular aimed to control the Chinese communication with the natives. The revived *passenstelsel* was enacted through Netherlands Indies Government Status Book or *Staatblad van Nederlandsch-Indie* 1816 no. 25. To perfect the refined system, Dutch Indies Government loaned 'disciplining power' to the Chinese through giving them exclusive rights to collect tax (tax farmer) and to monopoly certain concessions for distributing European goods. Additionally, Lohanda (2005) also found that this restored *passenstelsel* did not reach what it intended to prevent, because the Chinese continued to make regular contacts with native populations, where the Chinese petty traders kept supplying goods to the natives.

A number of literatures about Dutch racial policies in the pre-Indonesian state did not clearly specify significant differences between policies issued during the VOC administration era and the Dutch Indies Government, other than Lohanda's (2005), which lead to severe misconceptions in understanding racial features of Dutch colonial policies. Therefore, it is important to distinguish that the enforcement of *passenstelsel* and *wijkenstelsel* that was initiated by the VOC regime, as a commercial entity, then carried forward by Dutch Indies Government, as a

political entity. These two policies were completely distinct with the administrative categorization of Dutch East Indies' population as colonial legal subject a result of the Government Regulating Act (*Regeerings Reglement*) 1845. Although in practice, these ethnic-based policies intersected and co-influenced day-to-day living arrangement of the affected populations, but it will be wise to understand the distinctive features of these racial policies.

Under *Wijkenstelsel* policy that restored in 1818, the Dutch Indies Government clustered the Chinese, Arabs, and Indians in *Vreemde Oosterlingen* (Foreign Orientals/Foreign Asiatics) as a single administrative category. As mentioned clearly by Lohanda (2005) the category of *Vreemde Oosterlingen* under the VOC regime has dramatically shifted its scope and meaning toward broader geographical area, which stem its center on Europe and was no longer in Batavia. This made the category of *Vreemde Oosterlingen* under the Dutch Indies Government rule, was understood as people who were foreign to the *Europeanen* (as the first category) and also not from one of the natives, which were categorized as *Landskinderen* (as the third category) (Lohanda, 2005). Despite the *Vreemde Oosterlingen* shifted meaning of across different political regime, this has been continuously reproduced as Foreign Orientals, which equated as the Chinese minus the rest.

Under the Dutch Indies Government, the archipelago continued to receive new settlers from China. Anggraeni (2011) estimated that the second wave of Chinese migrants was due to Opium Wars (from 1839 to 1842 and from 1856 to 1860). She then theorized that during the 18th century, there was increased number of traders, miners, farmers, and other skillful Chinese who left China due to severe poverty as well as to escape from foreign incursion. Similar findings also confirmed by Yuen (2014) that analyzed the population and socioeconomic characteristic of the Chinese community in Dutch East Indies based on the 1930 Population Census. He noted that because the enactment of Dutch liberal policy in 1870, which intended to boost up private investment, this has led to mushrooming of some industry such as tobacco, sugar, coffee, tea and cinchona plantation, also growing trend of mining enterprises. This condition was certainly better opportunity for the Chinese immigrants to find better living in comparison with their native land. W.F Wertheim (1959) explored issues around significant changes in traditional pattern of economic structure in Indonesia during 1800. He argued that such restructure

has created new roles for the Chinese as intermediary actors that connected the European-controlled sector with the indigenous ones. As a result, the Chinese population in Dutch East Indies skyrocketed from 221,438 (in 1860) to 809,039 (in 1920). By 1930, the demographic number reached to 1,233, 214 that included 582,431 in Java and Madura and 650,783 in outer islands. Population data on Chinese noted that from 1900 to 1930, there were a total of 1,097,597 Chinese immigrants entered into Dutch East Indies, where majority of them came to settle down as permanent residents (Yuen, 2014).

Anggraeni (2011) wrote that the increased number might also resulted from influx migration of Chinese women, which were allowed to travel during that period. The new Chinese incomers then joined their fellow countrymen to live in Chinese quarters. Where most men had more frequent contacts with the native populations due to the nature of their activities, Chinese women and children only interacted with their own kind. Whereas, more wealthy Chinese women were able to establish limited contact with their maids or guard, which often were the natives. Anggraeni (2011) notes that this type of relationship resulted in various behaviors, for instance subconscious image that they had of the native was socially inferior. Further, it was theorized by a number of Sino-scholars like Skinner (1996), Coppel (2002, 2012), Suryadinata (1980, 1992, 1999) and Reid (2001, 2009, 2010) that these Chinese and their descendants constitute what it was called as the *Totok* group which has distinctive characteristic in their political movement, economic activities and degree of integration with the native population, in comparison with the earlier Chinese settlers and their *creole* descendants, which comprise the *Peranakan* group (Somer Heidhues, 2009a).

Despite the Chinese were seen as the problematic ones, Chirot & Reid (1997) believe that they were 'the essential outsiders' due to their distinctive characteristic to fill the social gap between the Dutch colonizers and Javanese elites with the mass population at that time. Reid (2010) further notes that although the China-born Chinese in Java were only about 24,000 people compare to the size of *Peranakan* group that was 10 times larger, but for the colonial ruler, they were basically one single monolithic group. Long after the earlier riot in 1740s, in the period of 1811-1819, a series of anti-Chinese uprisings exploded Java, which led Dutch to interpret as the effect of increasing Chinese nationalism that urged them to be treated equally with the Europeans. Reid then continues that many Chinese began to dress like the

Europeans and perceived themselves distinct from the native populations (Reid, 2001; Somer Heidhues, 2009a, 2009b).

In the beginning of 20th century, when China experience awakening of its new nationalism to build great China nation under the communist rule, the *Peranakan* Chinese community parted away from the native population. Shiraishi (1997) reconstructed the development of early nationalist movement, *Sarekat Islam* that was established by batik entrepreneurs that split their cooperation with the *Peranakan* Chinese, as they were perceived as ‘arrogant’ because of patriotic pride in ‘their people’ that refer to the Chinese community (Aguilar, 2001). Aguilar wrote, “*Wild rumors circulated (that the) Chinese now dared to say to the natives that the new republic would soon drive away the Dutch and that the Chinese would become their rulers and masters. The Chinese attitude toward natives accordingly became ‘arrogant’, and they demanded that native address them as tuan (master) and show them due respect as they did to the priyayi (Javanese Aristocrats) and the Dutch.*” (Aguilar, 2001: 507).

4.2.3. The important Other – The Chinese Population in Newly Independent Indonesia under Soekarno’s regime

During the first years of Indonesia’s independence, the population of Chinese descendants did not automatically become part of this new nation. Despite having been settled in Indonesia for generations, including adopting local culture and practices or changing their religion, people of Chinese descents remain treated as ‘The Other’ in newly nascent nation. In addition to that, Sukarno’s close political affiliation with the global left, including China and Soviet Union, this has been viewed as further hindered the native’s acceptance towards the Chinese. Some literatures pointed out on key policies that affected the life of many Chinese Indonesians and at the same time also jeopardized their relationship with the native Indonesians (Aguilar, 2001; Heryanto, 1998; Reid, 2010; Suryadinata, 1999; Tan, 1991). Such policies include, the signing of Dual Citizenship Agreement between Indonesia and Chinese Government in 1955; the launch of *Benteng* Program in 1950, as the first affirmative policy to protect the indigenous businessmen the issuance of Government Regulation No. 10/1959 that prohibited Chinese ‘alien’ to run economic activity in the rural areas. These conjunctures in newly Indonesian state

have wiped out the participation of Chinese Indonesians in political arena as well as their economic contribution to this growing nation.

Distinguishing the Chinese Indonesia into only two distinctive categories, *Totoks* and *Peranakans*, appeared as simplified way to understand the dynamics between their complex situations. Unfortunately, there were not that many literatures which were genuinely exposing social-economic class distinctions or political affiliations amongst these groups. Somer (2009a) in her book writes that Chinese in Indonesia was categorized into four groups based on political affiliations; but Anggraeni (2011) had different views. She argues that Chinese community were divided into three; those who want to retain political and cultural links with China, those who cut political links with China but retain Chinese culture and joined the new Indonesia nation; and those who wanted to move away from political-cultural with China and joined the new nation Indonesia. Having said that, it was really a daunting task to categorize the Chinese in Indonesia back then.

According to Somer (1946) after 1900 the Chinese *Totok* group became more active in politics in the China mainland, along the growth of *Kuomintang* under the Chinese Communist party. To support new Republic of China, supported by the Chinese mainland, they opened THHK (Tiong Hoa Hwe Kian) School in order to introduce Chinese patriotism. Conversely, the other Chinese group, the *Peranakans* group was discouraged to attend those schools and Dutch Government opened Dutch-language school – Holland Chinese School (HCS) – for them instead, which further pulled the *Peranakans* children away from the native populations and marked stronger social barrier. Furthermore, the *Peranakans* were made to believe that they were closer to the colonial elite rather than the native populations. Somer further notes that the success of HCS somehow creates a conception of *Peranakan* Chinese as a whole, which basically uninterested in political activities. Their lack of interest in politics appeared in contrast with growing political awareness in Indonesia (Somer Heidhues, 2009a). As a result, these two separate groups developed different views in supporting the new nations, which further politicized by the ruling elite that benefited from lack of awareness of native populations. Those Chinese who were politically passive, basically excluded and left out as target of angry mob. Therefore, this tended to drive they themselves voluntary ‘invisible’ and more inward looking (Anggraeni, 2011).

In terms of legalizing formal citizenship, the existence of Chinese in Indonesia in the early years of the country's independence was indeed extremely problematic. The rise of Communist Party in China mainland under Mao's administration followed *jus sanguinis*³¹ principle of citizenship that made all Chinese diaspora globally and their descendants were included as its citizens. In this case, it also applied to those who settled in Indonesia including their children, both that were born either as *peranakan* or *totok*. On the contrary, Indonesia followed the principle of *jus soli*³² which eventually made Indonesian of Chinese descents had dual citizenship. According to Wilmot (1961), the issuance of Indonesian Citizenship Act in 1946 mandated Chinese descendants to choose their citizenship by presenting formal declaration of rejecting Chinese citizenship in court and applying for Indonesian citizenship. Dual citizenship status of Indonesian Chinese has led to an establishment of Indonesian-China Treaty on Dual Citizenship in 1955 (which was enacted in 1958) that allowed Indonesian Chinese to choose their citizenship until the deadline of 1962. Skinner (1996) estimated that estimated in 1962 of 2.45 million Chinese in Indonesia, 1 million was born in Indonesia, 1.25 million held foreign citizenship and approximately 200 thousands had rejected Indonesian citizenship. Unfortunately, this Dual Citizenship Treaty was discontinued in 1969 due to anti-communist uprising in 1965, which was believed to receive support from Mainland China (Anggraeni, 2010). As a result of this discontinuation, many Chinese in Indonesia become stateless. Wilmot (1961) even suspected that during the mandate to choose Indonesian citizenship, courts in many areas were extremely slow in processing the declaration of repudiation and made many cases of repudiation were never officially certified (Chandra, 2012).

³¹ *Jus sanguinis* (Latin: right of blood) is a principle of nationality law by which citizenship is not determined by place of birth but by having one or both parents who are citizens of the state. Children at birth may automatically be citizens if their parents have state citizenship or national identities of ethnic, cultural, or other origins (Kostakopoulou, Dora (2008). *The Future Governance of Citizenship*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 26–27). This is mainly derived from political reason, and along with the rise of Communist Party, *jus sanguinis* principle was used to attract Chinese descendants attention to the political movement in China.

³² Commonly refer as birth right citizenship, it is the right of anyone born in the territory to have the state's nationality or citizenship, where they born.

As a new sovereign state, in the first years of its independence, Indonesia continued to struggle, especially in the economic sector. Indonesia's politicians and economists strived to achieve economic stabilization and rehabilitation by engaged in modern economic system, which previously controlled by large Dutch firms and some Chinese-own enterprises. To do such, Indonesia required strong local businessmen, in which underlined the reason behind the *Benteng* Program. Anspach (1969) mentions that the *Benteng* program which was launch in April 1950 masterminded by Djuanda, then Minister of Welfare, aimed to develop a strong indigenous business class (Thee, 2006). Suryadinata (1986) mentioned that the program, which ran until 1957, was a subsidized credit policy intended to promote the growth of native entrepreneurial class (Weeraratne, 2009) . In 1986, Sumitro who was the Minister of Trade and Industry (1950-1951) claimed that the *Benteng* program was set up to counter the Dutch economic interest. And because this program focused to ensure national control of the import, it reserved import license exclusively for "easy-to-sell" goods that referred as "*Benteng* goods" (Thee, 2010; Weeraratne, 2009) to "'national" importers'. What the policy referred as "national" importers are "*indigenous Indonesian importers or import firms where 70% of the capital came from indigenous sources*" (Suryadinata and Hardoyo, 1986: 130).

Mackie (1971) notes that despite this program did not explicitly specify to exclude Chinese Indonesian importers; but implicitly, the *Benteng* program also intended to counter the interests of ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs as they remained dominating the intermediary retail trade in rural and urban areas. Like what Djuanda claimed, as cited by Suryadinata (1986), "*Indigenous Indonesian nationals as a group are include in the economically weak. Of course, a few indigenous Indonesians are economically strong, but most of them are economically weak. Nationals of this country who are not indigenous Indonesians are from the economically strong group. Of course, in that group there are also economically weak persons, but these are only exceptions while most are in an economically strong position*" (Weeraratne, 2009: 131). However, the implementation of this *Benteng* program had considerable loophole, as the ethnic Chinese importers were also able to acquire the licenses through indigenous Indonesian license holders as their puppets. Sutter (1959) and Mackie (1971) named this tactic as '*briefcase importers*', which appears as reverse effect of this policy. Rather than promoted and strengthened the rise of new indigenous capitalist class, the *Benteng* program instead has produced unproductive rent-seekers (Thee, 2010:

65). This has led to a new system called *Ali-Baba* system (Robinson and Hadiz, 2004; Suryadinata and Hardoyo, 1986; Tan, 1991), which referred *Ali* – the common name for indigenous Indonesians – as those who had the legal license for import and *Baba* is referred to the Chinese Indonesians that had the financial capital, usually to purchase the licenses from the *Ali*. Harshly, Robinson (1986) wrote that what has been strengthened in this *Benteng* program were not new indigenous class, but instead “a group of license brokers and political fixer” in which according to Diao and Tan (2001) were politically connected but had small business aptitude (Weeraratne, 2009). In the later years, this phenomenon led to a particular perception that the Chinese used the natives to advance their economic domination (Hefner, 1998; Tan, 2004; Yoshihara, 1988).

Suryadinata (1986) called this *Benteng* policy as ‘pribumization of economy’. He cited Richard Robinson (1985), which described that Bank Industri Negara (BIN) – National Industrial Bank – disbursed IDR 160 million to finance industrial projects, which controlled and managed by national institutions (such as cooperatives or domestic private enterprises) led by native Indonesians. The same Bank together with Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI) directly transferred IDR 655 million to support native entrepreneurs. Not only that, Suryadinata also noted the important leadership role of native businessman that further scrutinized the involvement of Chinese in the new nation’s economy. He named Mr. Asaat, which appeared as key leading figure of anti-Chinese as well as the resurrection symbol of Islamic patriotism. Mr. Asaat’s popular speech in National Economic Congress (KENSI) that was conducted in Surabaya 19 March 1956 has provoked deeper sentiments towards the Chinese, not only the businessmen but also the whole populations. As quoted in *Tempo Magazine*³³, Mr. Asaat declared that “The Chinese People, as an exclusive group, rejected other people to join, especially in the area of economy. They are so exclusive, thus monopolistic in their practices³⁴” (p.88-89). Mackie (1976) mentions that this new movement as initiated by Mr. Asaat

³³ “Nasionalisasi Berakhir Buntung”. *Majalah Tempo*. 13-17 Agustus 2007 hal 88-89 (Translation: Nationalization ended as stump)

³⁴ Original text: “Orang-orang Cina sebagai satu golongan yang eksklusif menolak masuknya orang-orang lain, terutama dalam bidang ekonomi. Mereka begitu eksklusif sehingga dalam praktiknya bersikap monopolistis”

called for more radical measures on preferential treatment towards indigenous businessmen had attracted greater attention from the Islamist group (p. 14).

Government's effort to 'nationalize the economy' continued, which in returned has marginalized the Chinese involvement in Indonesia's economy. In 1959, sponsored by politicians such as Mr. Asaat, the government enacted Presidential Regulation (PP) No. 10/1959 that basically banned small-scale foreign-owned businesses to continue its operations, except in urbanized areas. This policy left the 'foreign' business owners with limited options: shutting down their business that were located in rural areas, relocating their business to urban area, or transferring their business to the native businessmen. Despite the policy only mentioned 'foreign' as single unified group, but in practice it impacted the Chinese the most. Chirot and Reid (1997) argue that this policy targeted more than 25 thousands Chinese retailers that operated nation-wide distribution network. Indonesian newspaper, *Harian Waspada*³⁵, noted that from 86,690 registered foreign small-scale traders, 90% of those were Chinese descendants, counted around more than 78 thousand small business owned by Chinese descendants were victimized. Pramodya Ananta Toer (1998), the most prominent Indonesian critical writer has written a book that specifically talks about PP 10/1959 which affected so many Chinese Indonesian families in Java. In his book, "*Hoakiau in Indonesia*", which was ban for circulation and has been destroyed during Sukarno's and Suharto's regime, Toer mentioned (as he cited data from *Antara*, August 1959) that they were about 9,095 small-scale retailers in West Java in which 2,300 were located in big cities. Not only that, there were more small stalls that impacted by the implementation of this racist policy. He quoted from *Republika* Newspaper, 7 August 1959, that said there were 695 small stalls (with 4,500 families) in Malang District; 230 small stalls (with 1,400 families) in Pasuruan District; 240 small stalls (with 1,500 family members) in Probolinggo District; and 220 small stalls (with 1,300 family members) in Lumajang Districts – which all of those in East Java provinces. Toer continued that as of Juli 1959, there were 114,875 alien traders; 1,326 among them were wholesaler, 26,859 intermediary sellers, and 86,690 were small

³⁵ (Berita Peristiwa 60 Tahun Waspada: Penduduk Cina Dipulangkan (1960). PP No. 10 dan Masalah Pemulangan Hoakiao Hal 39) (Translation: News on 1960s' event. Waspada Daily. Chinese's people have been sent home (1960). Government Regulation No. 10 and the matters of sending home Hoakiao, p.39)

retailers. From the large number of all the alien traders in Indonesia, Toer mentioned that 109,466 of them were *Peranakan* Chinese – as he referred them with *Hoakiau* – which accounted for more than 95%. This means that the *Hoakiau* community composed the majority of small retailer (83,783) and 24,991 that operated as intermediary sellers. Only very small portion of them played role as big retailers (692) (Toer, 1998).

Result from this policy was highly controversial which led to several riots in West Java (*Cibadak* Riot was among the pronounced ones) that also triggered huge outflow of Chinese Indonesian back to China. Chirot and Reid (1997) estimated that over 100 thousands Chinese left Indonesia. Suryadinata (1980) argues that series of incidents because of this regulation marked the beginning of anti-Chinese sentiment in Indonesia. Echoing similar tone, Robinson (1995) called that the ‘pribumization of economy’ is a political movement of Islam *pribumi* (read: native) petit bourgeoisie that did not receive much wider political support at that time, which dominate by Sukarno’s Nationalist Party and Communist Party (Sato, 2003).

4.2.4. “They called us non-*pribumi*” - The Chinese Indonesians as Unauthentic Other in the New Order Era

Following the bloody anti-communist riot in 1966 that killed up to three million people³⁶, Suharto, a high-rank general, took the power as the Republic’s second president. For about 32 years, he ruled the country in authoritative manner under the auspice of the military leadership. Under Suharto’s regime, called *Orde Baru* (New Order), many scholars argued that discrimination towards the Chinese descendants in Indonesia reached its peak. For more than three decades, Suharto’s administration institutionalized the process of Chinese othering through orchestrating what it called as ‘the Chinese Problem’ in 1967 that marked by an establishment of specific government bodies as well as special advisors to settle this problem. Chua (2004) writes that the orchestration of ‘Chinese Problem’ was deliberate, in which fabricated based on a rather old problem that redefined by Suharto’s regime. Likewise, Wertheim (1959) describes by the end of 1950s, the

³⁶ Data cited from <http://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20150930054754-20-81729/ypkp-65-klaim-3-juta-lebih-korban-tewas-lantaran-dituduh-pki/>

situation of Chinese in Indonesia become less problematic, because the social stratification in the newly independent state of Indonesian was no longer based on racial identification. It rather structured around economic competition, where the Chinese Indonesians were characterized as economic group which was positioned to be the pariah group. To overcome this rather fictitious 'Chinese Problem', New Order regime designed 'assimilation program' to eliminate their chineseness, based on their incompatibility in cultural domain. This incompatibility was then become the main justification to dispose their chineseness that was perceived to risk national integration and unity. Weeraratne (2009) notes that the historical construction of the Chinese Indonesian as "disliked outsider" based on three aspects of the 'triple minority' status that made them logical and convenient target for elite mongering.

Coppel (1983) noted that the construction of "Chinese Problem" in Suharto's regime started in December 1966, when the military commander for East Java, General Major Soemitro issued new decree against all Chinese alien in the province. This decree banned the Chinese alien that engaged in wholesale trade anywhere in the provincial area, except the provincial capital; imposed head tax towards them that resided around provincial territory, as well as prohibition in using Chinese characters and language in public space. These bans certainly led to growing protest of the Chinese communities in some cities across East Java (p. 99-105). Furthermore, Suharto also remarked the importance of integration and assimilation of Indonesian of foreign descent to act equally as Indonesian. In his speech on the nation's Independence Day in 16th of August 1967, he specifically addressed as follow, "*I appeal to Indonesian citizen of foreign descent to delay no longer their integration and assimilation with the Indonesian (indigenous) community. Brothers and sisters, let us be aware that brothers and sisters of (foreign descent) have already chosen voluntarily – without force – to take up Indonesian citizenship. These brothers and sisters are, as a result, not only given equal rights but are also called to fulfill the same obligations as citizens. Integration and assimilation mean participating in all the activities of the Indonesian people with all their joy and sorrow ...*"³⁷ (Coppel, 2002). By referring to their Chineseness as "problem", the Government through Presidential Decision

³⁷ Speech made by Suharto to the Parliament (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Gotong Royong/DPRGR*) on 16th August 1967, taken from Coppel (2002)

No. 240/1967, Article 3 Chapter 1 underlines the need for Indonesian citizens of foreign descent (which specifically refers to the Chinese descent and was not other groups like Arabs or Europeans) to undertake a rigorous and structured process of assimilation in order to facilitate the complete eradication of their Chineseness that assumed as threatening national integration due to racial exclusivity. In the same speech, Suharto continued, “[...]We must try to eradicate a system of social intercourses that is exclusive in the environment of a single nation, by simplifying the process of name changing (which is) one of the step to accelerate the eradication of exclusiveness” (Weeraratne, 2009).

In this period, their incompatibility as culturally distinct groups were further emphasized through the creation of invisible borders in various areas that ultimately limited their access to public education, public employment as well as public expression of cultural and religion. During the New Order regime, the process of othering towards the Chinese descendants in Indonesia resulted neatly crated reconstruction of what it means to born from a Chinese-descendant parents. Such ethnicity reconstruction then instrumentalized to establish a common basis for solidarity among the native nationals, including descendants of Arabs whom at a much later stage also included in this group (which later referred as *pribumi*) vis a vis Indonesians of Chinese descendants (later called as *non-pribumi*). As a result of this concoction, dichotomy between *pribumi* and *non-pribumi* was created to simplify the distinctions of these two. This categorization was skillfully used by Suharto’s administration to blur class contradictions that occurred among different social classes in the population, by emphasizing specific racial features that in turn aggravating the deep-seated outrage against Indonesians of Chinese descendant (Chua, 2004: 469). In his work, Chua emphasizes that in the case of Indonesia, power of ethnicity offers certainty in insecurity, in which the orchestration of *pribumi* identity that based on assumed solidarity of a ‘kinship community’ is capitalized as ‘psychological and political ideology’ against the Chinese descents (Brown, 1994: xviii–xix). Therefore by concealing the economic and class problem with imagined ethnicity problem, the New Order government was able to keep maintaining the power of what Hadiz (2001: 274) calls as ‘capitalist oligarchy’.

Robinson (1982) argues that during the New Order era, bureaucratic elite secured political infrastructure while at the same time, foreign and Chinese Indonesian business group injected capital including network and management of

knowledge. This symbiosis mutualism took specific form of the capitalist oligarchy group where the power dominated by *politio*-bureaucrats that conjoint intimately with the conglomerations of tycoons, of which majority owned by Chinese-descendants (Chua, 2004). This type of relationship called *Cukongism*³⁸, emerged as reproduction of *Ali-Babaism*, the previous model of business collusion, with a slight modification. Adding to earlier arguments on the simple dichotomy of *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*, Siddique and Suryadinata (1981) found that after the fall of Sukarno's Old Order regime, there was increasing used of this binary in association with economic inequalities. They found out that native entrepreneurs were no longer use the term '*pedagang/pengusaha nasional*' (national businessmen and entrepreneurs), instead used *pribumi* as more preferable term that signal an attempt to improve economic status of native Indonesians. They also wrote that Suharto himself pointed out that *pribumi* as native Indonesians should be considered as economically weak group. Therefore, in such dichotomy, *non-pribumi* has been normalized to associate the Chinese-descendants with economically superior group.

The normalized view of state protection for the *pribumi* further manifested as ethnicizing the class problem (Chua, 2004). As a result, *non-pribumi* appears as single category that characterized by its economic dominance as equation of business tycoons, economic animals, which also categorizing those of Chinese descendants who were economically weak into the same box. Schwarz (1999) further argues that word selections of *pribumi* that implies economically weak society versus *non-pribumi* that associate economically powerful groups, can be seen as "'code phrase' of officially tabooed discourse of race" (p. 117). Such discourses narrate that 3% of the population control 70% economy, which generalized single interpretation of 97% economically weak *pribumi* (Aditjondro, 1998; Suryadinata, 1992). Even bombastic media headlines also contributed in reproducing this discourse, by highlighting specific narrative of racializing economic gap. For instance, Forbes (2017) named 8 of the 10 wealthiest persons in Indonesia are ethnic Chinese descendants. The discourse of economically weak *pribumi* was repeatedly narrated not only as racial tension that lean towards economic domination of ethnic

³⁸ Derived from the word *cukong*, loanword from Hokkien dialect, which translated as Chinese capitalist or tycoon

Chinese descendants, but also as political message during major political events in the country, which Schwarz called 'ethnic blame game' (Schwarz, 1999: 345–6). Schwarz concluded that New Order regime skillfully crafted the economic problem of *pribumi* as the Chinese Problem, as a clever strategy to prevent class struggle, which presumably might have been targeted towards the capitalist elites and bureaucrats that enjoyed their power on the expenses of compliant Chinese financiers. Furthermore, the perception of socio-economic inequalities between the economically weak *pribumi* and stronger Chinese (referred as *non-pribumi*) could not damage the *pribumi* elite, which interestingly also perceived as 'economically weak' group that synonymously represented by the term *pribumi* (Coppel, 1983: 153). Moreover the political discourse of economically dominant Chinese Indonesians were re-narrated with the additional feature of 'politically weak group' that made them frequent target as 'scapegoat' elite to prevent uprisings (Mydans, 1998; Ravando, 2014; Turner, 2003; Turner and Allen, 2007; Weeraratne, 2009).

It has been argued that the notion of *pribumi* (or *bumiputera*), which previously understood as a resistance discourse against the colonial empire has been depoliticized and classified solely as economic category by the New Order regime. Tan (2001) says that the idea of *bumi* is an articulation of 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991) from which the Chinese-descendants citizens is not part of, which in this sense refers to the common imagination of the rest. He continues that ethnic domination of those who called themselves *pribumi* then functions as the core impetus for nation-building trajectory. This then selectively favor the native groups through institutionalization based on ethnic boundaries and left the minority out of the picture. By pointing out the similarity with Malaysia, Tan further elaborated that the ethnic identities are *selectively crafted* as effective tool of mobilization to maintain their homogeneity in "*bumi* imagined community", through nation-building process. In this "*bumi* imagined community", the Chinese are not part of it; despite though religious conversion or adopting the natives' way of life (Salmon and Lombard, 1977).

The imagined 'Chinese Problem' orchestrated by Suharto's administration led to what the literatures described as imposed assimilation policies, which further underlined growing stigmatization anti-Chinese sentiment by classifying Indonesian Chinese as one single group (Kwartanada, 2006; Mackie, 1976;

Ongkhokham, 2008). Hoon (2006a) in his writing argues that their loyalty was questioned, because of their previous relationship with the Dutch colonial government and the China mainland, which lead to a constructed perception as 'the foreign allies'. The assimilation policies were further enforced through the issuance of many implementing regulations that legitimized structural discriminatory actions by the State to its minority populations, although the other non-native descendants, such as Arabs, Indians, or Eurasian, did not go through the same experience.

Throughout this regime, Indonesian Chinese were strongly encouraged to adopt Indonesian sounding name. As pursuant to the decision of the Cabinet Presidium No 127/1966 that advised "*replacing the names of Indonesians of foreign descents with names which conform to indigenous Indonesian name will assist in assimilation.*" (Coppel, 2002). As a follow up of this recommendation, the Suharto issued Presidential Decision No. 249/1967, which stated that "*Indonesian descent who still use Chinese name are urged to replace them with Indonesian name pursuant to current legislation*". This government 'suggestion' later forced the Chinese Indonesians to lose traditional family name (Lie and Bailey, 2017), in which by the mid-1969, about 250 thousand Chinese-descendants in Indonesia discarded their Chinese names (Somer Heidhues, 1974: 83–4).

The urge to use Indonesian-sounding name was also believed to be cooping strategy, especially when they had to deal with bureaucrats for any purposes, for instance to avoid from derogatory comments or from the corrupt low-rank apparatus. Somer-Heidhuis (Somer Heidhues, 1999) writes that whoever had a Chinese sounded name and/or physically resembled *sino*-features could be exposed by official document and interrogated as Chinese and had to pay higher fees or bribe the officials (p.167). Not only that, Chinese Religions (Confucianism), traditions, and practices also forbidden, which justified by Presidential Decree No 14/1967 on *Masalah China* (Chinese Problem) (Suryadinata, 1986) as its written that "*Chinese religion, beliefs and customs (in Indonesia) originated in their ancestral land and their various manifestations may generate unnatural influence on the psychology, mentality and morality of Indonesian citizens and therefore impede natural propensity (for assimilation)*" (p.186). Chua (2004) suspects that alleged godless of Confucianism was contributed to strong association with atheistic communism, which made many Chinese descendants converted to Christianity and had lost their status as

officially recognized religion in 1979 (Coppel, 1983: 164). In addition to that, the oppressing regime also banned on the use of Chinese characters in newspapers, magazine, advertisements and other form of public communication, as formalized in the Decree of People's Consultative Assembly of Republic of Indonesia in 1966 (Tan, 1991: 71). Similarly, books, newspapers, literatures and documents with Chinese characters were subject to strict import restriction, as it regulated by the decree of Minister of Trade and Cooperative No. 286/1978 (Weeraratne, 2009).

Following to that, Suharto's regime issued the 'Guidelines for the Implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967 (Coppel, 2002), which show that the state was care enough to dismantle 'characteristics and features of Chineseness' such as prohibiting dragon dance (Tan, 1991: 118). On education and cultural aspects, Weeraratne (2009) mentions that Presidential Instruction No. 37/1967 article 7-9 regulated national schools only allowed to accept maximum of 40% seats for the Chinese Indonesian students. In other word, the number native Indonesian students of these schools per classroom should also more than the alien (read Chinese). Not only the government regulated what the Chinese descendants should not do in the public domain, Heryanto (1999) described that even telephone calls were monitored and conversations in Chinese interrupted. This further disciplined the Chinese not to use any of their cultural attributes even in the private sphere. Heryanto then continued that in Semarang, it was not even allowed to sell Chinese cookies, in addition to public celebration of Chinese New Year (p. 327). By dismantling their cultural features and attributes of chineseness, government sponsored assimilation program aimed to dissolve the Chinese descendants, yet leaving them without the main element of social coherence (Sommer Heidhues, 1999: 166).

Citizenship for Chinese Indonesian was never an easy part, especially under Suharto's administration where their cultural, social, economic and political backgrounds were racialized to craft what "Chinese Problem" is about. Due to the abortion of previous policies from earlier regime – The Dual Nationality Agreement with China – this left many Chinese Indonesians became stateless. As Coppel (1983) describes that Suharto's administration undertook particular measure to ensure the existence of these non-citizen Chinese through a state-produced document that proof the status of their citizenship, known as *Surat Bukti Kewarganegaraan Republik Indonesia* (SBKRI) (Tan, 1991: 123). Pursuant to the

Presidential Instruction No. 2/1980 and Presidential Decree No 13/1980, Chinese Indonesians could acquire the citizenship certificate from the head of the regional administrative sub-district where they live (Lindsey and Pausacker, 2005). Later, this SBKRI became the most important document for the Chinese Indonesian as it was required to process any kind of important documents, such as the KTP (Identity Cards), Family Card, Birth Certificate, Passport, Driving Licenses, including application to educational institution or for apply jobs, especially the public job. This SBKRI also needed when one applies for business licenses, bank credits, permit to construct houses, and many other documents. Lindsey and Pausacker (2005) added that it often became a lucrative business of the bureaucrats to take extra legal payoff for those that fail presenting such document. Despite Suharto has aborted the regulations related to SBKRI through Presidential Decision No 56/1996, but this made no significant impact as they argue that it was only applied to *“persons whose husbands, fathers and mothers already possessed an SBKRI”*.

On one hand the assimilation programs intended to promote new Indonesian identity for the Chinese descendants, but on the other hand the New Order government also fixed them in their isolation through exposing their otherness, which lead to systemic exclusion. Administratively, the government put certain code on IDs and birth certificates of Chinese descent by adding extra zero (Godley and Lloyd, 2001; Suryadinata, 1992: 145–6) in order to distinguish them with the native populations. Aguilar Jr. (2001) notes that this coding system used by the bureaucracies, policies and military to discriminate and to manipulate the coded population. For many years, discriminatory requirement to obtain such formal documentation become one of the worst nightmares of Chinese Indonesians’ legal identity. Besides that, Chinese Indonesians were excluded from working as civil servants, army/police, parliament members, and only limited numbers of them were admitted in the state university (Mackie, 1991: 191). Therefore, with such reservations, majority of Chinese descendants were left with business activities. It is then reasonable to argue that during New Order era, that were extremely rare Indonesian of Chinese descents made it into higher military or political position (Heryanto, 1999: 327), with some exceptions of whom who were Suharto’s golf-buddies and business partners.

Anti-Chinese sentiment intensively culminated in 1998, following the Asian Financial Crisis that turned into socio-political riot in several major cities in

Indonesia. The incidents also led to massive violations such as targeted mob to Chinese-owned property and businesses and more than a hundred women (mostly Indonesian Chinese) were reported sexually assaulted (Heryanto, 1999, 2000; Kirnandita, 2017; Merah Muda Memudar, 2017; Siegel, 1998; Sushartami, 2012; Winarnita, 2011). In addition, large-scale robbery and break-in also occurred in major shopping centers in various cities, which ended up with thousands of visitors and employees burned inside. This incident caused thousands of Indonesian citizens with Chinese background fled out of the country and it was also believed that efflux of massive amount of financial capital has left the country alongside. Far East Eastern Review edition 30 July 1998 noted that at least 30 thousand Indonesians with Chinese background left the country within three months as a result of culminated socio-economic crisis. Reid (2010) argues that Chinese-owned properties were framed as source of millions of angry and frustrated semi-educated unemployed urban population towards the wealthiest elites, which perceived to be equated with Chinese descendants. Therefore, attacking those properties, not only the big ones but also small shops, was understood as constant reminder of their vulnerability, in which bring to reality anti-Chinese rhetoric. Chua (2004) notes that the imagined 'Chinese Problem' was instrumentalized by Suharto as its vital elements on many of his New Order policies to curb the rising (native) bourgeoisie and middle class as new political powerholders (Robinson, 1986: 319–20). Chua further emphasizes on three vital steps to handle the 'Chinese Problem' which were through marginalization, discrimination and stigmatization through assimilation program that appears to neutralize them, but at the same time discriminate and excluding them, and finally stigmatizing the entire population of Chinese descendant as wealthy. The New Order-way of naturalization aimed to remove all of the Chineseness attributes, which defined and redefined as political tactics of the capitalist oligarchs and through stigmatizing and marginalizing this minority as the 'economically strong' group, social and economic inequality was easily camouflaged as ethnic problem (Chua, 2004).

Reading the construction of "Chinese Problem" as normalized way on how to interpret the Chinese Indonesians, disregard the distinction of *Totok* or *Peranakan* category, Pickering (2001) argues that this stereotype is understood as essentialist representation of a certain group or category of people that is widely shared in society in the form of public discourse. This then asserted calculated and deliberate

policy measures toward correcting the Chinese Indonesians behavior that “redefined, perpetuated, and instrumentalized the masalah Cina (*Chinese Problem*) which became an indispensable element of its policies” (Chua, 2004: 466) in which consistently depicting the entire population of Chinese Indonesia as economically privilege groups. This, according to Chua (2004), has contributed to their vulnerability to social resentment during economic downturn. Heryanto (1998) even harshly referred that type of orchestration as “racialized state terrorism” which diverted public attention away from burgeoning capitalism and entrenched web of chronic corruption. In similar tone, Despres (1975) adds that the state plays significant role in differentiating role in allocating privileges and resources through favoring specific classes and/or ethnic groups, in addition to develop beneficial relationship with elite of particular communities. Tan (2001) then describes that the features of ethnicity in “*bumi* imagined community” were used to bargain specific relationship among each other. Tan the conclude that within the “*bumi* imagined community” *pribumi* members have prerogative political dominance, while the *non-pribumi* only allowed to be presence in economic domain without interfering political sphere.

The main mode to manage the Chinese mas the state sponsored ‘assimilation program’ (Sommer Heidhues, 2009a; Tan, 1991) that premised with incompatibility of Chineseness with Indonesian national identity, created the fiction of “*Masalah Cina*” as a common problem that threat national unity. Heryanto (1998) argues that “*Chinese identities are never totally wiped out. They are carefully and continually reproduced, but always under erasure [...] To dissolve Chinese identities in an effective program of ‘assimilation’ means to give up the division of labor by race, upon which the status quo depends so much*” (p.140). Jemma Purdey (2006) argues that ‘Chinese Problem’ should be solved by New Order government, which sending message to the public that Indonesians of ethnic Chinese indeed were causing various problems to the country and society (p.20). Ethnic profiling often used through emphasizing persons’ ethnicity very clear by employing various ethnic markers, which reproduced dichotomized issues of ‘Chinese vs *pribumi*’ conquest, where Chinese Indonesians always associated as *nonpribumi*.

4.2.5. “Now we are *Orang Tionghoa Indonesia*” – The revived identity of Chinese Indonesian in the Reform Era

The reform era was identified with the rebirth of Chinese identity among the Chinese Indonesians as a result of significant changes in government policies concerning ethnic discrimination, especially against them. Under the reform era, there are several key policies that somehow attempted to eliminate the structural discrimination argument. It could be said that aftermath the 1998 riot, Indonesia underwent a significant democratization process marked with Suharto's step down from the presidency and succeeded by his vice president B.J. Habibie. The reform era, as many literatures referred Indonesia in the period after Suharto, was widely celebrated by newly elected president Abdurrahman Wahid, popularly known as Gus Dur in 1999. During his term, the Chinese Indonesians can be said to regain their freedom in order to fully express their culture, tradition, as well as religion. Turner (2003) notes that in January 2000, Gus Dur agreed to bring Chinese New Year celebration to the public arena, which then allowing the Chinese Indonesians to parade on the streets of Indonesian for the first time since late 1960s. Similarly, he also removed restrictive ban that forbidding local publications show Chinese characters. Cited from South China Morning Post, 9th January 2002 edition titled “*Confucianism in Favor with Tolerant Wahid*”, the President openly encourage Indonesians of Chinese descents to practice their culture and religious belief with no fear from state apparatuses by saying, “*I would like to renew the Government's commitment to stay out of religious issues. Let every religious believer take care of their own beliefs. As we have all learned, any government intervention would only create negative consequences*”. This promising start then continued by his successor, Megawati Soekarnoputri as she moved forward in initiating new trade relationship with China. She also publicly declared Chinese New Year to be a formal state holiday from 2003 until now.

Since 1998, many Chinese Indonesians have been able to openly show their identity, but at the same time also attempt to merge into larger Indonesian society. As they are not only claiming as ‘Chinese’ anymore, the new identity discourse has started to emerge. Turner (2003) found that despite their intention to fully blend in with the *pribumi* population, they are also adopting “*new tactic of ‘ethnic promotion’ via political representation, through literary and media endeavors, and via the work of non-*

political organizations." The case of Chinese *Benteng* that Turner and Allen (2007) pointed out shows an example of natural assimilation between the Chinese and indigenous culture, which brings some similarity with the Baba Malays of Malaysia and Singapore. They cited Media Indonesia newspaper (2002) which mentioned "*no discrimination in the cultural realms; there are problems in other realms, such as politics and economics*" that marked as new emerging identity as a result of longstanding assimilation among the Chinese descents in contemporary Indonesia.

In terms of political realm, it has been argued that the role of Chinese Indonesia remains debatable. Giblin (2003) brings this debate by arguing that some Chinese Indonesians have seek to express their political identity by establish ethnically based parties and some others preferred to join more mainstream parties. She then noted that *Partai Bhinneka Tungga Ika* (Unity in Diversity Party) was able to secure spot to compete in 1999 election; while the other such as *Partai Reformasi Tionghoa Indonesia* (Chinese Indonesian Reform Party) and the *Partai Warga Bangsa Indonesia* (Indonesian Citizen's Party) failed to be qualified in the same year (Turner and Allen, 2007). On the other hand, Mackie (1991) argued that Chinese Indonesians should instead seek more nationalist representation through mainstream political parties like National Mandate Party (PAN) and *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* (Indonesian Democratic Party, PDI-P) (Turner, 2003).

Not only in political realm, Chinese Indonesians have been starting to express their civic interest through the establishment of non-political party organizations. As Surdyadinata (2001) argues "*They felt that party politics was dangerous and ethnic party would not be effective. They preferred to work with association and pressure groups to fight discrimination. They wanted to establish NGOs that would promote ethnic Chinese interest*" (Turner, 2003: 350). Furthermore, this has promoted to the establishment of two prominent sociocultural organization called *Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia* (PSMTI, Chinese Indonesian Social Clan Association) and *Perhimpunan Indonesia Keturunan Tionghoa* (INTI, Association of Indonesians of Chinese Descent) (Giblin, 2003). And lastly, one progressive movement in acknowledging Chinese Indonesian as formal citizen was the passage of new citizenship law in 2006 defining *asli* (translated as natural) in the National Constitution as Indonesian born regardless its ethnicity background, which

allowing Indonesian Chinese to be eligible to run for president, which was never be the case in the previous version of the Constitution.

4.2.6. Contemporary Chinese Indonesian – After 20 years of Political Reform: Success in reclaiming identity or Anti-Chinese sentiment remains?

After almost twenty years of reform, many studies have indicated a significant change in Chinese Indonesians' identity in their relation with Indonesian state (Anggraeni, 2017; Giblin, 2003; Hoon, 2017). However, what just recently happened in 2017, which was the gubernatorial election in Jakarta, has recalled particular pessimism and fear that anti-Chinese sentiments might remain. Claimed as one of the most divisive electoral process, 2017 gubernatorial election placed Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (popularly known as Ahok) – a Chinese Indonesian as incumbent – run against two competitors, i.e. Anies Baswedan, an Arab descendants Indonesian which also the former Education Minister under the current President Jokowi's administration; and Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, a native Indonesian and the son of former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Despite Ahok's loss in the political contestation from Anies Baswedan; he also been charged guilty due to religious blasphemy accusation that was built from one of his formal speech. Ahok's blasphemy case, in particular, has been one of the most worrying iceberg phenomena of ethnic and religion division in Indonesia, which has been skillfully capitalized by political elite to win the electoral battle.

Despite Chinese Indonesians have been "accepted" as part of Indonesia's wider society, Anggraini (2017) finds that 'ethnic profiling' in criminal spotting remain exist in reporting news. She notes "*News reporting, especially concerning despicable acts involving individuals of Chinese ethnicity as perpetrators or agents, made the said persons' ethnicity very clear by employing various ethnic markers*" (p. 112). She outlines various examples such as incidents in Southeast Sulawesi, in August 2001 by Tempo News Magazine reported that the violation incidents targeting Chinese-owned shops were perpetrated by "*inhumane treatment committed by the wife of the owner of an automobile repair shop – both of whom were Chinese-descent – on their three household servants who were non-Chinese*" (p. 112). Therefore, in her writing, Anggraeni (2017) further argued that it had often perceived that Chinese Indonesian entrepreneurs would not hesitate to commit to corruption, collusion

and nepotism with officials; despite in reality, there are also many non-Chinese businessmen that also do the same. In addition, although there are many Indonesian important figures that are of Chinese descents and significantly contribute to the nation, but explicit negative stereotype continued when Chinese Indonesian individuals committed crimes (Anggraeni, 2017).

4.3. THE CHINESE *BENTENG* PEOPLE - *PERANAKAN* CHINESE OF TANGERANG

Unlike common physical characteristic on someone that has Chinese ancestry, the *Peranakan* Chinese people, especially those who lived as farmers, petty retailer, fisherman and agriculture laborer are rather difficult to distinguished with those of the native (read: indigenous population). Despite for the past decades, there are increasing tendencies of mixed marriages in Indonesia; in the colonial era, such things were rarely happened. Especially after the introduction of Dutch racial segregation policies that categorized various cultural groups into three large segments, people of different racial background were rarely mixed and lived together in the same geographical area. Certainly, this occurred with some exceptions, in particular for the elite upper class and the aristocrats, as what Haryono (2017) has written about arranged married among the Chinese upper class and members of Javanese aristocrats in order to maintain political and economic power in Java.

As mentioned earlier *Peranakan* Chinese community often appeared as cultural category when this term used to differentiate with the *Totok* community. The existence of *Totok* Chinese community, which also referred as *Singkeh* that means new guest or newcomer in Hokkien dialect, has increased due to rising number of Chinese people that came to the archipelago in late 19th century and 20th century for various purposes, for example gold digging community in West Kalimantan (Somer Heidhues, 2008), plantation laborer in tobacco industry in North Sumatra (Tan, 2005), tin miners in the island of Bangka and Belitung (Somer Heidhues, 1992) and fishery community in Bengkalis and Bagan Siapi-api (Tan, 2005). As these newcomer Chinese started to settle in and established their families in the archipelago, they showed significant differences in comparison with the *Peranakan* society. For the *Totok* community, being *Peranakan* was less pure

compared to them that still have 'pure' blood. Suryadinata (1986) noted that the *Peranakan* were often looked down because being of mixed ancestry, being incapable to converse with Chinese dialects and accused as unpatriotic toward China (p. 94). On the contrary, in the perspective of *Peranakan* people, the word *singkeh* was understood derogatively. Schwarz (1999) mentioned that often *Peranakan* complaints of the economic domination of the *Totok*, often at the expenses of the *Peranakan* (p. 103). For instance, most of the urbanized Chinese Jakarta called the *Peranakan* society in Tangerang as *Cina Benteng*, which often expressed through pejorative description that associate with derogatory lifestyles and attitudes. Despite the word "Benteng" meant and particularly referred to the former Dutch Fortress in central Tangerang which was used as geographic characteristic of the Chinese population that live around that area; but as the time evolves, the description of *Cina Benteng* applied to majority of Chinese population who have distinctive physical features with the common characteristic of Chinese, in particular the eye shape and skin color, which lived in Tangerang area. The definition of *Cina Benteng* then grew geographically wider, from the area of Kali Pasir Street (close to Pasar Lama – the Old Market) to as far as Panongan, Cukangalih, Legok, Ranca Kelapa, and some other areas.

The history of Chinese *Benteng* people is inseparable from the existence of *Peranakan* Chinese in Indonesia (then Dutch territories) and other Southeast Asian countries like Malaysia and Singapore. As mentioned above, the word 'Benteng' that is attach as signifier of the *Peranakan* Chinese is Tangerang means fortress or defense wall built by the Dutch to mark and to protect their territories from the attack of Banten Sultanate, the local ruler that controlled Tangerang area prior to the Dutch administration. They built the fortress as a solid 20-foot-walled made of brickworks with four bastions and ammunition powder storage. Once the construction was completed, the fortress guarded by 60 Dutch military personnel and 30 Makassarese and Bone soldiers from South Sulawesi (Leo, 2018). For this reason, the fortress was also known as *Benteng Makassar*, and the Chinese *Benteng* people believe that their predecessor used to live close to this fortress, so this is why, they called themselves that way. One could assume that prior to the existence of the fortress the *Peranakan* Chinese community of Tangerang might called itself as '*tanglang*' (often pronounced as *tenglang*) or '*tangren*'. '*Tanglang*' or '*Tangren*' derived from two words: '*tang*' which refer to Tang Dynasty that ruled China when

their ancestors left China mainland; and '*ren*' means people. Therefore, it could be understood that it was how they called themselves prior to the fortress construction, which means 'people of Tan Dynasty'. Currently, the calling of Chinese *Benteng* is not only refer to Chinese *Peranakan* of Tangerang city, but also for those *peranakans* that live in Tangerang District, including, Sewan, Kedaung Wetan, Selapajang, Kampung Melayu, Tanjung Burung, Tanjung Pasir, Lemo, Curug, Legok, Tiga Raksa, Baur, Sepatan, Kebon Baru, Cengkolong, Blimbing, and Kosambi. Beside Tangerang, the term Chinese *Benteng* also used to call the *peranakan* that live in far-western part of Jakarta, like Dadap, Cengkareng, Rawa Lele and Rawa Bokor (Perkumpulan dan keagamaan sosial Boen Tek Bio, 2012) .

Sinologists and historians predict that the Chinese people have started to reach Southeast Asia region during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). These Chinese people came in groups from different parts of China's territory. The largest group was Hokkien people which was originated from an area called Amoy, located in Fukien Province (present day is Fujian); followed by other smaller groups like Hakka, Cantonese, and Teochiu. This diaspora community, which most of them were male, started to settle in their new land and did not return to their homeland. When the Sung Dynasty took the power (907-1127), the Chinese overseas population grew larger, especially because of the increased number of Chinese traders that came to Southeast Asia. From China, these traders brought Chinese porcelain, silks and medicine to be sold to the local population. For over hundreds of years, these Chinese people have settled in and married with local women, which then formed new generations of what it called as *Peranakan* Chinese.

When the Dutch East India Company first arrived in the port of Bantam (present day this area called Banten) – northwest costal of Batavia – under the leadership of Cornelis de Houtman, they noticed that the Chinese already established harmonious relationship with the native population, as well as local rulers (Go, 2008). This perception was also supported by various sources that mentioned about the Chinese's arrival in Bantam, as early as in the 15th century. A voyager's note of a Frenchmen in 1609 noted that these Chinese have been living in Bantam that made their living by selling traditional kitchen cooking supplies, cooking ingredients (such as sauces) and medicine. According to Franke et al, the Chinese called Tangerang area as *Wandan* (p. 160) or *Danggalang* (Franke et al., 1997).

When exactly the Chinese first arrived in Tangerang area was pretty much unclear. But from the available historical records, experts can conclude that at least, it did not happen all at once. The *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* believes that the first influx of the migration was written in historical scriptures of Chinese Benteng people of Tangerang as described in Sundanese history, called "*Tina Layang Parahyang*" (translated as "Notes from Parahyangan"). This book illustrates the arrival of the first batch of Chinese people led by Tjen Tjie Lung (often referred as Halung) in 1407, from Hokkien Provinces. It was then theorized that this group was a small part of larger Cheng Ho's expedition in 1405-1407 (Fuad, 2012; Halim, 2011; Leo, 2018). Initially, they wanted to reach Jayakarta (previous name of Batavia, prior to the Dutch occupation), but due to serious damage on their vessel, including lack of food supplies; this legion was forced to shored in Teluk Naga (means Dragon Bay) and managed to enter Tangerang area through the mouth of Cisadane River. It is one of the major rivers on the western side of Java, started from Mount Mandalawangi (in Bogor Regency) to the Java Sea, with the sea basin 1,3667 km and spread as long as 137.6 km. According to the scripture, a number of women among this legion were married with Sanghyang Anggalarang, the local ruler a leading warrior of Padjajaran Kingdom; while some of the men also married local women. They were settled in a piece of land called *Pangkalan* village, which also means 'port', and fruits from these mixed blood couples were called *Peranakan* Chinese of Tangerang. This is why this area also called '*Pangkalan Tanglang*' which means 'the port where people from Tang Dynasty landed or shored'. As the community grew, the descendants of *Peranakan* Chinese opened up new area for their settlements or move out somewhere.

In a book about *Peranakan* Chinese in Dadap Village, West Jakarta, Go Gien Tjwan (2008) in particular conducted his research on Indonesian peasants of Chinese descents. In his introduction, he cited Lodewycksz's prominent work (1915) that illustrated in detail how the Chinese at that time has well integrated into Javanese society. In Lodewycksz's word that the Chinese petty traders have penetrated deeply into small villages (*kampung*)³⁹ with their portable weighing

³⁹ In the urban context, *kampung* also understood as densely populated settlements. In the colonial context, sometimes *kampung* often associated with poorly developed areas, where most native population lived

scale, approached native farmers and negotiated with them on the interested commodities. He described clearly that in that era, pepper was among the highly requested items. These Chinese petty traders then piled their stocks up while waited until the large Chinese trading vessels arrived and sold the items with higher price. Based on that description, Go (2008) assumed that those petty traders might be *Peranakan* Chinese, as they were depicted as very skillful in speaking Malay, which they might learned from their wives. Further Go pointed out a picture in Lodewycksz's book that portrays an image of a Chinese man, accompanied by a native woman, with the description more or less says "*A picture of Chinese trader that walks, accompanied by a woman that he has bought, who he can make use in Java, while he resides there. There is also picture of another trader that goes from kampung to kampung, buys peppers from the local farmers and estimates the mass with his scale. His hairs are so neat and tidy; he wears blue outfits with wide hand sleeves and pocket. They keep medicine beneath they hair, and because they dress like Javanese, we don't describe it here.*" (Go, 2008: 36)

A few weeks upon the VOC arrivals in Banten, in 10 of July 1659, the Dutch company proposed a peace agreement to the Sultanate of Banten to divide occupied territories. Once the proposal has been agreed, Tangerang area was divided into two, with the Cisadane River as its natural boundaries. Therefore, the Sultanate's territory was on the west side of the river and the VOC's was on the east. For that arrangement, many *Peranakans* Chinese that lived in Tangerang broader area like Panongan, Tigaraksa, Curug, Legok, Balajara and many more had to cross the river in their daily lives. To emphasize the natural boundaries, which was the Cisadane River, the VOC constructed the Makassar Fortress to segregate their controlled areas as mentioned earlier. Despite its prominence root of Tangerang's history, the Makassar Fortress is no longer existed due to longstanding abandonment since 1812 because of VOC's bankruptcy. In present day, on its former location, there is a middle-class shopping mall and this area has been transformed into commercial districts. Other than that, in order to commemorate the importance of the fortress, the district government of Tangerang named its former location as Benteng Street.

As a result of territorial division, many *Peranakans* Chinese Benteng who previously lived on the Dutch area ran away to the western part of Cisadane River. In this side of the river, they enjoyed protection from local ruler, the Sultan Haji.

Initially, they cleared the empty land in an area called Panongan, started to plan a variety of staple crops and vegetable as well as farming, only for private consumption. Sometimes they also traded the crops with other items such as sugar and salt. In this empty land, they built their house from jackfruit tree trunk as the main foundation of the house, and wood plank for its windows and doors. For them, it was common practice that male members of the family stayed in the '*rumah kongsi*' which means shared family house, brought their wives in and started to build new household in that house. On the contrary, the women members were 'taken out from' their childhood house by their husbands and ultimately joined the husbands' family to their '*rumah kongsi*'. Furthermore, as Dutch influence was expanded further west from Batavia, this brought a significant decline to the power of Sultan Haji, as the local ruler that was in power from 1682 to 1687. A year later, in 1684, Tangerang area and its surrounding became a protectorate of the Dutch company.

Under the Dutch power, the *Peranakan* Chinese communities lived without any protection; unlike what they have enjoyed when Sultan Haji was in power. Especially when the Dutch company reached its peak and started to introduce common currency in their protectorate, which pulled the commoners into the market mechanism. One of the solutions was to hire hitmen, called *jawara*, which were usually mastered in martial arts (*silat* – one kind of martial arts in Banten area) and also dark magic. These *jawaras* were hired to guard the wealthy *Peranakan* Chinese whenever they do their business, especially in trading activities in the local markets. One local source mentioned that in Tangerang area, there were two main bazaars, to where the Chinese usually sell their harvest, Cikupa Market and Curug Market. Until the present day, these two markets remain the key areas for many traders to do their commercial transaction. And due to this form of relationship with the *Peranakan* Chinese, it was often occurred that those *jawaras* that desired to run as village head, always seek support from the *Peranakan* community, whether in terms of money or their vote. It was not few to observe that some village heads happened to get rich and richer because they 'enjoy' the 'protection fee' from the well-off *Peranakan* Chinese that seek for security guarantee to them. On that era (perhaps until now, in some villages in Tangerang, this practice is still very much intact), those who become village heads were the *jawaras*, which they have a bunch of younger subordinates or follower who respect and be loyal to them to intimidate

the *Peranakan* Chinese, especially when they do not pay the 'protection fee'. Until now, these kinds of practice remain intact in Tangerang rural areas, especially during the seasons of local election as well as general election. Therefore, it can be understood that at that time, the *Peranakan* Chinese almost have no social organization and select their own leaders because they were always been prohibited by the *jawaras* and their gangs. The role of *jawara* became really important to ensure the security of Chinese' assets and belongings, including land and perhaps family houses. If there's no *jawara* to guards those assets, there was high likelihood to attract burglar.

The second wave of Chinese people entered Tangerang was predicted around 1740, following the bloody massacre that occurred in Batavia targeting the Chinese population who were suspected as rebels against the Dutch government. This was known as Angke Riot or *Geger Pacinan* (Chinatown Tulmult), in which victimized more than 10,000 people as some historians estimated (Lohanda, 2005; Somer Heidhues, 2009b, 2009a). Go (2008) notes that Tangerang has significantly contributed to importance of sugar industry in the Dutch Indies. Likewise, Fuad (2010) conveyed that in 1635, prior to VOC arrivals, *Peranakan* Chinese in Tangerang has been widely known as owning large sugarcane plantation, around an area called Kelapa Dua in Serang, Banten. They sold their sugar to the European traders, such as the British. It was even said that in 1640, the Banten Sultanate has established business contract with the British traders. Furthermore, Kelapa Dua area was no longer produced sugar, but also distilled Chinese wine and pepper plantation. From 1635 to 1678, due massive increase on sugar commodities in the global market, the *Peranakan* Chinese gained its importance as the core foundation for the economy of Banten Sultanate at that time. In 1727, when the VOC finally controlled the whole area of Banten, the popularity of Kelapa Dua as the main sugar producer declined significantly. This in turn contributed to the migration of many *Peranakan* Chinese that worked in sugar industry. Go argues that in mid-17th century until the beginning of 18th century, while sugar became the hottest commodity, this led to massive influx of Chinese people from the China's mainland. Lohanda (1996) in her book about Kapitan of Batavia (Fuad, 2012) found that in 1710, there were 130 sugar factories owned by 84 businessmen, in which 79 of them were the Chinese-own enterprises. Unfortunately, around the beginning of 18th century, the price of sugar plummeted which led to massive unemployment,

especially for those Chinese newcomers that worked in the sugar industry. This certainly alerted security threat to the VOC, which called that situation as 'yellow threat' referring to the Chinese. As a result, the massive influx of the newcomer led VOC to issue regulations on residence permit towards these Chinese, in which become the lucrative business idea for the VOC bureaucrats to exploit the Chinese financially. Lohanda in her other book *Sejarah Para Pembesar Mengatur Batavia* mentions that the resident permit has various forms. For those Chinese that lived for more than 10 years – dated since 19 June 1727 – the *permissie briefje* applied to them. Another permit was called *licentie briefje* that applied for the Chinese who wanted to stay for 3 months for business activities that cost 2 *rijksdaalders*. And for those returned Chinese that wanted to come back to Batavia, they also need to get permit (Lohanda, 2005).

Bad situation on the sugar trading has triggered to the increased number of unemployed Chinese. Blussé (Blussé, 1981, 1986) notes that many of them were trapped into multiplied debt, which made them committed to criminal activities. In Indonesia, administration papers always become the lucrative side-business for the bureaucrats, which has been there since VOC time. And due to many illegal Chinese (paperless Chinese) in Batavia at that time and combined with spreading unverifiable rumors that those who were sent to Ceylon (Sri Lanka), were actually threw into the sea (Lohanda, 2005). These spreading rumors then lead to a rebellious plan towards the VOC government by the Chinese that lived outside of the wall. As the rebel plan was a failure, another rumor spread which said that the Chinese plan to kill all the non-Chinese, rape the women – made them and their children as Chinese slave – which further perpetuate hate and anger towards the Chinese as their common enemy. The mixture of bad business, high level of unemployment, poverty, and crimes combined with rumors and speculation, from 8 to 19 October 1740, it was reported by a local newspaper that Chinese men, women and children were slaughtered brutally by the native people and Dutch soldiers (Setiono, 2003). Setiono also noted that those Chinese who survived the massacre from the city wall (referred as *Ommelanden* which means areas inside the wall), have escaped and ran to Central Java and also Tangerang, Banten, to where Muas and Witanto (2005) predicted, which was Tangerang - as one of their main destinations to hide. Fuad (2012) added that some while the main hiding places were along the Cisadane River, close to the Dutch Fortress, including Kalipasir,

Sewan and Neglasari area; many of them also ran sporadically to neighboring villages around Tangerang areas, like Pondok Cabe, Pondok Aren, Pondok Pinang, Pondok Jagung, Mauk, Legok, Serpong and Cisoka. Those that still feel unsafe in such areas, run further deep into the remote villages in Tangerang, until they have reached an empty area called Karawaci. A respected elderly that works in *Klenteng Boen Tek Bio* – one of the oldest Confucian Temple in Tangerang – Oey Tjin Eng (78) told me that those *Peranakan* Chinese that escaped to Tangerang area were mostly from the lower-class economy; while the upper class *Peranakan* Chinese ran further, maybe until they reached Central Java. Further during the Dutch administration, as mentioned in the *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch Indie No 146 Oostersche Vreemedelingen* issued in October 1871, Chinese people were allowed to live in Batavia – as the capital, Meester Cornelis District that covered the area of Bekasi and Pulogadung, Tangerang District and Buitenzorg District (now Bogor).

4.3.1. The 1946 Massacre in Tangerang

3rd June 1946, in Tangerang, another bloody massacre repeated after more than two hundred years that *Peranakan* Chinese have been able to live peacefully, in a new land where they called home. Massive killing towards those Chinese that live along the Cisadane River occurred. The Chinese were accused as traitor to Indonesia's new nationalism spirit that conspired with the Dutch. All Chinese in Tangerang were accused as traitor and for that reason, they were barbarically slotted, their houses were burnt down and loathed. Setiono (Setiono, 2003: 35) notes that there were 2 Chinese women and young girl were burnt alive in Desa Panggang (Cilongkok), among a number of sporadic incidents. It is argued that the 1946 post-independence riot was contributed in worsening the condition of Chinese Benteng. As a result of this riot, many Chinese-owned properties including houses and land were loathed and burned, especially semi-permanent house which might led to lose of ownership towards the free land in Tangerang, after the Dutch left. Setiono (2003) writes that in 1946, there was massive massacre towards the Chinese people that lives along the banks of Cisadane River. Ravando's study (2014) also cited a report issued by The New York Times (June, 6th 1946 edition) that mentioned there were about 600 people were killed and their villages were burnt down completely. Another report from Jang Seng Ie Jakarta Red cross noted that at

least from the 600 Chinese people that were killed, among them were 100 women and children. Furthermore, more than thousand houses that belong to the Chinese were also burnt down, destroyed and loathed. Setiono (2003) calculated that at least 25 persons ran to Jakarta. Citing WF Wartheim & The Siaw Giap, Ravando argues that the sole cause of anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia particularly due to economic competition. Wertheim (Wertheim, 1959) pointed out those economic factors that dominated the relations between Chinese Indonesians and the majority of native population. Due to those factors, it was theorized that anti-Chinese violence, mostly occurred predominantly during the economic crisis or political transition (Ravando, 2014). Similarly, Somers-Heidhuis argues that anti-Chinese events triggered by economic exploitation, competition or jealousy. Somers Heidhuis continues that, throughout different history points, the native Indonesian society capitalized anti-Chinese sentiments differently, which included religion, tribalism and nationalism. She concludes that converting anti-Chinese sentiment into attacking Chinese-owned properties as 'symbol of Chinese economic power', demonstrated the dominance of economic factors (Somers Heidhues, 1999).

Fuad (2012) and Ravando (2014) see increased activities towards extremism from the nationalist, and the indigenous. It was reported that the riot started from the periphery of Tangerang city, which was spread out rapidly until Mauk, Serpong and Karawang. Fuad reported that during such incidents, many Chinese men were forcefully circumcised and the women were raped. Jan Seng Ie Red Cross of Batavia recorded that about 653 *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* were dead, among them were 136 women and 36 children. The entity also reported that 1.268 houses were burnt down and about 236 Chinese *Benteng* houses were destroyed by the mob. Setiono (2003) argues that because of that, about 25 thousand Chinese *Benteng* were run away and migrated to Jakarta, which were temporary sheltered by Sin Ming Hui association in Molenvliet (now Jl Gajahmada in Jakarta) No. 188. And according to one resource (Souw Sin Tjiang, 72), he mentioned that at that time, there's more Chinese *Benteng* people that run away to *Kampung Wetan* to refuge, because this neighborhood was considered as one of the safest areas. Around 1920, *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* people that lived in *Kampung Wetan* area, mostly granted permission to occupy free land for their settlement as well as to cultivate those land to support their livelihood. This permit was given by the local ruler or

bureaucrats. In its development, they plotted those lands and rented out or sell to the new settlers.

4.3.2. The life of *Peranakan Chinese Benteng* People after 1965 Coup

The year 1965 was considered as one of the darkest histories in post-independent Indonesia. Branded as 'Communist coup' that threat Indonesia's national ideology and military dominance, the year of 1965 turned into heartbreaking stories for many victims, which still search for justice until now. As also for the great majority of Chinese descendants in Indonesia, regardless *Totok* or *Peranakan*, the 1965 incident has led to a series of ban and prohibition for the Chinese as explain previously. These discriminatory policies have also affected the cultural and social life of *Peranakan Chinese Benteng* in Tangerang, including their religious activity and civic association. According to Oei Tjin Eng (78), majority of Chinese *Benteng* that live in the city center – around old market area and the former location where the fortress was – were the members of a civic mass organization called BAPERKI. Established in 1954, BAPERKI was initiated in Jakarta by a group of *Peranakan* Chinese Indonesians that received Dutch education, as a medium to represent their interest, especially the integration paradigm that promoted Chinese culture, which have been assimilated with the local culture as one of Indonesia's culture and ethnicities. However, after the 1965 incident, Suharto did not only dissolve Indonesia Communist Party, but also BAPERKI that was assumed as the wing of communist party. For that reason, *Peranakan Chinese Benteng* who were previously involved in BAPERKI then accused as being also communist follower. Especially, at that time, BAPERKI Tangerang branch was led by someone that also the head of Boen Tek Bio Temple. Such double leadership led to public perception that the Boen Tek Bio Temple was the BAPERKI's headquarter in Tangerang.

After the 1965's coup, many Chinese schools in Tangerang were forced to close down, especially those that supported and financed by BAPERKI. Fuad (2012) notes at that time, the Government took over those schools, including grabbed their assets such as buildings and land, which then transformed into government-sponsored school. Oey Tjin Eng testified that for instance, for BAPERKI's school's building is now Islamic University of Tangerang. Not only that, the ban to practice Confucianism has also led to closure to their temples, repurposed those temples

into Buddhist temple. For those *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* that did not want to get into trouble, they just changed the religion to Buddhist or Christian. For the *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* people, many of them still maintain their Chinese name and did not change their name into Indonesia-sounding name, as advised by the Government. Local sources informed me that, those who have changed their name, usually involved in trading sector (like owning small shops or local business) and had to deal with administrative paper works and permits, for the purpose of their activities. Even – according to one informant – changing religion to Islam was also pursued in order to avoid further troubles as being *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng*.

The Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967 about Chinese region, beliefs and tradition customs was the one that hit the most for majority of Indonesians of Chinese descent, in particular the *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng*. This instruction explicitly mentioned that they were prohibited in conducting any activities related to religion, beliefs and traditional customs that affiliate with the ancestor's land. This ban underlined by accusations that such religion, beliefs and traditional practices can give rise to "... *inappropriate psychological, mental and moral influence on Indonesian citizens and so form an obstacle to the process of assimilation*⁴⁰..." (p.1) The Government then demanded that such activities should be regulated according to what it supposed to. Further the instruction specifically emphasized on practices of observance, in which included cultural affinity with the country of ancestors, should be practiced in the context of family or individual. Moreover, the instruction ordered that "*celebration of Chinese religious festivals and traditional customs such as the lion dance, should be done in a way which is not conspicuous in public ... all such forms of activity should not be made in a way which public spectacle and should not take place in the streets, public buildings or other places open to the public, except within the boundaries of the environment of the household or within the boundaries of the environment of a place of worship which has been designated for the purpose.*" (Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967, No.1-3).

⁴⁰ Original text – "*Bahwa agama, kepercayaan dan adat istiadat Cina di Indonesia yang berpusat pada negeri leluhurnya, yang dalam manifestasinya dapat menimbulkan pengaruh psychologis, mental dan moril yang kurang wajar terhadap warganegara Indonesia sehingga merupakan hambatan terhadap proses asimilasi, perlu diatur serta ditempatkan fungsinya pada proporsi yang wajar*"

From that point on until the next thirty-two years afterwards, the *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* community did not celebrate their cultural and religious festivals openly anymore. No more *barongsai*⁴¹ dance and dragon dance during Chinese New Year celebration and no *Peh Cun* festival – also known as Dragon Boat festival – that they observed on the fifth day on the fifth month on the Lunar Calendar. Despite ban from public exposure, they managed to observe some practices that can be done privately. Such practices for instance wedding ceremonies, burial, and observance to the dead spirits that they can do within familial context.

4.3.3. Socio-economic Condition of the *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* People

It has been publicly perceived that *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* live far from adequate welfare, including bad housing condition, poor access to health and education, and lack of mobility because of bad infrastructure that disconnect them from the public facilities. As mentioned above that since the 1740 bloody massacre towards the Chinese population in Batavia, a great number of those who were survived escaped to Tangerang and aimed to rebuild their new life there. At that time, in comparison with metropolitan Batavia, Tangerang was considered semi-jungle area with very limited infrastructure facilities. One can imagine that the main road might still covered with soil, which easily became muddy when the monsoon season started. Considered near to Jakarta, Tangerang is seen as very important in supporting the capital's economic development. Since the 1990s, Tangerang area was opened for major foreign investment and currently became one of the key industrial areas in western part of Java. Especially after the construction of Soekarno Hatta International Airport (SHIA) in this area, Tangerang's area is filled with the proliferation of warehouse operators.

People that live in Jakarta, often referred the metropolitan area as *kota* (city). On the contrary, they called areas outside Jakarta areas as *kampung*. During the colonial era, *kampung* often associated with indigenous settlements outside of the

⁴¹ Go (2008) described that *barongsai* is the game of the lion which were very popular during the celebration of Chinese New Year. Both *Peranakan* and *Totok* Chinese in Indonesia use the name *barongsai* as a compound term *barong* that used by the Javanese, Sundanese and Balinese to refer masked figure with a mixture of lion and tiger and *sai* which means lion (from Hokkien dialect)

heart of the city. Until now, *kampung* continuously perceived as underdeveloped area where its people are associated as uneducated, backward, traditional, and sometimes also poor. For that reason, those that live in areas like Tangerang often associated with people of *kampung*. Similar treatment also applied to other peripheral areas like Bekasi and Depok. Likewise, Chinese Indonesians that live in urban Jakarta, frequently refer *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* as Chinese from *kampung*. This is also supported by their physical features that resemble the native/indigenous Indonesians rather than the Chinese. In Tangerang, Chinese *Benteng* live in sparse land, they built their family home from whatever available in their surroundings. Despite their house resembled what the indigenous Indonesians looked like, but their houses still recognizable as Chinese houses, especially with the appearances of the praying altars in the most important part of the house – just when one opens the main entrance door, joysticks or incents that always hang on the right wall next to the main door, and various traditional ornaments to woo bad spirits.

In *kampungs* where the Chinese *Benteng* people are dominating the population, like in *Kampung Wetan* area, they build their house very close one to another. Before 1990s, where the land was still widely available in most *kampung* area, the Chinese *Benteng* people did not really pay attention about the formal regulation whether they can or cannot build their houses there. They frequently refer themselves as illiterate and uneducated, so they do not understand complicated yet tricky bureaucratic procedures. As a result, most houses in *Kampung Wetan* for instance do not have formal certificate of ownership and they are considered as living illegally. In *Kampung Wetan* area, most Chinese *Benteng* people live in modesty, and some of them living in a bad condition. Their houses are made partly by plastered planks combined with plastered woven bamboo. The houses usually covered with stone slabs, dirt floor and the roof constructed from earthenware tiles or thatched roof and. For those who are relatively less wealthy, their houses are made entirely from plastered bamboo and sometimes also patched with cardboard, transparent plastic or zinc material. Its doors usually consist of two panels that can be opened separately, with a wooden door latch. In the olden times, the owner of the house usually ordered special latch made from a large single-piece heavy wood plank, placed vertically to block the door panels. This latch was designed specifically only for that house, with a special lock mechanism. Unlike in

urban areas like *Kampung Wetan*, *Peranakan* Chinese houses in rural areas are extremely big which can host up to 4 or 5 households all at once.

As I explored *Kampung Wetan*, it was quite apparent that in the past, this was the area where once dominated by Chinese *Benteng's* settlement. This area marked by an entrance gate, paved by modest houses, which have been modernized through the use of brick wall, ceramic floor with somehow modern designs and colors, colorfully painted wall, glass window and single panel door. The entrance gate then leads to an outdoor plaza/square where the main temple, Tjong Tek Bio – was constructed in 1830 – is located. According to some locals, initially the temple was not located there; but due to frequent flood in the 1960s, the communities then decided to relocate the main temple where it is now. Despite this area has grown into semi-industrial area, where one can find factories building, hide behind tall iron gate; but deep inside the narrow alley, I found quite many houses that still maintain the shaped and construction that I just described. Often, I found various papers in different color like white, yellow or red, nailed or glued on top of the doorframe, in which have different Chinese characters. The Chinese *Benteng* people do not mean to distinguish themselves with the other inhabitants from other ethnic backgrounds like Bantenese, Sundanese or Javanese, which mostly are Muslims, through the exposure of material symbols and artifacts. “*That means Hu. It brings good luck!*” says one man that I met. They do not really know what it means. Generally, they received those colorful papers from the temple and stick them on the walls.

Picture 3 – A traditional house of *Peranakan* Chinese Indonesians of Tangerang



Researcher with a *Peranakan* Chinese family in their living room

Some Chinese *Benteng* house in *Kampung Wetan* still maintained its original shape, as it was originally built. Unfortunately, many of these houses are in a bad condition. The most common problem that usually happened is leaking due to heavy rainfall or flood, which sometimes also enter their houses. In addition to that, due to drastic climate change and land conversion as industrial area, many Chinese *Benteng* houses are falling apart due to chronic erosion and are facing landslides due to Cisadane river abrasion. Often, the homeowners do not have enough money to fix the house or just to maintain the house regularly. They seldom think to change the plastered bamboo ceiling that torn apart or replace broken earthen roof tile; they rather spend their money on something else like daily food supplies or children school fees. Eng Nio, 60 years old women has been living in *Kampung Wetan* for forty years. She told me that her late husband was the one that built the house by himself with commonly available materials like bamboo and dried thatch roof. At the time of my visit, her house was in a bad condition. The bamboo walls are torn apart which she has to covered with plastic or triplex. During the rainy season, the family often worried as the roof is always leaking and frequently caused puddle due to dirt floor. After her husband passed away, she lives there with her son's family and she tried to remember the last time she repaired the house. Maybe it has been too long, so she does not remember anymore. "*My house is broken apart. Long time ago, the government said that they wanted to help fixing my house. But until now, it was never happened.*" For many of the Chinese *Benteng* that live in *Kampung Wetan* and also other settlements of the lower economy population, to fix and to beautify their houses are not an immediate priority, as they have more urgent ones. And as long as they have roof to live, it is enough for them. It is also often found that for the newlywed, having their own house – separate from their families – is not very common thing to do. Many newlyweds join with their families and lived in a common family house.

As I mentioned earlier that son have more privilege to stay in the family house. As daughters will leave the family house to join her husband's family house, these young women tend to choose husbands with pretty good level of wealth; at least better than their natal family. In this current era, such attitude of choosing

someone who is wealthier or even rich, are often considered as materialistic but at the same time also realistic. This is why, when a Chinese *Benteng* house has to host a large number of family members, it needs to have many bedrooms – one for each household. Sometimes for those families that do not have enough savings to get their own house, they remain live together under the same roof with their in-laws, aunts, uncles and cousins. Despite in a more urban areas that these practices are no longer in place, but in rural area or middle-poor semi-urban areas like *Kampung Wetan* this practice remains. For those that live together with their relatives, sometimes this arrangement can also be more convenient to do. They say that they can split the household expenses, like water and electricity. The same treatment is also with daily food supplies.

Peranakan Chinese *Benteng* houses in Tangerang area mostly comprised of three main sections; the terrace or veranda (*paseban*), the middle room (*tia*) and the family room (*tin tia*). The kitchen is placed at the back of the house and located rather separated from the family room. They called this model as *Rumah Kebaya*, which is also the same terminology for the traditional house of Betawi community – native of Jakarta. The word *Kebaya* here is associated with traditional female blouse which usually worn by Javanese/Sundanese/Betawi women. *Kebaya* blouse becomes a particular material representation of *Peranakan* culture due to strong influence of native/indigenous culture that brought by the women in this community. Currently, *Rumah Kebaya* of Chinese *Benteng* can be found limitedly in Tangerang area. It was said that some Chinese *Benteng* families that cannot afford to maintain the house, often sold them to other people that do not understand Chinese *Benteng* culture.

When we enter the first section of a *Rumah Kebaya* that called *paseban*, it feels like a very large veranda or terraces. Usually, after long hours work in the rice field, the men of the house usually rest and lay down in the *paseban*. A few long benches made of bamboo were placed there in the *paseban* area. In more urbanized area, the *paseban* section often treated as extension to the house and decorated with ceramic tiles and set of chairs. Usually, this area is also used as guest reception area. In the olden times, guests with no family relation – either by blood or by marriage – were forbid to enter the house passing through the main door. They were only allowed to stay in the *paseban* area. The most important part of the *Rumah Kebaya* is *tia* where the ancestor altar table is located, where there are two bedrooms on each side of

the altar. Not every *Rumah Kebaya* has ancestor altar, only those houses that were built by their ancestors, where their ashes laid there in the table.

Ancestors' altar is considered as one of the most important aspects in the Chinese *Benteng* life. The altar also represents their obedience and devotion to their ancestors by taking care of their ancestors' spirit that represented by photographs around the altars. Usually, the homeowner and its family pray twice a day to commemorate their ancestors by preparing different types of foods and drinks, also consumable goods that the spirits fancied when they were alive, for example cigarettes. Before start to pray, they lit the red candle and the joysticks also make sure that all the food are well presented in the table. During the Chinese New Year, the ancestors' altar is the most important aspect of the celebration. Soen Nio (58) was not yet 19 when she got married and joined her husband's family. As a devoted wife, she is the one that responsible in taking care of the ancestors' altar table. Twice a day, around 10 a.m. in the morning and 17 p.m. in the afternoon, Soen Nio assisted by her daughter serves tea, arranges food or snacks, and lit candle and joystick for daily prayer. Since the husband is the eldest in the family, all his siblings and their family should come to the common house where the ancestors' altar is located. The ancestors' altar also understood as mechanism to ensure that all family members should gather at least once a year, during the Chinese New Year. On that day, each family member comes together to pay respect to the ancestors in front of the table. Not only that food for the ancestors' spirits is also no less important elements that the Chinese *Benteng* pay attention to. On special occasion like Chinese New Year, the altar is covered with special food too, especially steam milkfish with fermented soya bean sauce.

Picture 4 – Praying Altar



Domestic prayer rituals of the Chinese *Benteng* people are centered surround the ancestor's altar. In their house, the table is placed facing the main entrance door with the idea that people shall enter the house with high respect towards the homeowners' ancestors. The altar table itself is made of wood, painted in brown or reddish color, and about 1 – 1.25 m height. Sometimes the main altar table is combined with lower table, also with painted with similar color. For those wealthy Chinese *Benteng* families, they usually ordered or purchase more expensive altar table sets that exquisitely handcrafted with intricate designs, like flowers and mythological creatures. For those who are poorer, they usually use regular table as the altar. The altar table also stands in front of a wall that divided two parts of the house – the *tia* and the family room – which they hang or lean the photographs of the deceased. At the center of the table, they put the *hiolo* – Chinese type joystick holder – made of heavy iron and has four small legs with two inverted S shape ears

on both sides. The homeowner said to me that the traditional style iron *hiolo* has been there for decades or maybe centuries and currently no one sell or produce such type anymore. They even speculate that perhaps their deceased predecessors were the one that brought it from China. Generally, the *hiolo* has similar function like vase – often filled with sand – as they always plug the lighted joystick in after the prayer. On special occasions like Chinese New Year, Wedding, *Cheng Beng* (observance of the dead spirit), the altar table is filled with more elaborated cuisine rather than the daily food. Acculturated cuisine, called *Peranakan* Food, usually served to feed the ancestors spirits. In addition to that, *Peranakan* Chinese Benteng people always serve locally grown product, especially fruits such as green banana, pineapple, mango, *rambutans*, or green tangerine, in the altar table – as it is rather rare that they serve imported fruits like Chinese pears, apple, orange tangerine and grapes.

Dominant representation about Chinese *Benteng* often filled with derogatory words that based on economic measure of how the ‘normal’ Chinese should be. Pejorative commentary such as ‘poor’, ‘black Chinese’, ‘unlike Chinese’, or ‘rural Chinese’ are continuously repeated in writings, media reportage, literary works and other types of representation that contrast their economic condition with their culture and custom as if these two were comparable categories. Like many other *Peranakan* Chinese in Indonesia, the Chinese *Benteng* people live in a relatively comparable standard as also other community groups that settle in the same area. Some mention that in the past, *Peranakan* Chinese Benteng community was farmers and some farmer communities remain exist until present days – especially those who still own large sized land for paddy field – in rural Tangerang. Not only as known farmers, they also own small or medium size of animal farm, particularly pig and chicken farming for private consumption or for sell. However, the condition is a little bit different for those Chinese *Benteng* people that live in semi-urbanized *kampung* area like *Kampung Wetan* and many other surrounding areas. Due to massive industrialization in Cengkareng and Tangerang areas in the late 1980s and early 1990s, this has led many cases of land conversion, in which forced them to sell the land that they have been living for decades with a very low price. Lie Moy, a 70 years old lady once told me that she had no other choice than let her childhood house and its surrounding land go with a very cheap price. It was not only land, she said, the buyer also bought fruits’ trees, such as mango, coconut, star

fruit, *rambutans*, guava, and many other types of fruits – which she used to sell the harvest to the nearer market. Later, she found out that, in her former land, there would be a massive construction project of international airport expansion. As I spoke to her, she is left without owning a house. As a widow, she lives with her son and his family that also rent a modest house not far from her former land.

It can be said that industrialization project in periphery Tangerang has contributed to the loss of assets of many Chinese *Benteng*, especially land where their great great grandparents used to live in. Because of many Chinese *Benteng* people have sold their land for industrialization projects, they sought for other income generating activities to finance their livelihood. Due to low level of education, many of them have been trapped into low-skilled and informal jobs such as parking attendant, pedicab drivers, door-to-door snack seller, food seller, launderer, street hawkers, laborer and many others. Often, it is found that the children, whose parents engage in petty trading practice, are encouraged to help their parents to do the same. As they only involve in small-scale business practice, which require small amount of financial capital; they relied their financing from fellow family members or small profit. In general, in every household, there is only one main breadwinner, which is the man of the family, i.e. the father or the husband. The women, usually, stay home and focus on taking care of the house, do domestic house chores and responsible of the childcare. Sometimes, it is also found that some women are also engaged in small-scale business activities, especially selling homemade snacks or ready meal door-to-door.

A number of writings (Fuad, 2012; Kortchak, 2010; Purwanto et al., 2017) depict the representation of the Chinese *Benteng* people that struggle to find their living. Purwanto (2012) explains that the Chinese *Benteng* community that he observed experienced multidimensional poverty that usually caused by their low earning thus unable to fulfill their day-to-day needs. Likewise, Kortchak (2010) interviewed a number of Chinese *Benteng* people of Tegal Alur and found that despite owning houses, but they do not own the land as is belong to the district government. This condition rather similar with the one that I found in *Kampung Wetan*; many of families do not even know whether land certificate is necessary. However, in 2010, the city government of Tangerang intended to evict them away from *Kampung Wetan* as this area would be transformed into green zone and river normalization project. At that time, hundreds of settlers were worried that they

have nowhere to go if the city government kick them out from that land. I spoke with Pak Heri Tan, a neighborhood head that apparently initiated a community movement to resist the eviction plan back in 2010. He invited me to his house to talk about what had happened during that time.

Pak Heri Tan, 55 years old, is a very energetic man. Unlike the Chinese *Benteng* people physical feature that I described earlier Pak Heri shares similar physical characteristic with Chinese from Jakarta. Later I found out through his wife, Ibu San Nio whom become one of my key respondents, that Pak Heri is not native to *Kampung Wetan*. Originally, Pak Heri grew up in an area called Cideng, western part of Jakarta that is relatively near with Tangerang. Since his parent had moved to Wetan when he was teenager, thus he considered himself as also “*orang Wetan*” which literally means people of Wetan. Having been lived in Wetan for more than thirty years, he described that despite this area is dominated by Chinese *Benteng* people but there are also other groups from different ethnicity background that settled there. According to Pak Heri Tan, the community of Chinese *Benteng* people of *Kampung Wetan* experienced various changes. For him, it was difficult to define who are the native of that area, since *Kampung Wetan* used to be an abandon area where there were not many people lived there. Because of that, his parents moved from Cideng to *Kampung Wetan* because of the land was relatively cheap and still largely sparse. Pak Heri also remembered that Wetan area was getting more and more crowded in the 1990s, during the Suharto’s government, when many of the new incoming settlers were victims of massive evictions during the regime. One of the ‘illegal settlement’ areas that demolished during Suharto’s administration was Mangga Dua, a densely populated area in western part of Jakarta, where *Emak*⁴² Gwat Lan (62) and her family lived before she moved back to *Kampung Wetan*. Despite she was born in Wetan, she followed her husband and moved to Jakarta to have better livelihood in the late 1970s. After her house was demolished by the government, that area becomes one of the busiest shopping malls.

Despite Pak Heri did not born in *Kampung Wetan*, he was nominated by his neighbor as chief ward or *ketua RW* in RW04. As *ketua RW*, Pak Heri is the main contact point where usually the community address their complaints or seek

⁴² *Emak* is a local term that usually used to call elderly women

advice. As the consequence of such position, Pak Heri frequently received many complaints from his neighbor regarding various issues, commonly the ones that related with administrative paper works. But the incident of 2010 eviction was a different story, since it was widely attracted national media attention. According to Pak Heri, it was all started from rumors that some neighbors told him, *"They came to me and told me about the eviction plan. Because I am the Ketua RW⁴³, so I felt responsible to raise this issue to the Kelurahan. But Kelurahan seemed not like what I did, because I pushed them a lot to solve this issue."* Pak Heri continued that the eviction plan was never discussed together with the community live there. For him, the community has the right to know and to be given options where to live afterwards. At that time, he did not care if at the end he was removed by the *Kelurahan* as *Ketua RW*, *"They said I was against the order from the top."*

Pak Heri said that he is just a regular person and has no political backing from elite party, thus he did not afraid to face the government in the eviction plan. The 2010 eviction plan by Tangerang city government then got significant leverage as Pak Heri was able to mobilize his neighbors whom might be affected by the eviction plan. As he told me the heroic journey in fighting rights of the poor, his wife then joined our afternoon talk. Sometimes she confirmed what her husband just said by nodding or adding some missing details. Pak Heri did not have experience in organizing the mass, like what the student did in 1998 while overthrown Suharto from his throne or organizing protest. What he did initially just gather a few neighbors in his house and discuss plan how they can resist the eviction. He remembered those days when he still lived in his old house, which was in a really bad condition; that group decided that they should collect administrative documents from the people that they are representing. They named the group *Forum Warga Miskin Cina Benteng* – Poor Chinese *Benteng* people's forum (FWMCB), led by Pak Heri with the objective to defend their right to live in *Kampung Wetan* area. Almost every night, this group gathered at Pak Heri's house to make plan how they resist the eviction which eventually attract greater number of people that also want to join the forum. At the end, he claimed to get more than 300 households that were willing to fight together to resist the eviction plan.

⁴³ Head of the neighborhood ward

Despite claiming has no backing from the 'big people', Pak Heri and his group were able to connect with various people have the same concern on the issue of urban settlements for the poor. According to Pak Heri, their group was supported by Legal Aid foundation and some grassroots activists from Jakarta that suggest them to meet with the house of representative and talk about this plan. Even though Pak Heri and some other members of the forum were able to go to the house of representative, the eviction plan still continued for execution in mid-April 2010. As a result, the people who lived there resisted the local government and security forces by formed a barricade to prevent heavy tractors entering their *kampung*. When I spoke to Emak Gwat Lan about what she experienced that time, she felt proud to be able to defend her house. In the beginning she did not aware at all about the eviction plan, but one of her neighbors told her that the government would evict everyone on that area which brought so many worries to her. The neighbor brought her along to one of the meetings at Pak Heri's house to discuss what they should do to resist the eviction plan, *"If I didn't resist the government plan, where else should we live? Throughout my life, this is the third time that I have been evicted by the government. I used to live in Mangga Dua, Jakarta, before my family got evicted because of a shopping mall project. Afterwards, I moved Tangerang and once again we got evicted, for river normalization project. And now."* According to Emak Gwat Lan, they would be evicted because their houses were on government's land, termed by the local government as 'illegal settlement, thus theorized as 'disturbing the view' and cause frequent flooding.

After months of protest and finally went out to the street for demonstration; the Tangerang city government finally revoked the plan. Pak Heri said, *"The President SBY (Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono), sent his people down to Tangerang and instructed to cancel the eviction."* It is also worth to note that from 2009-2014, the President's party i.e. Democrat Party dominated the local parliament with 13 seats (26%) out of 50 available seats for a total of 10 political parties. For *Kampung Wetan* residents, the cancelation was a great relief; despite there is no official regulation that guarantees their right to settle in that area. For the time being, they somehow feel relief from eviction; but often they also feel unease and unsecure while there's local election as the regulation could have changed along with the new elected city mayor. Unfortunately, because of that incident, the *Kelurahan* government becomes more resistant to them and often drops community's requests to repair public

facilities in that area, like concrete pathways and small roads as access to the main road. Pak Chandra (67), settler of *Kampung Wetan* who has been living there throughout his life felt that his complaint to the *Kelurahan* apparatus is always ignored, despite he and his wife repeatedly complaint that their areas often flooded, especially due to the monsoon season. They then assumed that it might be “instruction from above” as they are now living illegally in government land, as they continue, “*Maybe the government indirectly wants to kick us out, by ignoring all our complaints, so we might feel unsafe and then leave this place...*”

4.3.4. *Peranakan Chinese Benteng Women of Tangerang*

As Suryadinata argued (1992) about the history of *Peranakan* Chinese Indonesia, he highlights the union between Chinese men and native women that resulted not only in terms of mixed racial complexion but also culturally hybridity of their descendants. Ong Hok Ham (2008) added that in Batavia, the marriage union between Chinese people and native elite were inexistence. This was mainly because Chinese women were unavailable at that time, and there was no native elite in Batavia. From a Chinese father and native mother, *Peranakan* Chinese community carried both cultures and customs. Young *peranakan* Chinese girls were predominantly raised by their mothers according to the custom and culture that the mother used to, the native ones. This pattern is repeated when these girls are married, become mothers and raise their children in that way.

Despite it has been argued that women play important role in the family, but such important role only limited to micro-scope that evolve around obligation to bear and give sons to her husband, organize and serve all members of her extended families. Confucian teaching that often used as a foundation for Chinese families underlines women’s position as subordinate to their male members of the family. Women are obliged to be obedient to their father before they are married, be dutiful to their husbands once they are married, and be subservient to her sons as widower. Thus, the position of women in Chinese *Benteng* community, as also in many native groups, is subject to patriarchal structure that dominated by men. These women often do not have power to decide what do they want and regularly unable to exercise their rights. Khanis (2010) in her study finds that often when the women experience domestic violence, the parents are unable to help. Because

throughout their life Chinese *Benteng* women always dominated by men's presence; for those that remain unmarried until they die will not have any altar table that dedicated to respect them.

Picture 5 – The Chinese *Benteng* Women



A group of Chinese *Benteng* women cultivated cassava

Sugiastuti (2003) argues that women (wife or daughter) in conservative Chinese family are ineligible as heir of family wealth/inheritance. Likewise, a mother will be taken care by her children and not by her husband. However, opposite traditional rules applied in the case of women's wealth. If a woman obtains wealth during the marriage, only the husband has the right to be the legitimate heir and not their children. Fuad (2007) also founds that in Chinese *Benteng* family, this practices still occurred, although not entirely the same. Some families still not recognize women as heirs, which commonly referred as 1:0 system and give the inheritance solely to men. However, in some families, women are given unequal share of inheritance compare to the men members of the families. This model referred as 2:1 system. In Chinese *Benteng* society, women tend to face multifaceted disadvantages compare to the men. As in many *totok* Chinese, the *peranakan* Chinese also prioritize men's right over the women's which brings to what Fuad has argued above, about the right to obtain family assets lies on men.

Women's lack of access to family properties further makes them more vulnerable to fall into poverty, compare with the men counterpart. Often, it then resulted in many families' properties have been sold by the men without the women's consent. Likewise, due to lack of possession of family wealth, most Chinese *Benteng* women continue to rely financially on their husband, which push them further into domestic sphere and lack of access to 'outer world'. For these women, daily activities are ranging from doing house chores – including laundry, cook, sweep and mop the floor, iron, and tidy the house; child and elderly care; and watch soap operas to kill time or chat with fellow women.

In terms of maintain the tradition and customs, Chinese *Benteng* women play significant role to ensure that her children continue such practices and pass it on to the next generation. As the women are considered as the main executor and bearer of Chinese *Benteng* important tradition, they are the one that generally more familiar than the men in terms of the rituals and traditional rules. They rarely skip any older relatives to whom she has to send offerings and pay detail attention to various complicated attributes of commemoration of death ancestors. Generally, mothers pass this knowledge to their daughters with the expectation that they do the same when they have daughters. But in the recent time, old Chinese *Benteng* women are often worried, because many young people do not have interest to practice this tradition anymore. These old women are concern, when they die, nobody in her family that will commemorate her dead spirit. Despite women's important role, the existence of a girl in a more conservative family that fully applies Confucian teaching is not really wanted as if it is a boy. The birth of a girl often celebrated less festive compare to boys. When they grow up, women rarely have access to important decision making in the family or in her life. Major and important decisions are usually decided by the men, either the father, brother, husband or son. As the elderly refers to "*jaman modern*" which means modern era or "*jaman sekarang*" means in the current era, the restriction towards girls is slightly reduced in comparison with the previous past decades. Despite so, the general assumption that prioritizes boys over girls remains in the Chinese *Benteng* families, as the boys are the one that holds the family name and pride.

In general, compare to a son, a daughter has closer connection with her parents – especially the mother – as she stays home more often than boys. As result of this habit, it is often generalized opinion that girls place is in the house and the

boys are seen as relatively free to go out. Unlike the boys, young girls are trained to help their mothers in doing light household chores like sweeping and mopping the floor or tidy up rooms. While the boys are 'free' to make mess in the house and can go play outside as they like, the girls are educated to be 'tidy' – means make no mess – as it is the appropriate and desirable character of a girl. At the same time, this girl also demanded to maintain the house in order and not being troublesome for her mother. Because of that, many young girls that I met do not show any resentment when they have to help their mothers. On the other hand, I noticed it is also somehow desirable for these young girls to learn the house chores like their mothers do.

Picture 6 – The Kitchen



A typical kitchen in the *Peranakan* Chinese House

A very young girl, about 8 years old, named Mey Mey, was seems happy to help her mother cleaning the house. As I came to her house to chat with her mother, Mey Mey was sweeping the floor – picked up assorted plastic package from snacks that her older brother brought from nearby *warung* – and continued her next tasks, folded her little brother's clothes. She said that she likes helping her mother, especially because her mother just gave her little baby brother. Besides helping in doing domestic chores, this little girl also helped her mother to sell snacks while in school. That day, her mother made chocolate pudding from those cheap instant power package that she bought from the *warung* – placed in a plastic cup with a small spoon – for her to bring to the school to sell. Full of excitement, she put about twenty cups inside a plastic bag and carried those with her. Often, when the main breadwinner, i.e. the father does not earn enough to finance the household expenses, this type of collaboration between mother and daughter forms an

economic unit of the family that the capitalist system capitalize to exploit women's double roles.

Majority, the ladies that I met had dropped out from school when they were 15 or 16 years old. As they are now in their late twenties or early thirties, and their eldest child are already teenager; they must have been started to be parent when they were very young. One of these ladies said that at those times, they wondered what else to do after they dropped out from school due to lack of financial means to pay. Ibu Ratnasari (42) stated that she stopped schooling when she was around 13 years old, at sixth grade of primary school. She thought that it is better help her mother doing housework and take care of her younger siblings, as it might help her mother to tidy up the house and spend no money for her schooling. Another feasible thing to pursue was getting married, perhaps with the first man that showed up in front of her door and expressed interest in her to be his wife. She said that she should have not waited any longer when a man was interested to make her his wife. She was afraid if no one takes her as a wife, she would be old maiden forever. That first man that came that day is now her husband; they have been married for over twenty years now. Their children are all grown up, two young men – 22 years old and 20 years old – and 14 years old teenage girl. As she remembered her olden days, she told me that her mother was the one that taught her to cook, clean the house, and little bit of sewing. As young girl – as she reached eligible age for marriage for Chinese *Benteng* women – she was under the complete supervision of her mother that always warned her to be diligent while doing housework and talk less to the neighbor, which might divert her attention away while working in her house. Ten or fifteen year ago, it was still very common there these girls should master in housekeeping in order to prospect mother-in-law; but not so much anymore these days.

The idea of marriage among the Chinese family, in the context of Chinese *Benteng* family stays the same as it was in the olden times. Despite some practices have been shifted away, adjusting with modern era – like appropriate marriageable age or the decision whether girls can marry men of their own choice – the values of marriage remain sending the same message, i.e. being complete as a human being. Unlike in the past, where family – especially the parents – that decided to whom the girl should marry; nowadays girls are free to marry with whom she chooses, despite parents blessing on the chosen man is still required. Back then, maybe forty

or fifty years ago, according to one elderly in the neighborhood, a girl should already be married just after she got her first period. This meant that her womb was ready to conceive a child and would have many opportunities to carry more babies for the family.

Often in the *Peranakan* Chinese family, as it sometimes still being said in the present days, that unmarried person is *belum jadi orang* – literally means is not yet human being. While this saying generally is intended to motivate man for find living more diligently for the future family; unfortunately, this is associated negatively to the woman, as she will be considered old maiden because nobody wants to marry her. Unlike the unmarried man that never tease out family's concern, unmarried women often become the source of family guilt and shame as the society could think that there is something wrong in how the mothers raised them. Unmarried girl or woman in this society is considered also odd and abnormal, because she will be looked with pity by the neighbors, relatives, family, and friends, which eventually will bring certain shame to the immediate family. This is certainly not the case for unmarried men. Girls of appropriate marriageable age are often face more pressure to get married than boys. This common perception remains until now, because women are considered 'belong' to the family and not to herself. Like when they are child, they are 'belong' to the family; when they are married, they 'belong' to the husband and his family; and when they are widower, they 'belong' to their sons – not even their daughters.

Among the older generation that I have met, general opinion about marriage is about life security when old age prevails. This view is certainly based on the common practice that the wife of their married son would have taken care of them on later on. At the same time, parents consider that they have completed their duty is when they see their children are properly married. Unlike to the son, the parents often get more worried when their daughters have not yet married. Other than the society's assumption about having old maiden daughter, being unable to send their daughters off to marriage life is also considered a burden. This is because, by ensuring their daughters are married, this also means transferring responsibility to taking care of her to her husband. This view is contradictory when their sons are married; because it means that the parents would get additional caretaker for them, which is their daughter-in-law. On the field, I often heard comments that when parents have all married children, they are considered fulfilled and fortunate. They

do not have to worry about their future, because their daughter-in-law will take care of them; also, they need not to worry about their daughters, because she will be taken care of.

These days, the average marriageable age for a Chinese *Benteng* girl of *kampung* Wetan is around 21 or 22 years old. By that time, girls could have finished their vocational education which considered 'just enough' to have practical modern life-skills to apply for an office job just before she gets married. And as soon as she seems already has prospective boyfriend, usually the parents urged her to get married as soon as possible. The parents often say, "*What else are you waiting for?*" and some other parents are more concerns on what the neighbor thinks if the daughter still hasn't tied the knot with the boyfriend. As the mother is the one that responsible to bring up her children, the selection of boyfriend sometimes also becomes her responsibility. Should her daughter show a risk to run wild, the mother is expected to step in and immediately arrange a proper marriage for her daughter. This makes the mother plays critical role in sending their children, especially daughter, off to marriage life.

Despite now girls are able to decide her own choice in terms of prospective husband, mothers in Chinese *Benteng* family often exercise her influence to suggest, to endorse, or to reject the prospective candidate. Besides that, it is also mother's role or duty to ensure that her daughters fulfill the quality of marriageable women. It is not rare that mothers often prefer financially secured prospective husbands for their daughters. This is perhaps also a reason why that close and intimate bonding between mothers and daughters send benchmarking signals to the society in regards to women's behavior. For instance, neighbors and surrounding society often determine the behavior and attitude of a girl as a result of education from her mother. Sometimes the society also thinks that bad behaviors of a girl were passed from her mother. I once remember one *Ketua RW* in that *kampung* commented on the 'wild' attitude of a girl whose mother I also know. He asserted, "*Look at Lola, she is just as wild as her mother. It must have been passed from her mother. That's why her marriage is not normal and awful.*"

It is also often found that many Chinese *Benteng* women are dependent economically with their husband. If the husband's earnings are sufficed for their household needs, it is rather rare that the Chinese *Benteng* women work. Majority of the women that I have met said that they do not work and simply refer

themselves only as housewives. If there is any urgency that they have to earn additional income, as their husband earning is just not enough, generally they prefer to engage in informal trading activities, for instance make cakes for order, sell snacks door-to-door, and sell clothes or other things. For those women whose husband earns well enough for the family, they usually prefer to stay home doing daily household chores and perform childcare also elderly care. Not only that often the husbands also the ones that demand them to stay home, focus on the housework and raise the children well. Majority of women that I spoke in *Kampung Wetan* are stay-home housewives and some others are secondary breadwinner in their nuclear family. It is also not rare that I have met some women that are illegitimate second wives, or abandoned wives whose husbands have remarried with other woman. In this case, these women are the main backbone of her family, especially when the children are minors.

In *Kampung Wetan*, I found many Chinese *Benteng* couples prioritize to have traditional wedding ceremony as oppose to have civic married registration. One of the most common reasons that I heard were because they did not really aware that it is important to register their marriage. A 65 years-old widow mentioned to me that she never really registered her marriage as she thought that it was not really important. Besides that, she is an illegitimate second wife anyway, which might bring more problematic condition if she claimed for a legalized married. She told me that at that time, around late 70s, her late husband came to her parents, expressed his interest to marry her. It was without any ceremony or whatsoever, only his promise to her father and mother that he would take care of her. Despite she just a second wife, she admitted that never regret to be 'illegally married' to her late husband. Not only her story, I also heard similar stories from other women in *Kampung Wetan* that were willing to be second wife; either for reason of love or financial reason, or both. As a result of situation like this, many children of this unregistered married couple failed to have 'proper' birth certificate – without the name of the father. It is quite often happened than this might lead to stigmatization in the society, as the mother is seen as sinner in the society with a low level of morality. Besides that, there are also cases that the married couples are unable to register their civic marriage properly due to lack of other administrative documentation, such as ID cards, birth certificates, or family cards which are

mandatory requirements for civic marriage registration. Therefore, these couples often decided to cut it short without registration process.

For a newlywed couple, they are urged by their family to have children. It was quite rare that I heard a married couple take contraceptive to delay pregnancy. I sense a bit of abnormality when married couple decided to delay in having children for a few years. Despite it is now getting common in a big city like Jakarta, but in *Kampung Wetan*, delaying to have children remain seen as a bizarre case; especially when the woman calls to postpone the pregnancy for pursuing career outside the house – which is never be the case. It is pretty often that families, relatives, and neighbors are repeatedly asking – sometimes in a joking mode – whether the wife has shown any signals of pregnancy after a few weeks or months after the wedding. And in the case of failing to show any pregnancy signals, usually the women are the one to blame and accused of being unable to carry offspring, in which preferably to be boy. A 40 years old woman was constantly abused psychically by her ex-husband as she was considered fail to give him a son. Her ex-husband used to call her *perempuan sial* (woman that always brings bad luck) because of that and often correlated every of his misfortunes with her *kesialan* (bad luck). It is also somehow common in this *kampung* that a married man is encouraged to take another wife if his wife fails to give a son, especially by his mother.

For many Chinese *Benteng* couples, the woman often in a disadvantage position. As briefly mentioned above that while a woman has married, she immediately considered as the possession of her husband's family. For that reason, many Chinese *Benteng* women are restricted to decide what is important for them; not only as a wife, a mother, or a woman, but also as a human being. For example, even the decision whether or not to get pregnant is not her decision, but the decision of her husband and the families. And for the case if she is pregnant, she will be the object of order and strict supervision from the mothers on what she can do or cannot do. Having said that, for the Chinese *Benteng* family, a pregnant woman should be taken care carefully. For the older women that are in the position of mother or mother-in-law, they usually prohibit the pregnant women to eat particular fruits to avoid miscarriage. Young pineapple is one of some fruits that these pregnant women have to avoid, as its acid substance might cause miscarriage and destroy the *peranakan* (womb).

Furthermore, after childbirth, it is forbidden for the new mother to go out within the next thirty days. Sometimes, accompanied by fellow women member of the family, she has to stay home and also forbid to do heavy housework. This is how other women help her doing heavy duty, such as doing laundry. During these 30 days, the new mother is also asked to put a *gurita* – a type of traditional umbilical bandage that helps tightened woman's belly after giving birth – and a *kain sarung* – a wrap cloth to replace skirt or pants. It is widely believed that this type of outfit helps to maintain women's figure as like before pregnancy. Often, during the first week or seven days, the mothers have arranged a traditional massage therapist, called *tukang urut* – usually an old and experienced lady – to perform traditional massage, including some rituals to maintain women's feminine figure as well as to rejuvenate her body after childbirth. The traditional massage is then believed as mechanism to regain pre-pregnancy woman figure and at the same time also release the wrinkle veins after the childbirth process. In addition to that, the new grandmothers usually prepare *ayam angchiu* – chicken soup with fermented red rice seed – in which believed to strengthen womb, recover her strength and increase the quantity of breast milk.

Chinese *Benteng* Women in *Kampung Wetan* often negatively stereotyped as *jablay* – a derogatory term for women that desire sexual attention. For that reason, women that are not originated from *Wetan* and moved in to join the husband are usually warned about that. One woman told me that before she moved to *Kampung Wetan*, someone warned her that she has to be careful with women of *Kampung Wetan*, as they might seduce her husband. Likewise, other women from West Jakarta that has been living in *Kampung Wetan* for more than a year said that women from this *kampung* have a negative reputation which made her rarely socialize with them. This negative stereotypes and bad reputation towards Chinese *Benteng* women of *Kampung Wetan* has been known since decades ago, as Ci Yanti (42), one lady from Karawaci (5 km away from *Kampung Wetan*) told me one day. Her story reveals that in the past, about forty or fifty years ago, *Kampung Wetan* was a location where wealthy *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* men hide their mistress which was termed *lubang landak* (hedgehog hole). Back then, these mistresses were usually the *Cokek* dancers that have a reputation as 'gold digger' – so Ci Yanti said – because one of the wealthy *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* man was his grandfather that spent his wealth for his mistress.

Due to that negative stereotype of woman that work as *Cokek* dancer, so does the reputation of *Cokek* dance itself. David Kwa (2005, 2009), a local expert on *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* culture mentioned that originally, *Cokek* is not a form of dancing. The work *cokek* derived from *chioun kek*, which means to sing a song in Hokkien dialect. During the (pre) colonial era, local *Peranakan* Chinese landlords often held a party, which also include weddings and other type of celebration. To entertain the guest, the landlord hired a group of local musicians called *Gambang Kromong* – a hybrid form of Chinese-Betawian orchestra that usually performed a particular type of music and songs. Kwa added that at that time, the *cokek* was the one that sing and not dance despite in the later development the *cokek* singer is also requested to dance with male guess. Phoa Kian Sioe (1949) referred that both men and women were perform as *cokek* or *gambang* singers; but the women *cokek* were expected also to dance in order to entertain the guess. At the same time, these *cokek* were also required to master important song that they had to sing during the party celebration. In that era, *cokek* has a special way to dress. They wear satin long sleeved blouse up to the knee and a pair of trouser with a bright color, like green, yellow, or red. Their hair was braided, tied up with red ribbon and twisted up as hair bun. This outfit remained this way until 1950s; which has been changed into *kebaya* and *batik* cloth.

In its development, the public image and perception of *cokek* has been shifted – in a more negative way, as opposed its original meaning. In the recent practice, while the *Gambang Kromong* singer remains play important role, the existence of *wayang cokek* have attracted more attention from the guest, especially the men guess. Therefore, the parameter of success in hosting a party, especially wedding, is determined whether the hosts hire *Gambang Kromong* group and *cokek* dancer or not. Like in most *Peranakan* Chinese *Benteng* wedding party, having *Gambang Kromong* and *cokek* is a necessity to attract many guests as well as to entertain them. While the singers start with slow and melodious song, the *cokek* dancers' group which are usually consist of 10 to 12 young girls, line up and prepare to dance with the male guess – usually those males are quite old. In the recent era, the *cokek* dancers do not wear the *kebaya* and *kain batik* anymore; instead, they wear something more modern and simple like jeans and fitted t-shirt. Usually, to dance with *wayang cokek* is referred as *ngibing cokek*, which the word *ngibing* is originated from sundanese word means to dance. During the first hour of the dance, these

wayang cokek dancers and the male guesses are separated by 1 m in distance. Before dancing, these men give some money to the dancer, as they called it *nyawer*; and the more often these men dance, the more money that he has to spend. For one wealthy *Peranakan* Chinese Benteng man, he spends on average 1 million rupiah (75 dollars) in a party, to dance with the *wayang cokek*. Initially, as it like line dance in the west, there is no physical contact between them. But as the party goes, in which also involves alcoholic drinks (local beer), the distance between the dancers and the guesses gets closer and to some extent sometimes gets uncontrollable.

As the meaning of the word *cokek* has been significantly shifted, people's perception towards *cokek* also has been evolving. Some sources mention that often, the male guess that dance with the *wayang cokek* demand sexual intercourse and will give her money and other material benefit in return. Not few *wayang cokek* agree with that kind of arrangement, which sometimes she agrees to be mistress. A group of older *Peranakan* Chinese Benteng women told me that actually *wayang cokek* is not Chinese Benteng, they are indigenous Indonesian women – Javanese or Sundanese. "*Chinese Benteng women would never be a wayang cokek, even if she is very poor. Most of those ladies are native Indonesians. They originated from Bogor, Bekasi or Indramayu.*" one older woman commented that day. Her husband is very fond of *ngibing cokek*, means that he likes to attend local wedding party and spent at least 1 million rupiah for *nyawer*. It is also locally known that once a man attracted to a *wayang cokek* and made her his mistress, he might leave his wife and family. Most of the cases that I heard in that area, such men often are marrying the *wayang cokek* at the end. For that reason, the reputation of *cokek* as a form of traditional cultural expression has been degraded and often accused as under covered prostitution practice.

4.4. CONCLUSION

Throughout this chapter, the representation of Chinese Indonesia has gradually changed according to the nation's history and its trajectory of nation's building process. Often termed as 'middleman minority' that equated them like the Jew in the western society, Chinese descendants in Indonesia are continued to be neglected and problematized as incompatible 'other' to the nation's identity. As the nation progressed, discrimination towards Indonesians of Chinese descent reached

its paramount under New Order authoritarian regime. Structural process of alteration operated by the state toward the Chinese Indonesians for more than three decades was intended to correct their cultural incompatibility through state-orchestrated assimilation intervention. Furthermore, despite the discourse of engineered assimilation program in order to eliminate incompatibility of the Chinese descendants; extreme limitation and *othering* were imposed to limit their engagement in public life, particularly in the area of politics. On the same note, collusive partnership between political power holders, including the military, and the Chinese tycoons were deeply ingrained in Indonesia's society which forced the Chinese Indonesians commoners to conform with very limited options and be compliant with oppressive regulations as day-to-day defense mode.

Common depiction of Chinese Indonesians that are associated with higher level of welfare frequently manipulated as source of jealousy that often provoke racial tension. Constructed image of Chinese Indonesians as wealthier segments of Indonesian society, imbued with public depiction of exclusive and stingy community, has worsen the life of poorer Chinese Indonesians whose life is indifferent with other ethnic groups. In this chapter, I have contextualized despite some Chinese Indonesian community was economically benefitted more than the others, the main representation and stereotype about the whole Chinese Indonesians have led to their exclusion from the nation building project; particularly in the critical period of contemporary Indonesia. The construction of Chinese "problem" in such racist historiography of the nation has rendered the whole Chinese Indonesian community as the incompatible others who dominate the majority of the country's wealth. Consequently, this construction has in turn reconstruct the native *pribumi* as weak economic group that should be protected from such "problem" within a game of ethnic blame, particularly under New Order administration.

Such racial construct on the basis of economic capacity that intricately intertwined with the Chinese Indonesians historical trajectory has further complicated those Chinese that economically disadvantaged. Chinese *Benteng* in Tangerang is one of such community that was endlessly experiencing constant construction on their chineseness identity. The recurring and normalized representation about their economic misery which often times, even though is depicted derogatorily, is used to highlight their 'poor' characteristic thus justify

their pseudo-membership of native *pribumi* as weak economy group. Lamentably, their lack of bargaining power in the society as part of minority group always situate them in a vulnerable and disadvantage position which frequently sits in at the fringe of “multicultural” Indonesia.

**V – DISCURSIVE
CONSTRUCTION OF
“SOCIAL EXCLUSION AS
THE “PROBLEM”**

V – DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF “SOCIAL EXCLUSION” AS THE “PROBLEM”

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprised of a combination of a reflexive analysis from my professional experience as “apparatus” (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1990) in the world of “development bureaucrats” (Mosse, 2005) as well as newly trained junior academics in understanding what “social exclusion” as a concept entails; and a series of analysis and interpretations about this concept that increasingly used in development discourse as more politically desirable than the notion of poverty. Brookfield (1998) and Taylor (2001) argue that critically reflecting upon unique personal history provide a capacity to reflect on researchers’ interest and at the same also acknowledge their strength, weakness and continuous curiosity. Adding to that, researchers’ appreciation, articulation and understanding on the complexity of interwoven elements in sophisticated research pieces have been unequivocally shaped by its constant use of reflection (Piper, 2005). As an important piece of my evolutions – in both perspective and knowledge – undertaking critical self-reflection is an experiment by which I hope to be able to carefully examine my view towards “development”. Following what Brookfield (2009) and Heron (2005) had advised, I deliberately employ critical self-reflection to discover the marginalized power dynamics and oppressive social discourses shaped by sex, gender, age, class, race and ethnicity as inseparable parts of my professional practices, which resulted in an explicit consideration of power dynamics and social structures associated with one’s practice.

In writing this critical self-reflection about the process of knowledge production and development practices that I was involved in, I follow Fook’s (2002) view which suggests that its main purpose is to discover that as researchers we participate in shaping existing power relation discursively (p. 98), through creating what it called as “conceptual space” (Rossiter, 2005: 1), which enable us to step outside the way of our thinking that restrict avenue for change (Fook, 1996: 99). I took Fook’s advice that suggests, “*Research should arise from personal experience since*

the researcher will certainly have the motivation and openness to appreciate the experience being studied" (Fook, 1999: 15). Moreover, as Fook (2004) continues that postmodernist critical reflection recognizes and reconstructs conceptions of power, identity, dichotomized categories, as well as dominant narratives, he added that it also helps us to reconstruct the possibility to challenge and to change structurally produced power relation at interpersonal level. Critical self-reflection then may be useful to unravel different ways of knowing about how as researchers we could connect individuals with the means of social changes as well as exercising our intellectual agency in responding to structural realities. These then bring additional arguments to my justification in incorporating personal experience as data on my critical self-reflection, which I believe could offer valuable privilege to step out from my own subjectivity and learn the ways how the reality around me has influenced my way of thinking and comprehension that always in constant construction and contestation.

The objective of this chapter is to explain how "social exclusion" is constructed as a "problem", which represented as threat to development. Here, the construction of "social exclusion" as a problem underwent a series of problematization processes, in which will determine "social inclusion" – which perceived as policy to reverse "exclusion" – as a solution that shall take place. To help me in analyzing the process of problematization, I will use the What's the Problem Represented to be (hereafter 'WPR') approach conceptualized by Carol Bacchi (2009). Through revealing such problematization, "social inclusion" clearly appears as solution that should be operationalized through development project intervention to overcome "social exclusion" as the constructed "problem". I start this chapter by outlining my autoethnographic experience as low-level 'development bureaucrats' that participated in running development machine as anti-politics (Ferguson, 1990) through involving particular types of NGOs as its implementing partners within dominant development paradigm. Furthermore, this autoethnographic stance refines my understanding of how "social exclusion" came into existence throughout the practice of development that continuously construct certain groups of people to whom various projects would impose upon them as mechanism of correction. I continue this chapter by elaborating "social exclusion" as a disputed concept and how its use has been widely criticized, especially in the context of the Third World. Furthermore, I will show how

hegemonic narratives and representation about “social exclusion” looks like in dominant literature which mostly produced by international/multilateral development agencies as the principal source of “knowledge”. Furthermore, to help understanding “social exclusion” from different political and ideological stance, I draw on three paradigms of social exclusion, developed by Hilary Silver, that are helpful in understanding this problematic notion. In the following section, I will explain about WPR tool that I use to analyze how “social exclusion” is represented as a problem from two different positions, the project representation that mostly represent the ideology of NGOs and more mainstream representation as reflected by international development agencies. In the last part of this chapter, I present two distinct representations of “social exclusion” as problem from a number of text and campaign materials.

5.2. MY AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC VIGNETTE: A NARRATIVE OF A DEVELOPMENT APPARATUS

Since 2009, my experience in pursuing the process of knowing has been continuously evolving. As a graduate school student from left oriented institution in the Netherlands, I was trained to be critical towards the dominant discourse of development that generally centralized on the modernization paradigm. Analytically inculcated with Marxist based theory on post-colonialism, post-developmentalism and post-structuralism; I am increasingly familiar with various authors whose works have significantly contributed in contemporary critique of development. Throughout my graduate study, I familiarized myself with scholars like Harvey, Escobar, Chambers, and Ferguson in order to learned how to think and to analyze critically about uncontested paradigms and practices of development in the Third World countries – which I often take as face value. Having said that, despite being familiar with academic critics of development, I was less familiar with the practice of Development in my own country – in fact at that time, my understanding about development was shaped by its voluntaristic notion and the perspective of charitable events.

As not-so young graduate – in comparison with my fellow graduates who completed their master in their early twenties – I started my early encounter with Development practice through a number of internships at Netherland-based

international government and non-government organizations that worked in various field. A few weeks after my graduation, I was offered an opportunity as an 'intern' in an advocacy type of international membership-based NGO that support the work of mainly diasporic ethnic minorities and indigenous people in various countries that were basically exiled in western countries, mostly in Europe. At that time, I thought it was such a good opportunity for me to learn how international NGO functions in supporting the work of the disadvantaged population, particularly those that are from Third World countries. Unfortunately, being an "intern" was far removed from what I had expected. With the justification of providing experience for the inexperienced fresh graduate students, the NGO that I worked for instead exploited the "interns" for doing regular daily tasks which were generally carried out by office boys or girls in the country where I came from. Such tasks were included making coffee, doing photocopy and doing groceries for office supplies and materials without any sort of compensation – not even a small amount of remuneration. I quite surprised that many interns from other European countries had to travel far from their home country to do this kind of "internship" without any sort of allowances and even had to finance their own expenses for months.

I considered myself lucky because I didn't live very far from the NGO's office – just 10 minutes walking distance from my apartment. But since the internship did not provide any financial remuneration, besides exchanging my labor and skills with "international working-experience", I had to find other type of work to pay for my daily expenses. Every day, after finishing my internship, I had to run to an Indonesian restaurant where I work in the kitchen; helping the cook to prepare the *rijsttafel*⁴⁴, the "fancy" version of Indonesian meal that is so popular for most Dutch people which obviously has been altered to satisfy the imagination of exotic Indonesia, as well as washing the dirty dishes. From Monday to Friday, what I did was the internship with the NGO in the morning and worked in the restaurant until late at night, which I did for nearly a year. Away from my own country and faced with the reality of being non-white woman that hold passport of a Third World country, that was my first experience of exploitation – as someone from developing

⁴⁴ A Dutch word, literally translated as "rice table". It refers to an elaborated setting of assorted types of Indonesian food in small portions that is "adjusted" to the Dutch

country whose' skills are not being recognized because of status as intern and as someone that need to survive in one of the most expensive country to live in.

After almost four years, lived through various types of engagement with Development practices in The Netherlands, I decided to return to my home country – Indonesia for 'field' experience. In mid 2012, I accepted an interesting new job offer as operations analyst in a newly developed project managed by the World Bank in Indonesia. Maybe due to the immense excitement of the new job offer in one of the most highly regarded and prestigious institutions in Development sector including extremely attractive financial remuneration package, I skipped any consideration, or perhaps I ignored, my early critical experience that gradually had been built during my master degree. It was indeed an economic consideration imbued with illusion of prestige to work in the World Bank. Moreover, as someone that gained master degree from European institution as well as experienced in working in a 'multicultural' environment, I felt that I was valued more as someone with right education path and experiences to do the job. Unlike my previous 'internship' experience where I felt less valued and started to be apathetic to Development related job, this job offer has regained my confident to trust what 'goodness' that Development can bring to the people it serves or those who Development 'saves'.

My inception in The World Bank started as part-time analyst and gradually became full time member on a number of the Bank's financed projects. Over the course of several years, I also have been involved in a social development research team that focused on various issues such as rural development, empowerment and participation, social inclusion as well as gender equality. In one hand, practicing Development within highly regarded and reputable international institution has brought its personal economic benefit as well as source of self-pride; but on the other hand, I also felt that I have been shut down from critical thinking mode in which I was very familiar during my 15 months of graduate school. For that reason, my ability and sensitivity to see things from alternative point of view gradually diminished and shifted towards more dominant positivist epistemology, where it focuses on validity and reliability (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Koch and Harrington, 1998; Porter, 1993). While engaging in 'knowledge production' through research activities that intended to provide particular solution where there is avenue for Development to intervene life of its beneficiaries; this epistemology limits the

exercise of critical thinking as well as recognizing that knowledge production as social construction process. Having said that, my return to critical thinking is enabled by my current academic endeavor, when different academic trainings allow me – both time availability and access to knowledge – to engage critically on various discourses on topics that I am familiar with, such as community development, women empowerment, participation, social exclusion and social inclusion. Therefore, I decided to use several instances from my earlier engagement with Development and its project that anecdotally exemplifies the critical self-reflection, of which my personal vignette stands out.

Reflection upon my identity construction as non-white women from a Third World country in white male dominated society, this has helped me to understand the importance of questioning and challenging the practice of Development that we have encounter. My return to Indonesia, as European-educated middle class urban woman has somehow elevated my social position in the eye of my fellow colleagues that engaged in similar project. For several years engaging in empowerment project, I was then become accustomed to unquestionable assumptions of social realities that I encountered on a daily basis in the project that I managed. For the job purpose, I was fortunate enough to be able to travel across the country and experienced to get to some of the most difficult areas to reach in Indonesia. Often, I understood this experience as “good feeling” to “help and save” the local people out of their despair and misery, by throwing sophisticated ‘buzzword’ like “participation” and “empowerment” (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Hickey, 2005; Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Rist, 2010). For some local communities which were rarely engaged in government-endorsed community empowerment projects, those buzzwords sound very foreign. But, certainly, through support from local NGOs to whom the project financed, these fancy buzzwords were easily translated into such engaging activities, in which at the end became quite popular and familiar to the local communities. Nonetheless, it was occurred to me that, what we introduced as “empowerment” and “participation” to these communities were a kind of technologies – as Foucault refers in relation to his Governmentality concept – for them to help themselves out of desperation.

As new project analyst, my first task was going through all the NGO’s reports and summarized what were important for the project to highlight. This task was a

three-monthly routine that I had to do as a part of the "accountability" mechanism to the donors – which understood as upward accountability to whom the project had received its financial aid. Obviously, this "accountability" was not addressed for the national and local NGOs, to whom the project referred as 'partner'. There was very little room for the NGO partners to send their views, feedback, corrections, or disagreement towards what I had written in the draft. I did that once. After completed my first assignment on the report, I presented to the NGO partners about what I had submitted to the donors. As expected, they bombarded me with too much comment and even much more complaints on how I selected to include or to exclude the project achievements in that report. I was obviously in shock with those comments and was unable to respond honestly to them. As much as I wanted to *yell* back at them, saying that I only had 3 days to write the report, I was just the new analyst and had no authority to negotiate with the donor's deadline. Besides, even if I decided to send the draft for feedback, these NGOs would not send their respond straight away – certainly with various excuses too, like "*We are on supervision mission to remote area where there's no electricity*"; "*We have to send this draft to our local NGO partners for their feedback before we send it back to you...*"; or "*We have deadline from other project,*" and other similar excuses. At that point, I learned straight away that such 'accountability' mechanisms were design in such a way that limit room for downward 'accountability' to the partners and even impossible to obtain such from the project beneficiaries, where the project claimed to benefit for.

With the purpose to report to the donors and to show how their fund was invested into something 'beneficial' and good for the project target, there were a number of issues that the report should focus on. First and the foremost was to highlight the 'exotic' identity of the target groups, including sometimes choice of words that show the 'good intention', for example: rather than use 'landless female farmers', 'poor women' were more preferred in the report. The choice of 'poor women' was seen as more effective to draw donor's attention on what kind of people that benefit from this project. Secondly, the selections of what were impactful for the donors' investment are seen more important rather than the real change in the life of the respected individuals or population. For that reason, I opted to include activities on reading and counting for the illiterate indigenous people rather than women villagers that raised their complaint for the first time. It

was a deliberate ‘cherry-picking’ report, which I had to produce as part of the project’s accountability mechanism to secure the fund flows.

In the World Bank, the project that I was involved in was unlike its conventional projects, which mostly implemented by government agencies. The project – called PNPM *Peduli* – was conceptualized as a response to some findings of a research project, which revealed that the large-scale national empowerment program, namely PNPM *Mandiri*, was unable to reach particular groups of people. PNPM *Mandiri* itself was a community development project, financed by World Bank loan that was implemented from 2007 to 2014. Despite has been praised by World Bank as the largest community driven development project ever operated, this PNPM *Mandiri* project was not free from criticism. Among others, Li’s work (2007) – *The Will to Improve* – was among the criticism towards the operation of the project. Build her case from PNPM predecessor project, called *Kecamatan Development Project*, Li’s work shows that rather than keeping up the promise of poverty reduction the project instead engineered community behavior towards certain conduct. In her later work, Li (2013) elaborates two key processes to socially engineer a community – like what PNPM has done. First of all is the process of problematization and secondly is the process of rendering technical solution. These two key processes remain as the most effective and efficient way in designing development intervention project, just like the project that I managed.

Because PNPM *Mandiri*’s inability to reach all community groups, it was assumed that some groups are left behind from PNPM *Mandiri* project implementation and continued trapped in their marginality. A study was commissioned by PNPM *Mandiri* project team to know who are those that never been included – further referred as marginalized groups – in the participatory process of PNPM Rural, the main branch of PNPM *Mandiri* that was implemented in more than 70,000 villages across Indonesia. The study found that the marginalized groups were rarely touched by mainstream development project – like PNPM Rural – for various reasons. The conceptualization of “marginalized group” defined in that report came into existence as rather narrow and specific project context definition, in which intended to determine its typology and characteristic for specific project purpose. In that report, marginalized groups were described as “*having no (valuable) assets, living in outlying areas with limited basic infrastructure, having limited income with a large number of dependents, and originating*

from an ethnic/religious minority" (Akatiga, 2010: 3). Further, the study also points out some reasons why their participation was seen as low, mainly because of their unwillingness to spend their valuable time to travel and to attend community meetings, their inferiority compares to the majority, and intention not to invite them to the meeting (p.38). The study then concludes that "*Marginalized and minority groups do not have the knowledge capacity, or time to follow the PNPM-Rural process to the MAD⁴⁵ stage. They also do not see the immediate benefit of the process, which further reduces their interest in participating*" (p.30) which caused by their limited resources, access to information, and lack of confidence (p.40). Such diagnostic then led to specific recommendations, including "*facilitate marginalized group to organize and voice their needs*" (p.40) which should focus on organizing capacity, negotiation skills, networking and ability to access information that assumed would help them to voice their needs. Therefore, based on those recommendations, a contracted international consultant was hired to develop a project design including implementation structure of PNPM *Peduli* project, in which involving NGOs to carry out the project activities.

At the same time, as part of the project preparation, the project team also published a coffee table style photographs book, titled "*The Invisible People: Poverty and Empowerment in Indonesia*"⁴⁶, which was prepared for the purpose of project's launching. Unlike common publication materials, which usually showed less attractive in design and printed in cheap material, this book is considered very fancy, printed in glossy paper, hard cover bind with intricate design and looks very exclusive. In the creative process, the team sent an international consultant as writer and a professional well-known photographer to travel across the country to 'find' the invisible people, interviewed them and take their photographs to be featured in this fancy book. This book is comprised of more than 30 personal stories of those people who were seen as not reached out by the government development intervention, like PNPM *Mandiri* or other similar programs. The narratives of their stories evolve around the same line, namely their existence that is ignored, their despair, and their difficulties in accessing government support. They are, among

⁴⁵ *Musyawarah Antar Desa* or inter-village meeting was a predetermined stage that the population target should follow in order to access the PNPM Rural's project fund.

⁴⁶ The Invisible People book can be accessed here http://psflibrary.org/catalog/repository/2546_Invisible_People.pdf

others, female head of the family, victims of religious conflicts, disable people, female sex workers, indigenous people, ethnic minority and HIV/AIDS survivors. Social characteristics of the people featured in this book showed the crystallization of 'the excluded' in Indonesian context that face multiple barriers to engage in development project and thus was understood as their inability to benefit from development's good will.

PNPM *Peduli* project was officially launched in June 2011 (PSF, 2012a). Branded as government-led program, financed by a group of donor countries, managed by the World Bank and implemented by a network of NGOs at the local level, this project intended to bring these marginalized people into Development project to be empowered and to be trained in order to help themselves out from poverty. Based on the earlier research findings (Akatiga, 2010), this project hypothesized that NGOs (in project context, it refers as CSOs) have comparative advantage to reach and to empower marginalized group *if* they have adequate capacities to empower these groups. Based on the argument of comparative advantage like what Jessica Matthew (1997) argues that *"At a time of accelerating change, NGOs are quicker than governments to respond to new demands and opportunities. Internationally, in both the poorest and richest countries, NGOs, when adequately funded, can outperform government in the delivery of many public services... And they are better than governments at dealing with problems that grow slowly and affect society through their cumulative effects on individuals ..."* (p. 63), PNPM *Peduli* project established its program architecture by relying on national NGOs that already have existing networks with local NGOs to implement the program. Therefore, unlike other variations of PNPM *Mandiri* projects, which normally implemented by government agencies, PNPM *Peduli* project selected Indonesian NGOs to be its implementing agencies, as they were called – "partner", through a competitive selection process. In the later stage, these national NGOs were called Executing Organizations ("EO"), which indicated less and less reference as equal partner; but emphasizing NGOs role as development project implementers.

Directly channeling development aid became the core design element in this project. National NGOs and its local NGO networks were built into project architecture through providing *"on-granting to intermediary NGOs and philanthropies that then on-granting to grass-root organization working on poverty"* (PSF, 2009). This new initiative was designed with a new feature for the World Bank-managed

project, that involve NGO to implement various project, as oppose to the generic approach through contracting private firms to recruit individual facilitators. In addition, the decision to invite NGOs to be part of this massive empowerment project has been understood as a “collaborative innovation” in solving the problem of poverty. The design document explicitly mentioned that project like PNPM *Peduli* was built on “*the need to promote greater involvement of civil society organization*” because the CSOs have “*comparative advantage in reaching and working with and for these groups at the grassroots level in a way that large poverty programs are often not able to*” (PSF, 2010: 3). By mid-January 2010, PNPM *Peduli* project started its first kick-off in designing the whole project machinery upon received confirmation that about more than 4 million USD was initially prepared to enroll the project to start (PSF, 2012a). Overall project architecture also included providing grant to three large national grant-making organizations that have the status of non-government organization, which successfully win in the competitive bidding process (PSF, 2010). Main tasks of these organizations were basically only two, which were: (1) To strengthen the capacity of their local NGOs partners – in total of 69 local NGOs – through providing funds and implement capacity building activities for these local NGOs, which have been designed by the Bank’s consultant for them; and (2) monitored activities done by their local NGO partners.

For many years, the relationship between the World Bank and NGO has been characterized with uneasiness and complicated tensions rather than collaborative approach in carrying out development project. Nonetheless, increasing neoliberalism, together with structural adjustment policies advised by Bretton Wood institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, has contributed in the withdrawal on the role of state and give more space to private entities. In this case, NGO also can be seen as private that often supplement or replace the function of the government. Furthermore, continued frustration and distrust among international donors due to high level of state’s corruption combined with authoritarian ruling regime has fueled growing support towards NGOs due to the image of representing beneficiaries and view of their role as innovator in terms of approach and the way of delivering development to the poor (Barr et al., 2005; Gill, 1997; Lewis, 2005a; Murray and Overton, 2011). For that reason, as Whitelum (2003) describes that in mid 1970s, donor agencies used NGOs to support poverty alleviation initiatives through increased NGO contracts to do

development works. By contracting NGO, this was aligned with promoting liberal discourse and commercialization of development.

In her article, Mercer (2002) argues about the impacts of increased donor funding on NGO's internal bureaucratization which include organizational/management reform as well as professionalization, which have led to less transparent NGO operation as downward accountability to their local constituents (Bebbington, 1997; Farrington and Lewis, 1993; Gideon, 1998). Echoing to Mercer's argument, White (1999) also raised similar concerns that the NGOs tend to make themselves more formal by adopting structured and bureaucratic procedures as required by their donor, in which contribute to their conservatism and self-protection character of state agencies. Kamstra & Schulpen (2015) argue that these days NGOs are hierarchically structured non-membership based organization, working with professional staffs, using mostly non-confrontational strategies and depending on donors' funding for most of their income. They conclude that there are a number of reasons why many NGOs opt to pursue non-confrontational approach. First and the foremost is that confrontational approach might risking their close relationship with the state bureaucrats whom they tried to influence. Secondly, since many donor agencies also cooperate with the state, and restoring confrontational approach might also damage their financial security, as their donor will not approve such strategies. In addition to that, Craig & Porter (2006) also commented that "NGO terminology" is common in western debate on neoliberal notion of democracy and development, which features particular jargons like 'sustainability', 'empowerment', and 'good governance'.

Despite Nelson (1995) argues that the World Bank gradually has improved its relationship with NGO over the years, but Whitelum (2003) instead says otherwise. Whitelum describes that the Bank treats NGO as single representation of CSO, in which further lead to 'comfortable relationship' between NGO, States and donors as Hulme and Edwards calls (2015; 1997) as diminishing the critical role of NGOs in contesting and challenging dominant development paradigm. For donor like the World Bank what interests them is to 'partner' with community development NGO that deliver service, especially education, health and small-scale income generating activities. For this type of NGOs, their main objectives were providing direct basic services to the grassroot community without changing power structure, as well as seek to expand the choice and relationship between

groups of people at the local level. Further Whitelum added that such relationship risks NGO to be part of the civil society actors that sustain the hegemony of ruling elites, ideas, and paradigms. For development agencies and international donors often see NGOs as what governments are not: free from heavy bureaucracies, relatively flexible and open to innovation, more effective as well as faster in implementing development intervention, and their ability to identify and to respond to what the grass-root's needs (Edwards and Hulme, 1998; Fowler, 1991). These are some of the reasons, why World Bank noted that NGOs *"have become an important force in the development process (mitigating) the cost of developing countries' institutional weakness"* (Clarke, 1998: 6).

For certain type of NGO, as pointed above, serving the purpose of privatizing state function (Schuller, 2007) due to the argument of inefficient and unreliable state often used as a justification of massive aid flow to improve service delivery through NGO. For that reason, NGO can be seen as providing strong legitimacy to neoliberal globalization idea by filling the 'gaps' left by the state's social service due to structural adjustment policies (Schuller, 2009). Not only that, NGOs also function as *'buffer between the elite and the impoverished mass'* which can reinforce *'institutional barrier against local participation and priority setting'* (Schuller, 2009: 85). Furthermore Forte argues that *"in order to NGOs to intervene and take on a more prominent role, something else is required for their work to be carried out, in addition to gain visibility, attracting funding and support from the powerful institution, and being well placed to capitalize on the opportunities created by neoliberal structural adjustment"* (Forte, 2014: 12), and for that reason they need what is described as 'needy subject' that are constructed from poverty and stories of discrimination (Timmer, 2010).

Literatures about Indonesian NGO have been written extensively, in terms of political ideology, strategies, accountability, role and organizational structure, or their relationship with their donor (Antlöv et al., 2010, 2012; Aspinall, 2005; Beittinger-Lee, 2009; Eldridge, 1997; Fakhri, 1991; Hadiwinata, 2003; Kamstra and Schulpen, 2015; Mietzner and Aspinall, 2010). Eddyono (2015) notes that during Suharto's regimen, the English term for 'non-government organization' was a controversial one, which was assumed as anti-government perspective. For that reason English-termed NGO is referred to a more local term LSM (*Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat*) or LPSM and translated as self-reliant community development organization (Aspinall, 2005; Eldridge, 1989; Fakhri, 1995). Since the fall of New

Order regime, many NGO referred themselves as *Ornop* (*Organisasi Non-Pemerintah*) as a direct translation from NGOs, as Hadiwinata (2003) believes to show their independence from the government. And along with more contemporary discourse of civil society that started to grow as part of donors' support to democratization (Aspinall, 2005; Beittinger-Lee, 2009), the NGOs are commonly associated with CSO (Aspinall, 2005), in which to some extent also lead to criticism towards their dependency to international aid.

NGO's dependency on international aid becomes a source of its criticism. Brown & Korten (1989) and Fisher (1997) see that NGO often idealized as 'doing good' (Ziveth, 1991) that help others for good reason, not for profit nor politics. These critics add that the idealization of NGOs as apolitical participants in development arena has led theorists and practitioners to expect such from them. For that idealized role, NGOs commonly used by development agencies and international donor to pursue 'new policy agenda', as a heterogeneous policy package which based on neoliberal economics and liberal democratic theory (Biggs and Neame, 1996; Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Moore, 1993; Robinson, 1993). In this view, NGOs are seen to have capacity to efficiently deliver trainings and skills to help individuals and community for fierce market competition. These NGOs are also believed to be able to provide welfare service to those who are marginalized by the market. Lastly, they are seen as important actors in realizing democratization and the growth of robust civil society. Those aspects of NGOs roles in society are seen as critical importance of the growth of neoliberal economic policies (Fowler, 1991; Frantz, 1987; Hyden, 1998). Fisher (1997) has warned depoliticizing NGOs by actively engaging in current development paradigm that promoted by development agencies and donor institutions – as oppose to NGOs' potential as viable channel to pursue alternative to development – just as the 'development apparatus' did while practicing development by treating local conditions as 'problems'. These 'problems' are represented in a certain way so it required technical and not structural or political solution (Ferguson, 1990) via development intervention.

In describing my engagement in Development project as its 'apparatuses' (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1990), I follow what Mosse (2005) has described in his book "Cultivating Development" about how development policy is being formulated. He mentions that there are two opposing views on designing

Development policy, which able to help us in understanding the relationship between the policy discourse and field practices. First is instrumental view that usual concern in defining the problem and implement program to answer identified problem. Mosse notes that international development agenda has shifted its focus "*from narrow technology-led-micro-managed project to the wider programme goals of sector and state level reform...*", in which require more sophisticated way of connecting development intervention with the expected outcome (p.3). Mosse further continues that international development regime is characterized by new managerialism underlined by two complementing trend, narrowing the ends through quantification of results, targets, and widening the means. The second is critical views that perceive policy as "*rationalizing technical discourse concealing hidden purpose of bureaucratic power or dominance, which are the true political intent of development*" (p.2). Further, Mosse argues that development's rational model store cognitive control and social regulation; they enhance the capacity and expand bureaucratic power (particularly over marginal areas and people); they reproduce hierarchies of knowledge (scientific over indigenous) and society (developer over 'to be developed').

The core project team that I was part of was comprised of 6 personnel. We were: the program coordinator that was responsible for the overall project operation; two senior advisors – each for monitoring and evaluation (hereafter M&E) and capacity building (hereafter CB); two analysts – each for monitoring evaluation and operation; and a program assistant. All senior positions in the project filled by international consultants and the lower ones filled by local staff, including myself and two other local staffs. Despite the team consisted of six, but on day-to-day basis, only three of us that run the whole operations, which includes project reporting routines; regular or irregular meetings with government, implementing NGOs, donors, or internal World Bank team members; conducted various missions – monitoring mission, VIP visits, media visit or government visits; implemented workshops, seminars, conferences, and other similar activities; and carried out studies and evaluations. The role of these international consultants became so critical in shaping the project policy and direction. Mosse (2005) cited Wood (1998) by referring consultant as "*...significant framer of knowledge, discourse and the legitimization for allocating sets of resources in particular way*" (p.45) in which in the context on PNPM *Peduli*, their knowledge and particular sets of skills were

crucial for steering the project implementation in order to achieve what the project development objective promise to deliver, which is *“to strengthen the capacities of Indonesian CSOs to reach and empower marginalized groups to improve their socio-economic condition”* (PSF, 2011).

PNPM *Peduli* was designed to fill the gap that the mainstream community empowerment program was unable to address, which was bring the marginalized groups into the participatory process of local development planning. One of the main reasons of failing to include marginalized group in the mainstream development project, caused by overloaded administrative burden that project facilitators have to focus on. As a result, the inclusion of marginalized group into generic community empowerment project was overlooked. For that reason, the decision to develop new project architecture by involving NGO in project delivery was expressed in the PNPM *Peduli* design note – presented in front of the Joint Management Committee (JMC) in 2010 – trough open up a dedicated funding stream so the Bank, on behalf of the Indonesian government, was able to *“...facilitate cooperation with CSO in order to target gaps in reaching the most marginalized”* (PSF, 2010). This could channel approach to complement mainstream poverty reduction program that mostly implemented by government agencies. Not only that, the strategy to involve CSO – which is used interchangeably with the term NGO – also to contribute to *“institutional strengthening of local organizations”* (p. 5) which have been longstanding focus of donors’ interest aftermath the fall of authoritarian regime. Focusing on the NGOs’ institutional strengthening, it reminds us with Matthews’ earlier argument (1997) about NGOs efficiency *if adequately funded*, in this case to implement development project. The landscape of weak NGOs, combined with lack of financial resources (Scanlon and Alawiyah, 2015), have created a problem solution driven type of project like Mosse’s reflection on IBRFP project design that craft *“technical cause-effect models”* in which easily able to tailor different interest, point of view, and people for the purpose of the project. He then added that, *“To achieve this, the policy process requires ambiguous concepts like ‘participation’ which mediate or translate different divergent interest.”* (Mosse, 2005: 46)

Many studies about NGO and civil society in Indonesia focus on democratization and how NGOs play effective role in filling the gap where public services are absent or to some extent also replace government’s role (Schuller, 2007). Such studies also theorized variants and typologies of NGOs in Indonesia

based on what they do (Antlöv et al., 2012; Beittinger-Lee, 2009; Eldridge, 1989; Fakih, 1995; Hadiwinata, 2003; Lewis and Kanji, 2009; Mietzner and Aspinall, 2010). As an example, according to Eldridge's NGO typology (1989), the NGOs that involved in PNPM *Peduli* was type 1 model – “High-Level Partnership: Grassroot Development” or in short community development NGOs. These organizations mainly dealt with neoliberal institutions, like the World Bank, because of its useful arena for influencing policy and program. The other reason of selecting these types of NGO was because they have grassroot connections through their network but do not have radical empowerment objective. This type of NGO is keener to focus on technical issue and quick fix and distancing themselves from critical questions about the role of the Bank and its politics of development aid in developing countries. Moreover, not only with the Bank, such NGOs also have many contracts with Government and other donors to implement what have been fashioned, i.e. community development project. It was also part of the reason why the PNPM *Peduli* project deliberately selected this type of NGO as its ‘partner’ because of their familiarity with queries and demand from the donor institution, in addition to their ‘proven’ track record in managing donor funds with accountability standard. These NGOs are comfortable to discuss technical aspect of development planning, project management cycle, or monitoring and evaluation frameworks and at the same time also eager to contribute to change the Bank's development agenda (Whitelum, 2003). In this way, PNPM *Peduli* project then saw this type of NGO as a suitable vehicle to execute the project strategy by “*capitalizing on the comparative advantage of local CSOs in reaching and working with marginalized group*” (PSF, 2010: 5) as articulated in the 2010 project design document.

Growing donors' interest to focus on decentralization and democratization of southern state has understood as support the survival of NGO sector in many countries and Indonesia is no exception. Despite many NGOs showed their discomfortability while receive funds from the Bank, Whitelum's (2003) study shows that their believe to share their development vision in which could contribute to greater change in development landscape in Indonesia. Banks, Hulme & Edwards (2015) wrote that due to significant NGO growth, in which also associated with their close relationship with their beneficiaries, NGOs become the new ‘sweetheart’ of development (Barr et al., 2005; Gill, 1997; Hearn, 2007; Kamat, 2004; Lewis, 2005a; Murray and Overton, 2011) Banks et.al. further argue that

development aid has enabled NGOs to widen the scope of their delivery function, especially to those that Government failed to reach, namely the marginalized and excluded groups. Unfortunately, the expansion of NGOs' roles are channeled through streams that disconnect with deep process of political, economic and structural changes in which the disadvantage groups continue to search for alternative ways to challenge such dominant structure (Bebbington et al., 2007; Mercer, 2002; Rahman, 2006). At the other end, the Bank's intention to strengthen 'civil society' through this partnership model nurtures more compliant NGOs rather than genuine and critically reformist partners. Adding to Whitelum's study, Howell and Pearce (2000) also warned about the instrumentalization of NGO as neoliberal tool which justify donor's liberal blueprint that perceive Indonesian NGOs under Suharto's authoritarian regime as repressed thus consequently contributed to their lack of skills, knowledge and information. Such idea to 'strengthen civil society' as they cover a wide range of interventions, including creating enabling environment which oftentimes occurred through reforms – legal, bureaucracy, or governance – developing multistakeholder partnerships, and direct funding.

Despite Indonesian NGOs were seen as being curbed under Suharto's authoritarian regime; Antlov, Brinkerhoff and Rapp (2010) notes that as long as they did not challenge, criticize, contest ruling government in a politically active manner or limit themselves to community service delivery, they were usually tolerated. Adding to that, Antlov et.al., Mannin and Van Dierman (2003) argue that Indonesian NGOs were less organized and lack of capacity which could risk the quality of democratization process (Aspinall, 2004), unless such problems were addressed. Having said that, Whitelum (2003) found that the Bank's and donors' view about capacity is no more than technical skills to manage development projects which include negotiation and policy analysis and evaluation, program design, report writing, service delivery and other forms of programming skills. In her investigation, Whitelum argues that the Bank uses patronizing assumption by categorizing Indonesia's NGO in the 'infancy stage' as opposed to what it believes as 'capable' development organization based on modern organizational system and hierarchical structure. Further Withelum adds that the Bank's conceptualization of capacity building leads to an understanding of neoliberal ideal

of non-government organization which to be shaped as technical advisors, researchers, service delivery agent, or development contractors.

Considered as a breakthrough in World Bank conservative environment, PNPM *Peduli* project explicitly designed to forgo a new business model by financing the CSOs and ‘educate’ them to fulfill bureaucratic style processes, including its compliance with complicated fiduciary and safeguards requirement of the World Bank delivery model and at the same time also ensuring project cost delivery is at minimum level. To fulfill what was envisioned by PNPM *Peduli* project, the NGOs were trained to basically function like state bureaucracy through particular ‘capacity building’ idea in a way that has been problematically identified earlier, just as Whitelum’s (2003) has previously argued above. This explicit intention is articulated in the project concept note that refers ‘capacity building to the NGO as “... include developing activity work plans and budgets, conducting monitoring and evaluation, and in reporting on sub-grant funds and activities. The sub-granted CSO/branches may also receive training on issues such as fiduciary management, fundraising, proposal writing, organizational learning, and governance and transparency.” (PSF, 2010: 7) In order to carry out such activities, budget allocated to address the lack of NGO’s capacity was dedicated to up to 20% of the total funding (2010: 7). Nevertheless, it was also said that the project to still maintain a ‘light touch’ approach by operationalizing through the NGOs’ existing structures and processes, which often is portrayed as a way to capitalize the NGOs strategic advantage in working with and for the most marginalized population.

Since the beginning, the idea of working with ‘marginalized groups’ was never been clearly articulated. Despite the very rough understanding of ‘marginalized group’, as defined by earlier study, PNPM *Peduli* project never comprehensively specified to whom this project would benefit. Rather than developing solid criteria about the target groups, the project concept note instead throw assorted types of groups that variably describe and categorize the poor with particular characteristics such as “*street children, orphans, exploited children who may be sexually abused, youth in conflict with the law of suffering drug abuse, female headed household, victims of domestic violence and of community abuse, sex workers, victims of conflict, people living with HIV and AIDS, people living with disability related to leprosy, poor ethnic minorities, handicapped persons and other disabilities, garbage collectors, pedicab drivers, domestic workers subject to exploitation, poor migrant workers, trafficked*

persons, transgendered persons, street beggars, landless farmers, rural fisher folk, poor plantation laborer and poor indigenous people." (PSF, 2010: 8) Unfortunately, this assorted groups of the poor that were specified in this concept document did not come from any kind of research; instead, the target groups nomination was proposed by the local NGOs that have been pre-selected through the competitive process in parallel with the preparation of the project design. While the definition of "marginalized groups" was never been clearly defined since the initial conceptualization of the project, this term became a blanket terminology to include all kinds of groups' variety under the category of the poor.

Beside focus on strengthening the capacity of local-level NGOs, PNPM *Peduli* project was also allowing their implementing partner to freely "*address specific and identified needs of a marginalized individual or community and directly provide for this need*"(PSF, 2010: 7). The identified needs as specified in the project concept document includes hands out charity model goods provision, such as purchasing "*equipment for disabled persons or medicine for people suffering from infectious or terminal diseases*"; and "empowerment" activities that encourage "*individuals to participate ... to effectively advocate or articulate their individual needs to those who can influence outcomes.*" At the end, listed activities shall be able to capture the aspiration of marginalized groups in order to ensure that they would be integrated "*into mainstream society so that they can fully participate.*" (p.7) Unfortunately, as this project was supposedly "driven" by the NGOs, activities that had the potential to challenge dominant structure and power relation were rather ignored and left uninterrogated. The project design mentioned straightforwardly that "*Sub grants will not support the following: revolving funds; micro-credit programs; charity nor provide welfare payment; [...]; political activities, purchase of land; activities involving major construction works; and the purchase of large items ...*" (p.7). Project financing for local activities implementation were claimed as what it was called "*open menu*" with certain "*negative list*", in which implied to any kind of activities that "needed" by the marginalized people, but not activities that are potentially disrupting local structure. For example: activities that involve the indigenous people, particularly the *Suku Anak Dalam* – nomadic and semi-nomadic groups of Sumatran rainforest – that are displaced by the palm oil plantations in Jambi province were focused on teaching them how to plant rubber, to farm fish and goat and to sell them; rather than organizing claims or demand against land distribution policy. Often, these

small-scale activities were those types that able to give direct and short-term benefit in order to sustain the temporary livelihood of this group due to the corrosive damage that structurally embedded in the local power system which the NGO alone is unable to solve. As a result, most activities that were implemented on the ground evolved around small scale economic activities, ranging from snack making, sewing class, goat farming, rubber nursery, fish farming, laundry, selling phone cards, cooking and baking class, which persuade the marginalized group to directly engage with market system. Despite so, small-scale economic activities were comprised of more than 80% from the total project activities (PSF, 2013a).

Despite PNPM *Peduli* project was formally launched in 2011, engineering the development project had been carried out since June 2010, when the project team started to map out potential NGOs at the national level as the project’s eligible grant recipient. A set of selection criteria and requirements have been established rigidly in project design document which focus on the administration criteria rather than credible track record in working with complex issues of “marginalization”. Focus on just administrative ‘accountability’ was explicitly mentioned in the design document as the following “...*have documented external audit report for the past two years; have an Operational Manual outlining clear standard financial and operational procedures for program and financial management; Be willing and able to establish a separate account in the name of the Project or have an accounting system to adequately separate Project funds; and Be willing and able to be audited by an external independent auditor on an annual basis for the duration of the Grant Agreement.*” Besides that, the design document also specified ‘particular’ experience required to receive project fund which was related with their capacity and experience namely “[E]stablished and strong working partnership with local CSOs working supporting poverty reduction activities to targeted marginalized groups; Able to identify potential CSO projects and activities consistent with the objectives of PNPM *Peduli* in reaching the most marginalized; Demonstrated experience strengthening the capacity of local CSO networks evidenced by reference letters from recipient for recent programs; Demonstrated experience in grant making to local CSO and existing grantees carrying out relevant project activities; Capacity and willingness to upscale support for local CSOs over time through increased number and reach of sub-grants; and Demonstrated staffing and resources that will be allocated (either existing or contracted for the project purpose) to ensure on-granting is well managed.” (PSF, 2010: 11–2).

Due to strong administrative requirement from the selection process, PNPM *Peduli* project finally selected three national-level NGOs, which reflected what Antlov, Ibrahim & Van Tuijl (2012) describe about them which are centralistic and urban, where majority of them based in Java and Jakarta. They are also found to be elitist and middle class, where many NGOs are often formed by powerful middle class persons with university degree, often graduated from the West, but has limited knowledge on grass-root mobilization (Sidel, 2005). Furthermore, they are also detached from the everyday reality of common people as well as sectoral and fragmented; often lack of focus and ideology. These three organizations were well known Indonesian NGOs that have longstanding experience in running donor-funded projects and have mastered in donor-style accountability reporting that required practices in filling what data in which format. Each national NGOs were free to select their own local NGO partners, including carrying out their own competitive selection process, to whom they would finance to carry out development activities with the marginalized groups. These were national NGOs that had direct relationship with the World Bank as the project management team, but not with the donors nor the national government.

A few months after PNPM *Peduli* project activities were implemented on the ground with a wide range of target beneficiary groups; the whole project organs, including the World Bank, national NGO partners, national government and donor representatives hold its first *Management Retreat* in April 2012 in order to determine project strategic directions. The report of this retreat emphasis on the uniqueness of PNPM *Peduli* that was believed as the main motivation why they were all together, namely “*The Power of Dreams – enabling target groups to achieve their aspirations; The Power of Motivation – enabling vulnerable groups to advance and move forwards to improve their lives and to live in dignity; and The Power of Togetherness – Enabling vulnerable groups to fulfill their aspiration, by acting collectively to assist each through gotong royong, or mutual assistance*” (PSF, 2012b: 3). Not only refreshed the project’s underlying motivation, the team also listed various characteristics that were perceived as leading to marginalization experienced by the target population gathered from the team’s experience while implementing the project for a few months. While acknowledging that marginalization is multidimensional, the national team neglected that such marginalization is not only about poverty perse. Moreover, reflecting from a short duration of implementation, they noted that

while majority of the target population are poor, but they are not necessarily the poorest which often experience various kinds of discrimination that lead to unfavorable way of being treated by the state and the societies. Furthermore, by linking marginalization with social and economic exclusion, PNPM *Peduli* national project teams highlighted a number of attributes that illustrate their understanding of social and economic exclusion as *"cannot access services available to others; are not present in government data; face stigma and negative stereotyping; do not participate in the community; cannot access the justice system; are at risk of being exploited or abused; and have no individual bargaining power."* (p.4).

Identifying 'exclusion' as characteristic of PNPM *Peduli*'s beneficiaries also justifies the causes that made them excluded, in particular, by emphasizing on the economic dimension of exclusion. The emphasis on economic dimension of exclusion focuses on *"lack of skills to improve livelihood", "no access to credit", "no productive assets"* and *"engaged in livelihood activities that reinforced their marginalized status"* (p.4). In addition to such economic dimension, the project team also repeatedly pointed out on discrimination, whether it was by state or society, which often indistinguishable and blur in terms of finding the causal relationship (p.4). The economic dimension of exclusion also apparent in how PNPM *Peduli* project viewed its target population which was described as *"under-utilized national asset"*, despite its claim that it avoided charity-based model. Having said that, the focus on economic aspects of exclusion remains dominant than the social and political aspect as PNPM *Peduli* project interpreted citizen's right simply derived from expectation to make valuable contribution to the society through their potentials, namely skills, knowledge, information and experience. For that reason, PNPM *Peduli* was translated as *"'unlocking' this potential, so that individuals become more self-reliant, live more dignified lives and make a positive contribution to Indonesian society."* (p.4) which the definition of 'unlocking' the self-potential here further lead to the discovery of 'social inclusion' to tackle these marginalized people that experience socio-economic exclusion.

5.3. REVIEW ON LITERATURE ABOUT “SOCIAL EXCLUSION” AS PRESENTED IN THIS THESIS

In social policy discourse, the concept of “social exclusion” remains highly debatable and continues to evolve. With increasing global trend of human mobility across borders and widening gap of inequality, the concept of social exclusion has potential that offers new lens in explaining multidimensional factors of inequality. This concept itself originated from European discourse, in particular France that emerged after the World War II. Belánd (2007) writes at that time, the social insurance system utilized in modern French welfare state was based on “occupational solidarity” (p.126) which underlined the development of social exclusion concept that can be found as early as 1965. In his writing, Belánd described that this notion focuses on people who cannot enjoy the positive consequences of economic progress due to their irresponsible behavior, in which emphasizes on personal and individual responsibility. It was based on a book titled *L'Exclusion Sociale: Etude de la marginalité dans le sociétés occidentales* (Social Exclusion: The Study of Marginality in Western Society), written by a social commentator, Jean Klanfer in 1965. Furthermore, the discourse of “social exclusion” gained an increased attention as it was popularized by Rene Lenoir in 1974 in his book *Les Exclus: Un Français sur dix* that defines socially excluded people as those who were separated from mainstream society because they were not engaged in the social insurance system in the French welfare state due to various factors such as disability, mental illness and poverty (Silver, 1994) which influence their capacity to participate in labor market.

Citing Silver (1994), De Haan (1999) pointed out that that concept of poverty, which was very much British-centered and due to its association with Christian charity as well as utilitarian liberalism, was never been popular under the French discourse. Adding to that, Belánd (2007) expands his elaboration on the French-style “social exclusion” during the year of 1980s-1990s, while the economic crisis combined with increasing tendencies of racism and discrimination because of socio and political crisis has resulted in new type of social disadvantage and social problem, such as unemployment, ghettoization, and fundamental changes in family life (Cannan, 1997). As a result, this has modified the understanding of early definition of “social exclusion”. In this period, “social exclusion” was defined based

on lack of social integration because of long term of unemployment, thus limited or unrecognized their rights to citizenship (Mathieson et al., 2008). This, under the French Republican model of integration that based on citizenship and social solidarity, was then considered as a threat (Béland, 2007). In this context, the excluded persons like drug user, suicidal, physically and mentally disable, and homeless were considered as the social misfits or the marginalized people (Saith, 2001).

Not only in France, the use of “social exclusion” in many European states has dominating the public policy discourse and is increasingly used to replace the notion of ‘poverty’ as the Union’s collective concerns. The concept of “social exclusion” was adopted widely across European Union states as the institutionalization of anti-poverty discourse (Du Toit, 2004) along with the growing level of unemployment and social stability because of deregulation, privatization and declined public spending. Following to that, this concept also commonly used in international development context since 1995 World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) in Copenhagen (Beall and Piron, 2005) led by the United Nations which explicitly called for addressing social problems that include “poverty, unemployment and social exclusion”⁴⁷. This has been marked by a number of studies carried out by The International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS) and United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) that highlights what Singer (1997) reports as ‘pattern and cause of social exclusion’. Likewise, Silver & Miller (2003) commented that European conceptualization of social exclusion was rather different than the concept of poverty. They continue that while poverty concerns with distributional issues of income, “social exclusion” focuses on relational processes of denying participation, solidarity and access. Following Silver’s earlier work (1994), Silver and Miller emphasized on ‘solidarity’ as the keyword of ‘the rupture of social bonds’ was highlighted as the main cause of social exclusion in French society. Silver adds that social contracts within the French society underline the connection with its citizen that materialized into reciprocal relationship. Increasing use of “social exclusion” to replace the notion of poverty in European states was strongly signaled by the 3rd EU’s “anti-poverty program” that was gradually shifted into fight against social exclusion, which describes, “to

⁴⁷ Annex I, point number 2, Report of the World Summit on Social Development

foster the economic and social integration of the least privilege group" that Silver & Miller (2003) argue as partly political.

Internationally advocated by some donor countries and multilateral development agencies, there are growing interests to incorporate the discourse of "social exclusion" in development agenda as a new approach to tackle social problem around poverty. Silver (1994) argues that concept of "social exclusion" sometimes broadly understood and increasingly used to replace poverty as a more political problem associated with the market forces. According to Silver, the emergence of "social exclusion" discourse challenges the main assumption of welfare state system, which indicated by state's decreasing ability to guarantee the welfare of its citizens. Increasing uncertainty, as a result of decreasing state's ability or its will, further make the social protection system as an uncertain condition (Syahra, 2010). Silver (1994) and Levitas (2004) argue that the concept of "social exclusion" is versatile because it can be used to refer different meaning in a different context; and it has the advantage of emphasizing social issues in which traditional concept of poverty is unable to explain.

As a contemporary concept, "social exclusion" is seen as less familiar in comparison to the more established concept of poverty. Béland (2007) notes that "social exclusion" can be distinguished cognitively from other concepts to define social issues. He emphasizes strong biographical meaning on "social exclusion" due to its association with subjective and personal experience of social and economic isolation. Further he added that "social exclusion" is understood based on horizontal metaphor, unlike the idea of vertical mobility when explaining income-based inequality. This is because people are associated with 'in' and 'out' rather than 'up' and 'down' in a welfare category. Despite some disagreements that question whether or not "social exclusion" can be used to explain poverty in developing countries; some scholars indicate its possibility as a new concept to be translated into the context of developing countries. De Haan and Maxwell (1998) argue that "social exclusion" is no longer used solely as descriptive identifier to explain the situation that narrowly defined social groups. They added that "social exclusion" now encompasses "catch-all" term for wide range of discriminatory and exclusionary processes that contribute to "deprivation". Thus, "social exclusion" should be seen as an extension to widely understand multidimensional poverty beyond the monetary focus (de Haan, 1998) and not only in narrower term, "social

exclusion" which is commonly understood as direct cause of poverty (de Haan and Dubey, 2003).

To accommodate the complexity and fluidity of this concept into various context, de Haan (1999) tries to define "social exclusion" as *"the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live"* (p.6). Unlike De Haan that attempts to locate "social exclusion" in a wider scope, Silver and Miller (2003) associate "social exclusion" in a more contemporary European community as rupture of social bonding, which lead to lower participation, access and solidarity among community members. They argue that at the community level, "social exclusion" is demonstrated by low cohesion and lack of social integration; and at individual level, it is indicated by personal inability to participate and to develop meaningful social relationship. In respond to such description, De Haan (2001) elaborates two key characteristics of "social exclusion" that moved away from such static description of deprivation. First is the multidimensionality that means people could be excluded in various forms and situation also its multidimensional forms of deprivation that people experience differently at the same time in different spheres. Secondly, De Haan highlights a strong focus on the relationship and processes that cause deprivation along with the formation of groups in human society, which often characterized with exclusion of others. What De Haan tries to do here is to convince us that "social exclusion" is more than just mere static description of a situation as being deprived, but instead focuses the analysis of "social exclusion" around social relations and dynamic processes that shape and become integral part of deprivation.

Hickey & Du Toit (2007) write that some proponents of this concept believe that its approaches are able to include both relational and distribution features in poverty analysis (Bhalla and Lapeyre, 1997; de Haan, 1999; Kabeer, 2015). Silver's (1994) conception of "social exclusion" contrasts the dichotomization between the excluded and the included as *"exclusion arises from the interplay of class, status and political power"* that to some extend benefit the included (Hickey and Du Toit, 2007). Hickey and Du Toit add that this dominant view implies that *"the excluded are therefore simultaneously outsider and dominated"*. This perspective resonates with Kabeer's (2000) example that economic disadvantage and forms of symbolic devaluation that are reproduced in social life put low caste Indian in a condition of exclusion. Kabeer then add that not only economic and socio-cultural

impoverishment, but also social inequality that underlines their poverty. For Kabeer, “social exclusion” is the product of combination between various processes, namely institutional processes, group dynamics and social practices, which are produced through active socioeconomic process rather “*anonymous processes of impoverishment and marginalization*” (Kabeer, 2000: 3).

Despite some scholars claimed that the notion of “social exclusion” is possible to be translated into the context of developing countries (de Haan, 1999, 2001), Saith (2001) argues that there is limited attempt to develop a new definition of “social exclusion” that fits the context of post-colonial states. Dominant discourse on “social exclusion” remains relying on its European conception as mentioned in EU’s policy documents that emphasized on “*relation to the social rights of citizens ... to a certain basic standard of living and to participation in the major social and occupational opportunities of the society*” (Rodgers et al., 1995: 2) which unapplicable to explain heterogenous and complex realities in many states of the southern hemisphere. Scholars like Whelan et.al. (2002) also Gore & Figueiredo (1997) utilized employment axis as the entry point in some “social exclusion” researches in which employment status is assumed to be correlated with exclusion in different aspects, for instance the relationship to labour market link to a certain belonging in class, income, savings, and other type of deprivation.

5.3.1. Criticism on “Social Exclusion”

As emerging new concept that increasingly used by many multilateral and bilateral development agencies, “social exclusion” is not free from sharp criticism. Questions and debates around whether “social exclusion” does make any sense in a context where poor and disadvantaged population are the majority in many developing countries. Silver (1994) criticizes “social exclusion” as evocative expression that is ambiguous, multidimensional and elastic; in which can be defined in many different ways and can be deployed for various political purpose. Adding to Silver’s criticism, Belánd (2007) points out that the dominant discourse about “social exclusion” has instead legitimizing modest social programs that rarely challenge liberal rationale which encourage citizens to be dependent on market mechanism. On similar note, Du Toit (2004) comments that “social exclusion” sticks to its original meaning, where contextual discussion lies on

poverty in homogenous society in wealthier countries. He highlights the vagueness of "social exclusion" in which lead to various interpretations depends on what meanings are chosen. According to Du Toit, it is unlikely to extract solid analytical rigorousness from "social exclusion" discourse due to its *quasi-moral* political construction that underlies its ideological baggage, especially its patronizing and normative assumption.

Hickey and Du Toit (2007) point out that growing criticisms towards the concept of "social exclusion" indicate its late acceptance in development discourse. Moreover, they show a number of problems that repeat the argument of moral meta-narrative that configures various researches on "social exclusion". With such moral narrative, it produces binary assumption about the goodness of "inclusion" and at the same time uncritically accept that "exclusion" is necessarily bad. In addition, it does not further interrogate how society is understood in the duality of exclusion/inclusion complex. Moreover, this moral construction ignores how inclusion too can be problematic, disempowering and perpetuate injustice. Other than that, Hickey and Du Toit also mention that understanding of "social exclusion" also lacks an inherent focus on agency, in which potentially portraying the excluded as helpless victims. This type of 'structuralist' bias also risks the expectation that the excluded people would be able to pull themselves out of desperation. They further continue that "social exclusion" researches tend to focus also on the causal process leading to deprivation, in which rendering the concept suitable in any context (Ruggeri-Laderchi et al., 2003). Both authors criticize dominant "social exclusion" discourse that stressed the enduring effect of poverty rather than its relational features. This kind of focus thus pulls away poverty analysis from an understanding how power relation underlines poverty. In addition to that, seeing "social exclusion" in this way also disconnects the forms of exploitation in which people are impoverished in wider political economy (Byrne, 1999: 44–59). Moreover, they argue that such notion of "social exclusion" is poorly constituted to tackle issues around various types of inclusion or relations that occurred between people and different political, economic, social process and structures (Hickey and Du Toit, 2007).

As repeatedly mentioned, "social exclusion" is commonly explored in the context of richer industrialized countries. In that context, "social exclusion" approach derived from universal conception of welfare state, which focus on the

institution and their role in solving the problem poverty in these countries. Some scholars that focus to discuss “social exclusion” are commonly agree on its multidimensionality aspect that highlights on difficulties in explaining “social exclusion” and its complexity. Scholars like Atkinson (1998; 2000); Silver (1994, 2015); Byrne (1999); De Haan (1998, 1999, 2000); Saith (2001); Levitas (2004); and many others emphasize that multidimensionality in “social exclusion” refers to multiple sources of deprivation. Shucksmith and Chapman (1998) describe “social exclusion” as a *“multi-dimensional dynamic concept, which refers to a breakdown or malfunctioning of the major societal system that should be guarantee the social integration of the individual or household”* (p. 230) In this view, discrimination and other form of “social exclusion” are understood as superfluous social factors that restrict *“normal participation in the workings of an economy that is seen as value-free and intrinsically neutral”* (Du Toit, 2004: 1002).

De Haan (2001) defines that being excluded and included are not mutually exclusive; people can be excluded in one domain and include in other at the same time. This view followed by Jackson (1999) that criticizes the current understanding of “social exclusion” by giving example on the context of women in which are not categorically excluded, but included in such as way into extractive system, for instance in reproductive labor. She also points out that women’s marginality leads to a condition where women can organize themselves for collective action. She disagrees on how “social exclusion” treats its analytical foci, in which tend to concentrate on categorical groups. She further continues that binary classification of exclusion and inclusion is problematic in itself. Despite agrees with Jackson’s arguments, De Haan (1999) disagrees with Jackson’s view about “social exclusion” on bounded group. De Haan argues that “social exclusion” debate should indeed focus on societal relation and its central focus should lies on the process through which people are being deprived.

5.3.2. Three Paradigms to understand “Social Exclusion”

Among many scholars that focus on themes on “social exclusion”, Hilary Silver has offered a way to analyze and to understand “social exclusion”. In her 1994’s work, she conceptualized three paradigms on “social exclusion” that are helpful and often used as main reference (de Haan, 1999, 2000) to unpack how

"social exclusion" is being understood. These three paradigms on "social exclusion" can be identified based on their theoretical perspective, political ideologies and national discourse it responds to. Initially, Silver argues, "*Those unfamiliar with the term exclusion often ask the question 'exclusion from what?'*" (1994: 541) and the question of 'exclusion from what' become the core focus on talking about "social exclusion". This question lays foundation to a more fundamental understanding as the problem of social order during the period of change in society. Silver points out that theories of 'insertion'; 'integration'; 'citizenship'; or 'solidarity' provide point of reference in differentiating these paradigmatic approaches to "social exclusion". According to Silver these three paradigms that are based on different political philosophy, which are: republicanism, liberalism and social democracy, provide different explanation on multiple form of social disadvantage and include theories of citizenship as well as racial-ethnic based inequality and poverty. Further Silver comments that since defining empirical reference is quite difficult; the notion of "social exclusion" is rarely elaborated in that regard.

First and the foremost is solidarity paradigm, which stem from the French Republican political thought. This paradigm believes that "*exclusion occurs when the social bond between the individual and society known as social solidarity breaks down.*" (p. 534) Here, 'social' order is conceived as external, moral, and normative, rather than grounded in individual, group or class interest. Furthermore, the relationship between individual and larger society is mediated in national consensus, collection conscience or general will within the institution. In the solidarity paradigm, the importance is on the way that cultural or moral boundaries between social groups are constructed in a binary manner, which define the social order. In such perspective, this can be seen as "deviant" versus "normal", in which exclusion can threatened or reinforce social cohesion. According to this paradigm, the inverse of exclusion is 'integration' and 'process of insertion'. This process implies to assimilate these groups into the dominant culture. In a more contemporary use, Silver argues that proponents of this perspective incorporate multicultural notions for solidarity, as the dominant culture also adjust to the minority and vice versa (Haut Conseil à l'Intégration, 1992, 1991). This perspective is heavily drawn on anthropology, sociology, ethnography and cultural studies, because their attention on exclusion as inherent nature in the solidarity of notion, race, ethnicity, locality

and other cultural or primordial ties that unleash boundaries between groups. Furthermore, for solidarity paradigm, conception of integration lies on group solidarity of cultural boundaries.

Secondly is specialization paradigm, which is commonly found in Anglo-American society that based on the political ideology of liberalism. In this paradigm, exclusion is understood as a consequence of specialization – social differentiation, economic division of labor and separation of sphere. Silver argues that in this paradigm, individuals are understood as different that lead to a specialization in market and social groups. For that reason, this specialization embraces high level of individualist method; despite the cause of events is not only because of individual choice, but the structure created by cooperating and competing individuals in market and association. Unlike the first paradigm, social order in this paradigm consists of voluntary exchanges between individuals with their own interest and motivation. This social order consists of separate and competing that lead to exchange and interdependence between them. According to Silver, in the social order, groups are voluntarily constituted by their members and alliance is always shifting and changing, depend on their interest and wishes. She also emphasizes contractual exchange of rights and obligations as well as separation of spheres in social life that lead to cultural and political pluralism in social group formation. Therefore, “social exclusion” in this solidarity paradigm caused by inadequate separation of social spheres that can be seen through rules, barrier to free movement and exchange between spheres.

In the solidarity paradigm, Silver argues that due to the existence of separate social spheres, “social exclusion” can have multiple cause and dimension. In this paradigm, individual freedom of choice is facilitated based on diverse personal values and psychological notes for engaging in social relations. As a result, this engagement could increase affiliations and loyalties across groups, in which might contribute to integration in societies. Silver sees boundaries that restrict the free movement is considered as ‘discrimination’. State institution becomes important to ensure the protection of individual form of impediment within the environment of group and market competition. Silver also adds that in solidarity paradigm it emphasis methodological individualism that treat group characteristic as individual attributes as well as focuses its analysis based on neo-classical economics theories also theories of political pluralism that intended to provides

policy proposal that oriented on skills, works disincentives, network and social capital to solve problem of exclusion.

Silver calls the third is monopoly paradigm, which is quite influential on European leftist orientation that perceives "social exclusion" as a consequence of the formation of monopolistic group. This paradigm is drawn from Weberian and Marxist ideology and sees social order as coercive and imposed through a set of hierarchical power relation. In this monopoly paradigm, it uses social democratic or conflict theory to analyze intertwined issues between class, status, and political power that serve the interest of the included. Silver comments that 'social closure' become a key concept in this paradigm, in which when institution and cultural distinction build boundaries to keep others out against their will and worsen inequality. "Social exclusion" from this perspective can be combated through citizenship and the extension of equal membership and full participation in the community. In this paradigm, source of integration is full citizenship based on social democracy as its political discourse.

Often, by definition application of "social exclusion" is contrasted with "social inclusion", in which seem to be zero-sum game (Silver, 1994). Silver criticizes those scholars who are focus on "social exclusion" only as dynamic processes and often overlook the structural outcome of such processes. For her, institutionalization of "social exclusion" may create a social boundary or permanent division between those who are in and out and become structural when it is confirmed through social relations and practices. What constitutes "social exclusion" in the context of Indonesia is somehow a combination of what Silver describe as 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' perspective. As an example, 'top-down' perspective views "social exclusion" as employment crisis, social policies and crisis in integrative social institution, in which caused by macro-sociological phenomena like modernity, globalization, or technological advancement. On the contrary, 'bottom-up' perspective of view "social exclusion" as crisis of community solidarity within micro sociological processes of assimilation that leads to social isolation. Unfortunately, what often occurred, particularly in Indonesia, that it tends to be sectoral and focus on specific population identified as being at risk of "social exclusion" due to its generalized global term (Silver, 1994: 548).

5.3.3. "Social Exclusion" and its dominant narrative

In many welfare-related literatures, "social exclusion", inequality and poverty are often conflated and used interchangeably to describe a situation where those of distinct identity who experience injustice. Often "social exclusion" is uncritically used to refer a certain condition where minority groups are unable to obtain basic needs and to access public services. According to Silver (2003), "social exclusion" can intersect with poverty, stem from a set of multiple, interrelated disadvantages that result in economic as well as social deprivation. Frequently, "social exclusion" also used to justify that "the poor" are not homogeneous and differentiated based on their identity such as gender, ethnicity or occupation (The World Bank, 2013). Likewise, "social exclusion" is used to categorically describe social groups that experience multiple deprivations in which leads to a state of being poor. Studies sponsored by multilateral development agencies on "social exclusion" focus on particular deprived groups, which measured by welfare related indicators, aim to find justification that make them to be excluded. Rather than use "social exclusion" as analytical lens (de Haan, 1999, 2000), the application of "social exclusion" in such studies is functioned as a concept in problematizing 'the other'.

Popularly known as knowledge institution, World Bank is one of the most active development institutions that promotes the use of "social inclusion" as a new mechanism to combat "social exclusion", as it reflected in its various reports. For instance, in their 2016 report about Poverty and Social Exclusion in India, the World Bank points out that caste and gender inequalities are deeply entrenched in India's philosophical tradition through the role of religion, in which have justified and maintained systematic rules for exclusion towards some groups in their society (p.2). By arguing that "social exclusion" is a concept that perceived individuals are part of groups or society; "social exclusion" becomes important to understand "*relations that constraints individuals from achieving these outcomes*" (de Haan, 1997). Citing De Haan's argument (1997), World Bank refers "social exclusion" is unlike poverty that focuses solely on absolute individual measures, but it also sees processes of non-economic means that exclude certain groups from *equal access to basic goods and services* in which determine their well-being followed by their lack of access to other aspect such as labor markets and social protections mechanism.

Furthermore, World Bank notes due to cost of exclusion that affects economic and welfare, it suggests that inclusion policies be viewed as an investment rather than as a handout.

When picturing “social exclusion” in India, World Bank points out that among other groups, Schedule Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Caste (OBCs), in particular *Dalit*; Scheduled Tribes (STs) or *Adivasi*; and women, are those that experienced rather severe forms of exclusion. For instance, according to this report, structural inequality faced by the Scheduled Caste rooted from particular historical process that made them as the *untouchable*. Bêteille (1991) cited in this report has noted that SCs (*Dalit*) have lived among the mainstream society but socially segregated ideologically; and STs (*Adivasi*) have been living completely isolated – both physically and socially (World Bank, 2011: 39). Employing the broad definition of “exclusion” as being “*prevent(ed) ... from entering or participating*” or “*being considered or accepted,*” the World Bank defined *Adivasi* group as excluded population, just because they face more or less similar struggle with the native Americans where they are in constant *competition for choice natural resource* (p. 38) and not because of destructive corporatist project backed up by the corrupt state in the name of development. Furthermore, the elaboration of “social exclusion” is centralized around cultural attributes such as linguistic elements and cultural practices that isolate them from the majority of mainstream society. As a result of such description, the World Bank report solely focuses on quantifiable output – poverty and child mortality – caused by their own situation and delinks the process of exclusion from other global processes that lead to such situation.

After gaining its important currency, addressing “social exclusion” is seen as key due to its moral and social justice dimension (World Bank, 2011). According to World Bank (2013), generally individuals and groups are excluded based on their identity, which includes gender, race, caste, ethnicity, religion and disability status. When their identity is considered as status of membership, it carries shared and common attribute of social affiliations in a certain social group. Further, “social exclusion” due to these attributes potentially lead to inferior status, and combined with lower achievement in terms of income, educational attainment, health status, access to employment and other type of basic services. In a more contemporary era, identity, which becomes the base of “social exclusion”, has evolved significantly. Individual or group identities such as sexual orientation, nationality, and

HIV/AIDS status have also emerged as source of exclusion. Moreover, because the identity is complex and dynamic, the notion of 'intersectionality' is key to determine the likelihood of being excluded and the level of exclusion. An example shows that being a woman in Bolivia reduces 5% the probability of completing secondary education, in comparison with being a Spanish-speaking man. Moreover, if she were a Quechua woman, this number would fall by 28% (The World Bank, 2013: 76).

According to World Bank, "social exclusion" based on certain groups attributes – in this case is seen as identity – can cause lower social standing and in many cases also together with worsening results in related to human development, such as income, access to services and employment. In this report, individual identity is inseparable with group identity which cause in them situation of being excluded. Some identities are more observable than the rest. Among others, the most studied ones are around: gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability status, minority status, indigenous status, sexual orientation, and to some others also migration status. Often, in such report, multinational institutions like World Bank or United Nation focus on finding *what* or *who* exclude(s) the excluded people rather than *how* these people are excluded. Obviously, by asking *what* or *who* question, the elaboration becomes limited in finding the opposite identity in which less able to understand *the way in which* people are being excluded or included.

Another World Bank report on Social Exclusion and Mobility in Brazil (2008) frames that development in Brazil has benefitted the nonpoor than the poor (p.7). Because of that, "social exclusion" in Brazil affected rural people the most, especially those who live in the northeast, those of farm households in remote, isolated, sparsely populated, and low-productivity areas (2008: 10). The report also mentions that increasing trend of urbanization has led to skyrocketed numbers of urban slums or *favelas*, where discrimination often happened (p.12). Besides people that live in *favelas*, those of African descents also experience prejudice and racial discrimination that characterized Brazilian society, which are not only social or economic problem but also racial and cultural issue (p.16).

Authors of "social exclusion" (de Haan, 1998, 1999, 2000; Jackson, 1999; Kabeer, 2000; Peace, 2001; Room, 1999; Sen, 2000; Silver, 1994) argue that "social exclusion" has many meanings, in which used to describe a wide range of social, cultural and political disadvantage which experienced by excluded people. Many

also questions that “social exclusion” as a concept adds value, like other much profound concepts such as ‘poverty’, ‘relative deprivation’, ‘cumulative disadvantage’ (Bhalla and Lapeyre, 1997; de Haan and Maxwell, 1998; Kabeer, 2000; Saith, 2001; Sen, 2000). Loury (1999) and Jackson (1999) argue that invoking the term “social exclusion” and “social inclusion” have moral and political implication, placing “social exclusion” as ‘bad’ and “social inclusion” is ‘desirable’ which means finding a solution to include the excluded. Because “social exclusion” is a slippery concept, Else Oyen (1997) mentions that researchers “*pick up the concept and are not running all over the place arranging seminar and conferences to find researchable content in an umbrella concept for which there is limited theoretical underpinning*” (Pradhan, 2006; Sen, 2000: 2).

5.4. HOW “SOCIAL EXCLUSION” IS CONSTRUCTED AS “PROBLEM”

International development agencies together with donor countries have been narrating the discourse of “social exclusion” as “problem” that posse significant challenge to global development agenda. In 2016, right after the conceptualization of Sustainable Development Goals 2030, United Nation launched its World Social Situation Report that calls government to ensure “*that no one will be left behind and to see all goals and targets met for all nations, peoples and for all parts of society, endeavoring to reach the furthest behind first*” (United Nations, 2016b: 1). As mentioned previously, the “problem” of “social exclusion” has been repeatedly mentioned in social policy discourse among wealthier European countries, in which heavily focus on the existence of “the others” that are characterized as misfit with what European society entails. Gradually “social exclusion” also increasingly used to name new forms of poverty in contemporary Europe, as this concept has been widely adopted by European Union and its member countries to replace the notion of poverty.

What the thesis is interested in is not about the “social exclusion” as a concept, despite its continuous critiques as being too slippery, but this thesis aims to unpack how “social exclusion” is represented as a particular “problem” in many developing countries where inclusive development intervention that is promoted by donor countries is employed to solve the “problem”. In unpacking “social exclusion” as “problem”, I am guided by ‘What’s the Problem Represented to be’

framework (hereafter referred as “WPR”) that coined by Carol Bacchi (2010) to problematize its representation which lead to a particular way to understand how social policy is formulated in order to tackle certain “problem”. Due to limited elaboration of “social exclusion” as a concept or as a “problem” in the context of Indonesia – until recently, especially when the Government of Indonesia sponsored an explicit “social inclusion” project to overcome “social exclusion” in the country – it is important to critically interrogate how “social exclusion” comes out as “problem” in which to be solved by development project. To do the WPR analysis, I use in total 4 documents that are considered relevant and crucial in shaping the view of “social exclusion” as “problem”. Of the 4 documents, 2 documents produced by the United Nations and the World Bank as key international agencies that strongly encourage “social inclusion” approach to tackle “problem” of “social exclusion”. The other 2 documents produced by the “*Peduli Program*”, a NGO-implemented project under the auspice of the Indonesian government that explicitly states “social inclusion” as its core approach to contribute to the government’s poverty reduction agenda. Previously managed by the World Bank under the name of PNPM *Peduli*, “*Peduli Program*” was administered by an international NGO which directly financed by Australian development agency.

The understanding of “social exclusion” in Indonesian context is rarely elaborated. Despite the practice of “social exclusion” has occurred in various contexts in many different areas in Indonesia, its theoretical articulation and analysis remains foreign in comparison with a more popular terminology like discrimination and negative stereotyping. Often the definition of “social exclusion” in Indonesia is understood simply as rejection and isolation that generally leads to discrimination. Such description of “social exclusion” is understood as attitude or behavior due to various reasons, especially related to certain socio-cultural attributes or physical presence that characterized individuals or groups. The use of “social exclusion” in social policy context then becomes extremely vague, blur, and often implicit which leads to multiple interpretation according to diverse local contexts. Having said that, this does not mean that “social exclusion” should be understood as universal, instead it is equally important to see how the interpretation of “social exclusion” translates into a “problem” that represented in a particular way by either international development agencies and non-state actors to promote certain policies. The selection of “*Peduli Program*” as a case is important

to rationalize how explicit “social exclusion” problem representation is core to design and to implement development interventions at the community level, carried out by non-state actors, that are intended to create a harmonious relationship with the State.

5.4.1. The WPR (What’s the Problem Represented to be) Approach: Critical tool to analyze dominant discourse

In contemporary development agenda, “social exclusion” is something that constantly discussed by policy makers around the world, including international development agencies, corporations, as well as civil society actors. As mentioned in the previous section, the notion of “social exclusion” is increasingly growing as a global concern, due to its deteriorating effects which constrain successful achievement on development agenda. To unpack the representation of “social exclusion” as a “problem” that is echoed widely in development sector in various countries, including reputable development international agent; I found the WPR approach is a suitable tool to understand how “social exclusion” comes out as “problem” and how such “problem” is represented across different socio-cultural-political context. ‘What’s the Problem Represented to be’ or for short the WPR Approach is a discourse analysis tool coined by Carol Bacchi in 1999 and was revisited in 2009. The WPR analysis intends to read public policy with a refined lense to understand how the “problem” is represented also to subject its problem representation for critical scrutiny. In developing the WPR tool, Bacchi argues that “problems” constitutes how particular type of subjectivity is constructed, and for that reason what is crucial in the analysis is the ‘self-problematization’ or reflexivity of the “problem”. Bacchi (2009) argues that the WPR approach focuses on fixing the “troubling condition” (p.xi) as represented “problem” and it also instigate critical analysis of how such “problems” constitute as “problems” in particular public policies.

Bacchi’s conceptualization of WPR approach stated from a close analysis of items that composed particular political agenda to reflect upon the overall shape of policy initiatives, what they include and also what they exclude. Bacchi believes that the WPR approach also challenges the conventional paradigm that policy address problems. As she says that WPR as, *“reactive in the sense that policies are*

conceived to be reaction to be presumed problems of problematic situation – with the term ‘problem’ operating as a catch-all conceptual shorthand for diffuse and often unspecified issues” (p.7) and this approach treated policies as productive or creative, in which “problem” is constituted as particular sort of problems (Bacchi, 2016). For Bacchi, “problem representation” is used to refer to a process of problematization in a specific domain. Because of that, Bacchi suggests the policy analysts to “work backwards” from any policy in order to analyze how a “problem” being produced. She further suggests that WPR approach does not look for “crisis” point, but instead it proposes that policy relies on problematizations which can be opened up and be studied to enter the *“implicit system in which we find ourselves.”* In this WPR approach, Bacchi introduced three key propositions, namely *“(1) We are governed through problematizations; (2) We need to study problematizations (through analyzing the problem representation they contain), rather than ‘problems’; (3) We need to problematize (interrogate) the problematization on offer through scrutinizing the premises and effect of the problem representation they contain”* (Bacchi, 2009: 25). In her work, Bacchi’s WPR approach treats “problems” as representation that are constructed through interpretative practices, in such a way like Saphiro described as *“things take on meaning and value”* (Bletsas and Beasley, 2012: 27). Furthermore, through WPR approach, as Bacchi argues, that meaning makings are created through policy process in which significantly distinct with ‘problem solution approach’ (Bacchi, 1999: 21) which will be mentioned below.

Unlike most common type of policy formulation process, Bacchi’s WPR approach used reversed logic from what she refers as ‘problem solution approach’ (Bacchi, 2016). Building from Bacchi’s constant interrogation towards certain unquestioned assumptions and presuppositions, Goodwin (2012) highlights that in this dominant form of policy formulation, policy analysts use positivist paradigm to provide solution for the problem. Often ‘problem solution approach’ also called by other name as ‘evidence-based policy’ that underlines rational foundation for policy-making process. Goodwin added that policy formulation based on positivist paradigm rely on structured and ordered argument that oriented towards providing solution to the problem. In this model, the main underlying assumption is sort of ‘problem’ that being ‘addressed’ as uncontroversial and to be analyzed promptly in which the ultimate objective is to ‘solve them’ (Bacchi, 2012b, 2016; Goodwin, 2012). Bacchi (2010) mentions that ‘problem’ in ‘problem solving’

approach employs top-down managerialist approach to policy formulation process, in which assure 'citizen' to think "*about government as the 'proper' domain of expert, producing them as (more easily) governable subject*". (p.10). Miller and Rose (1990) describe such policy formulation process that produce political subject with particular understanding of capabilities and attributes in such a way that they were to be governed and to conduct themselves. In this view, these are the subject that are persuaded to see themselves as responsible for all the 'ills', in this case 'problem', in their lives. Bacchi then understood that policy formulation targets subject to continuously invest in themselves through capacity building as required by the labour market (Bacchi, 2010: 10).

In responding to the "problem solving" model, Bacchi (2010) challenges this type of policy process by criticizing the way in which policy is formulated based on certain paradigm to solve the "problem". In Bacchi's (1999) earlier work, she expressed her disagreement with the evidence-based policy due its positivist paradigm, which assumes that 'knowledge' is neutral and neglects its linkages to power. In her criticism, Bacchi encourages policy analysts to deeply question the way in which 'problems' are commonly constructed in policy formulation. She continues that 'affirmative action' as policy prescription is considered as 'special treatment' that is designed to cure specific problem. Bacchi then argues that government are seen to be responsive to 'problem' by trying to solve them through develop particular representation upon the issue, in which can be seen as creating 'problem' rather than solving them, due to the creation of particular impression of what the 'problem' is.

For Bacchi, social problems are socially constructed and provide a direct challenge to realist presumptions. The "problems" then are brought into being and not only exist to be solved, or corrected by government. Like Bacchi once said that "*(it) is what is meant by the sometimes misunderstood phrases that people do not discover problem, they create them*" (Bacchi, 1999: 9). Because of the process of meaning making in its formulation, policy discourse is a practice that have effects that include the creation of subjects and subjectivities, including its 'lived' effect. Adding to Bacchi's comment, Colebath explains about policy that involves 'framing' and 'reframing of problem lies within a tradition of 'interpretative policy analysis' which pay attention on the values and belief expresses in a certain policy

as well as on the process through which such policies are communicated to and 'read' by various audiences (Colebatch et al., 2010).

Foucault (Foucault, 1972: 49) defines discourse as "*practices that systematically from the object of which they speak, they do not identify, they constitute them and in the practices of doing so, conceal their own intervention*". In developing the WPR framework, Bacchi adapted Foucauldian thinking on analyzing discourse to uncover the process of creating problem by arguing that the society is governed not by policies, instead by problematization. As Foucault wanted to reveal the *grounding assumption* that people took for granted, meanings are needed to be in place in order for particular proposal to make sense. Additionally, in discussing problematization, Foucault coined *subjectification*, which explains that the rule take places through subjects, to be precise, through the production of governable subject. Based on Foucauldian post-structural policy analysis, Bacchi's (2015) analysis interrogates the governmental problematization as the way in which "problems" are produced and represented in public policy. She stressed the importance of problematization in this process that is as a more thinking exercise than '*diagnosis of ideological manipulation*' (Bacchi, 2012b). She notes that Foucault himself employed problematization in two ways. First is to describe his method of analysis, in which Foucault refers as '*thinking problematically*' (Foucault, 1977a: 185-6) where the point of analysis is to question, analyze, classify and regulate at particular times in a specific circumstances (Deacon, 2006). Second is to refer to a historical process of producing object for thoughts. Problematization captures a two-stage process including how and why certain things (behavior, phenomena and process) become a "problem" (Foucault, 1985: 115) and how they are shaped as particular objects for thought (Bacchi, 2012b).

For Foucault, a problematization is always "*a kind of creation*" but "*a certain in the sense that, given a certain situation, you cannot infer that this kind of problematization will follow*" (Foucault, 1985). By studying problematization it is possible to "*demonstrate how things which appear most evident are in fact fragile and that they rest upon particular circumstances, and are often attributable to historical conjunctures which have nothing necessary or definitive about them*" (Bacchi, 2012b: 2; Mort and Peters, 2005: 19). Further it can be said that studying problematization, it is necessary to '*dismantle*' objects that are taken for granted (Foucault, 1997) and show how these object come to be a "problem". In order to understand how

problematizations opens door for reflection process, it is required to examine the relationship between problematization and the practices. Bacchi (2012b) commented that by studying and practicing problematization, it enables policy analysts to consider the relations around examining how they are 'thought' as material practice and not a mental image. To do that, policy analysts can start with observing and examining how practices render complex relational phenomena – as "problem" – through a certain process that produce them as "object". Foucault illustrates problematization as it *"doesn't mean the representation of a pre-existing object, nor the creation through discourse of an object that doesn't exist. It is the set of discursive and non-discursive practices that makes something enter into the play of the true and false and constitutes in an object for thought (whether under the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc.)"* (Foucault, 1988a: 257).

For Bacchi and other Foucauldian theorists, problematization as a method required studying problematized "objects" (problematization) also historical process of the production. Foucault added then that thinking in this way produces a kind of *"freedom in relation to what one does, the motion by which one detaches oneself from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem"* (Foucault, 1997: 177). Bacchi points out comparison of problematization, that highlights particular combination of aspects and connections that allow something to become "problem" in one situation and not in other. She expresses that the objective is to make politics visible rather than to generate "knowledge". Bacchi (2012b) gives examples of Uma Narayan's (1997b) examination of contrasting problematization how the practice of *sati* or "widow burning", accomplishes this goal. According to Bacchi, Narayan compares how *sati* is conceptualized (problematized) differently in what she calls the 'colonialist stance' and among contemporary Indian feminist critics. On the contrary, the "colonialist stance" ignores past political struggle and generalized the whole 'tradition' and 'Third World Patriarchal Cultural Practices' in the practice of *sati*. Such strategy involves producing genealogies of problematization. Narayan's work shows how a focus on problematizations promises to reveal the exigencies and contestation involved in the production of oppressive practices which conventional approaches to 'traditional' and 'culture'. In her view, such practices produce forms of problematization that create objects and subjects required involved in how rule takes places.

Bacchi (2009) argues that specific policy proposal is formulated based implicit “problem” representation. This representation relies on a simple idea that is what’s needed to be changed in which then leads the policy makers to think what is problematic. In this way, “problem” is constituted or represented. Bacchi further advises that policy analysts should understand how the “problem” is constructed in order to examine a specific policy. To do such, Bacchi suggests that we should start from the proposed “solution” (the policy) and ask – *“if the suggestion is that this form of change or intervention is required, what is the ‘problem’ represented (constituted) to be?”* Echoing Bacchi’s argument that says representations of “problems” are not imagined states, but are interventions; Shapiro (1988) adds that, *“Representations do not imitate reality but are practices through which things take on meaning and value”*.

The WPR approach helps policy analysts to understand how “problems” are constituted as part of policy formulation process. This approach suggests different connections that are useful for the purpose of policy analysis. Koon et.al. (2016) add that the core theme of WPR approach is not on social actors *“framing”* an issue for *“instrumental and excessive purpose”* (p.7) but instead how policy text gives meaning to “equity” as a contested concept (Baum et al., 2013: 210). Bacchi explains that WPR does not analyze “problems” and “solutions” as separate unit analysis. Instead, Bacchi suggests to begin with the proposed “solutions” and to continue working backwards by identifying what and unpacking how the “problem” is construed in a particular representation. This WPR approach raises critical questions about “the frameworks” of senses and obviousness in which policy is postulated, developed and disseminated (Ball, 2006: 24). Bacchi continues that “problems” are set out by those who are in the position of power or authority, in which includes what she calls three critical foci namely the attached meaning to a certain concept, how the “problem” is represented, and how “context” is represented. As the WPR approach encourages policy analysts to move away from ‘problem solving’ way of policy making, in which is considered as neutral and responsive, main attention of WPR are two things. First of all is mode of thinking, which is reflective practice to critically question and to contest the key concepts in specific policy and secondly is mode of analysis that is flexible in content, context as well as form of policy analysis (Bacchi, 2009). Furthermore, she calls WPR approach as “mode of thinking” that is constructive which focuses on the “political dimension” of the constructed “problem” in policy formulation, including its consequences and effects (p.4).

Bacchi’s WPR (Bacchi, 1999: 200) offers a Foucault-influenced mode of problematization analysis that “consists in seeing on what type of assumptions, of familiar notion, of established, unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based” (Bacchi, 2015). Bacchi’s (2010) concern for the “non-innocence of how ‘problems’ get framed within policy proposal, how the frames will affect what can be thought about and how this affects possibilities for action” (Giaquinta, 2016) shows possibility of how this approach gives special attention to what have been left unquestioned, like people’s categories – who are the included and the excluded – as well as what are the discursive silences in this problem representation. Goodwin adapted Bacchi’s WPR approach and structured it into six questions to “probe the conceptual underpinnings of the problem representation” (Goodwin, 2013: 171) which aims to unpack the normative framework and assumption behind the conceptualization of “truth”. By employing the WPR approach, it helps the analysis to delve into how “social exclusion” is constituted as “the problem” that development projects are designed to solve. It will also ask key questions like what subjects and objects are created by this representation of “problem”; where are the silences in the discourse produced; and ultimately what are the effects of such representation.

As Goodwin (2013) mentions that the focus of the WPR approach is not “the problem”, but the problematization as critical scrutiny in analyzing public policies – and in this case, development intervention project. For that reasons, I use Giaquinta’s useful compilation of Goodwin’s adaptation of Bacchi’s WPR approach that can be analyzed through six guiding questions as showed in tabulation below (Giaquinta, 2016).

Table 1 – The WPR Framework

Question	Goal	Strategies
1. What’s the problem represented to be?	To identify the implied problem representation	Identification of the problem as it is expressed in the policy
2. What presuppositions of assumptions underline this representation of the problem?	To interrogate the conceptual premises or logics that underline specific problem representation	Foucauldian archeology involving discourse analysis techniques, such as identifying binaries, key concepts and key categories.

3. How has this representation of the problem come about?	To highlight the conditions that allows a particular problem, representation to take shape and assume dominance.	Foucauldian genealogical analysis involving tracing the 'history' of a current problem representation to identify the power relations involved in the prevailing problem representations.
4. What is left unproblematic in this representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?	To raise for reflection and consideration issues and perspective that are silences in identified problem representations.	Genealogical analysis, and cross-cultural, historical and cross-national comparisons in order to provide examples of alternative representations
5. What effects are conducted by this representation of the problem?	To ascertain discursive effects, subjectification effects, and lived effects.	Discourse analysis techniques including identification of subject positions, dividing practices where subjects are produced in oppositions to one another and the production of subjects regarded as 'responsible' for problems. Impact analysis: consideration of the material impact of problem representation on people's lives.

<p>6. How/where is this representation of the problem produced, disseminated and defended, disputed and disrupted?</p>	<p>To pay attention to both the means through which some problem representations become dominant, and to the possibility of challenging problem representations that are judged to be harmful.</p>	<p>Identification of institutions, individuals and agencies involved in sustaining the problem representation. Mobilizing competing discourses or reframing the ‘problem’</p>
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Sources: Giaquinta (2016) (*other sources includes, Bacchi, 2010; Bletsas & Beasley, 2012, Bacchi 2009, Goodwin, 2013, etc.*) – (Goodwin, 2013: 173)

To help me in unraveling the process of problematization, I will not use all the six questions proposed by Bacchi, instead I will select those that are relevant to show how “social exclusion” is problematized, constructed, and represented as “problem” that development projects are designed to fix. Giaquinta (2016) wrote that the six questions aim to “*probe the conceptual underpinnings of problem representation*” (Goodwin, 2013: 171). She continues that WPR framework allow researchers to tease out how “problem” is constituted as a problem of intervention for development practitioners. The first question of the WPR tool asks what’s the problem represented to be aims to identity the implied “problem” representation. This can be done by pointing out the problem as it mentioned in the policy proposal or in this case in development project proposal or concept notes, which Giaquinta (2016) notes that it is crucial to focus on connotation, frequency of use and the tone how “the problem” is shaped.

The second guiding question asks what presuppositions or assumptions underline this representation of the problem? Such question intends to help policy analyst to clarify and assess conceptual logic that underpins such representation of the identified problem. This question helps to structure underlying production of knowledge, including uncovers the unquestioned assumptions, presuppositions, as well as background knowledge that lie behind particular representation of “the problem”. In this question, the analysis will also show that knowledge production about what certain meaning(s) are needed to be in place prior to establishing the representation. Often, in this part, the use of “key concepts”, in which abstract and

open-ended, is critical to produce meanings that support meaning making process as well as to understand “the problem” representation. Bacchi (2009) continuously mentions that the use of binary and dichotomy in policies and statements simplifies the complex relationship to highlight two extremes, the privileges versus the disadvantages, or in this case the excluded versus the included. In this part, the excluded, in which often associated with the minority is being contrasted with the included, which implied as the majority. Under this context, it implies that the excluded, which often minority also associated with those who are oppressed.

The fourth question deals with what is left unproblematic in the representations of “the problem”. This question intends to facilitate interrogation in uncovering silences in the particular representation. It also questions on asking whether “the problem” can be thought about in a different way. Goodwin (2012) points out that the fourth question focuses on teasing out the process of problematization, in which intended to raise reflection and consideration on particularities that intentionally silenced in “problem” representation. Goodwin adds that it is crucial for the policy analyst to use cross cultural comparison or historical account that can rendered visible the way in which particular representation of “the problem” reflect specific institutional and cultural context also. The analysis will be continued through posing the fifth question which lead to understanding the effect of such representation of “the problem”. Here, policy analysts are guided to question the effect created by policy formula or development intervention that developed based on particular representation of “problem”. Bacchi (2010) and Goodwin (2012) describe this question as a way to unpack particular identification of subject position as dichotomized with the other, in which impacted to people’ lives. At last, this Foucauldian post-structuralist approach offers alternative way to policy analysis. It shows problematization as deep-seated conceptual composition that could unravel how we are being governed.

5.4.2. Overview of the texts and materials

The first text is “Inclusion That Matters”, a thematic report produced by the World Bank Social Development Group, which was launched in 2013 as part of the World Bank’s new approach towards poverty. This report is presented as the

institution’s flagship report that focuses on social inclusion by first understanding what “social exclusion” means in many different contexts. Not only presents quantitative data that illustrate how excluded groups are restricted to be involved in different domain; this report also uses anecdotes and qualitative stories to describe the condition in which these excluded people are being denied. This report utilizes multiple national and international datasets gathered from different surveys or censuses undertaken by various institutions, including universities, state agencies and private institutes. In addition to that, international consultants also deployed to some countries where World Bank’s projects operate in order to collect stories from the local population, interviews with project beneficiaries also frame those stories in the relevant context.

The second text is World Social Situation Report and issued bi-annually by Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nation Secretariat in 2016. Titled as “Leaving No One Behind: The imperative of inclusive development”, this report highlighted that development could be maintained sustainably if it is inclusive. The main argument of this report is inclusion and social justice is important to ensure the sustainability of development result, which often undermined by unequally shared benefits of social and economic progress to certain individuals or groups. Like the first text, this report also emphasizes social inclusion as way to pursue more equitable and sustainable development results.

The third text is a document titled “Understanding of Social Exclusion in Indonesia (2016a). This text is one of the only two reports that published publicly by the “Peduli Program” after a year of activity implementation. This document portrays how “Peduli Program” understands “social exclusion” issues in Indonesia through studying 68 Theory of Change documents produced by NGOs that received project fund to implement activities with targeted excluded groups. Published by international NGO – The Asia Foundation as the project’s Managing Partner through contracting international and national consultants – this report only available in English and does not provide any Bahasa Indonesia version. This report explains the overall project’s objective, to whom it aims to benefit and a glimpse of overall project’s achievements. Besides that, this text also tries to consolidate project’s initial assumptions about social process and how “social inclusion” can be achieved through theorizing 3 sets of pathways, i.e. facilitate social acceptance, increase access to service and improve policy, where the project

intervention can best implemented. This is why I include this document as part of my text analysis, in particular to grasp project's understanding on "social exclusion" as a problem that "social inclusion" tries to solve.

The "*Peduli Program*" assumes that to reduce poverty in excluded community needs change in social relation that governs access to resources and economic opportunity (p. 20). This change can be done through NGOs (as the project describes as CSO) as the vehicle to "...*foster dialogue to strengthen social relations between excluded groups and their surrounding community ...*" (p.2). "*Peduli Program*" believes that through project cycle, implementation, reflection and learning; it can achieve its strategic objective as "*to improve social inclusion for those who have been socially excluded.*" (p.3) Furthermore, three specific program outcomes include: increased access to public services and social assistance; increased fulfillment of human rights; and improved policy on social inclusion.

The later report titled "*Peduli Program*" Updates is a kind of progress report, which aims to show progress of the project towards what it was designed for. It is rather common practices among many development projects funded by donor institutions that hired international consultants to carry out assessments, evaluations or similar activities, followed by producing reports. Despite the claim of 'independent' review, most cases of evaluations are usually carried out with particular project frames and purposes, which is maintaining funding flows.

In addition to the above texts, I also choose a number of videos produced by "*Peduli Program*" to complement the descriptive analysis. The first video titled *What They Said about Social Inclusion* (2015). This is one of the earliest videos produced by the "*Peduli Program*" as its campaign material. Knowing that the "social inclusion" issue remains unexplored in the context of Indonesia, this 6m15s short video aims to explain what "social inclusion" is. Initially framed within the broader poverty alleviation discourse, narrative in the video shows that "some groups of people still face barrier in accessing (development) program due to stigma and marginalization". To further illustrate how these groups of people are stigmatized and marginalized, this video interviewed a number of activists to elaborate their understanding about how to realize "social inclusion" for those groups that are mentioned. These activists are representatives of community groups that are targeted as beneficiaries of the "*Peduli Program*" which are victims of human rights violations, religious minorities, transsexual persons, youth, and

disable. In addition to these resource persons, the video also includes perspective from Indonesian Government that oversaw this project. A number of keywords/phrases emerged from the narratives produced in the video that are considered important to elaborated further in the following sections. Some important key phrases/keywords are: equal dignity, social diversity, social inclusion can reduce social inequality, and respect. This short video was distributed mostly through social media channel and platforms, especially Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Project Website. In addition to that, this video was mostly disseminated through both personal accounts and institutional accounts of those who were engaged with the project – either as volunteers, NGO staffs, civil servants, or other affiliates.

The second video titled *Social Inclusion Starts from Us* (2018). Unlike the first video that mostly shows series of interviews with key actors as representative of the project beneficiaries, the second video uses more animated motion graphic that tells what the project beneficiaries are facing in their general life. Like the other video, this 1m57s animation video also used as campaign material that focuses more on engaging viewer to contribute to “social inclusion” effort. Slightly different from the first video, this animation frames the project’s beneficiary groups in terms of daily despair in which unable to get basic facilities or services in order to be functioned in the society. This is illustrated by animated graphic combined with a voice from a narrator to dramatize these images. Highlighted examples include: image of a disable fell from the staircase or provoking questions such as “*What if you can’t get access to public facilities on a daily basis, or unable to get basic services because you don’t have proper documentation, or considered as different, or labeled as low-class? Imagine, if your children can’t go to school, just because your marriage is not acknowledged by the state... Just because your faith and how the ways you pray are different from others?*” At the end, narratives of this animated video send message about ‘diversity’ and ‘being inclusive’ as foundation to development.

5.5. THE REPRESENTATION OF “SOCIAL EXCLUSION” AS “PROBLEM”

The way in which “social exclusion” is represented as “problem” occurred in two ways at different level. The first is how international agencies represents “social exclusion” as a critical problem that countries should be tackled effectively.

The second is how “social exclusion” at country level – in this case Indonesia – is represented through the existence of “social inclusion” project implemented by network of Indonesian NGOs to solve such “problem”. These NGOs are operated under the administration of an international NGO and under the auspice of Indonesian government. At different level, these two types of representation follow two distinct paradigms of “social exclusion” conceptualized by Hilary Silver (1994) in which lead to different solution on how to solve the ‘problem’.

In understanding the problem representation of “social exclusion”, it is important to understand the underlying paradigms how and which “social exclusion” is understood. Often, contemporary literatures that talk about “social exclusion” in various contexts overlook the underlying assumption on how society is being view. The dominant view of society still oriented towards European libertarian society in which state-led social policies that ensure the members of its polity has sufficient resources to survive in competitive world. In such view, the nature of relationship between state and its citizen is usually more direct and formal; unlike in countries like Indonesia where the relationship between state and citizen often is informal and usually mediated by *brokers* (Berenschot et al., 2018; Berenschot and van Klinken, 2018; Ito, 2017). Therefore, what can be understood as “exclusion” is related with what types of relationship do excluded people have with informal power around them, in which can be abusive but also benevolent at the same time. The degree of exclusion is the how the relationship with this informal power determines their relationship with the state.

5.5.1. Problematizing ‘body’ with problematic ‘relationship’

“Peduli Program” itself can be considered as a unique development project with specific intervention focuses on targeting particular groups of people, in which are seen as *“six socially excluded communities which experience poverty but are underserved by government social protection programs”* (Program Peduli, 2016b: 2). Within the context of development intervention in Indonesia, project like “Peduli Program” or its short-lived predecessor PNPM Peduli that focused on facilitating the rejected social groups in society were quite rare and less popular in comparison with more generic empowerment projects. What common at that time was sectoral based project intervention, for instance projects on HIV/AIDS in which also

targeted female sex workers and transsexual persons as key population of such development interventions. Despite there was massive structural change in the project operation team which leads to a complete project restructure, this project continued its implementation on the ground. Through a serious re-branding by eliminating “PNPM” identity, which strongly associate with World Bank loan project, this project maintains the “Peduli” identity as the soul of the project. “Peduli” itself means, “to care” which considered as key aspect to the project ideal since the beginning that reflects also sense of compassion towards those groups who are rejected by the society. The current project formation remains supported by majority of its existing NGO partners and some additional partners that brought to a number of 79 local NGOs works in 84 districts across 26 provinces in Indonesia.

The “Peduli Program” was designed to facilitate six socially excluded groups, which are vulnerable children and youth; remote indigenous communities reliant on natural resources; discriminate religious minorities; victims of gross human rights violations; transsexual person; and people with disabilities (Program Peduli, 2016b: 2) which referred as the project’s pillars. The decision to use ‘pillars’ were brought up during the management transition meeting (early March 2014) between the World Bank and The Asia Foundation, endorsed by the Australian DFAT as the sole donor in this project. In this process, the word ‘pillar’ was deliberately selected to illustrate how these groups mostly experience *similar issues* around their exclusion. In this way, from the efficiency perspective, “social exclusion” issues will be much easier to tackle when the *beneficiaries* were grouped together, in which lead to greater impact from the technical monitoring and evaluation (M&E) standpoint. Therefore, I argue that that the process of beneficiaries’ grouping by using ‘pillar’ to identify different groups that share similar features of material characteristic is homogenizing process to simplify complex realities that are context dependent – which are experienced differently by different social groups that targeted by the “Peduli Program”.

The conceptualization of “social exclusion” in Indonesia was never been clear in the first place. Not only because some strong criticism towards its slippery and its catch-all nature (Hickey and Du Toit, 2007; Jackson, 1999; Pradhan, 2006; Du Toit, 2004), but also because of its recent introduction in the development landscape in Indonesia. Besides that, because of its confusing meaning, institutions and organizations developed their own definition based on their interpretation about

“social exclusion”. In Indonesia, the notion of “social exclusion” was pretty much introduced by PNPM Peduli, through the concept of marginalization whose characteristics were outlined in the PNPM Peduli Management Retreat Report (2012b). Therefore, in the context of PNPM Peduli, marginalization and “social exclusion” are used interchangeably and understood as a situation of isolation that this project should solve. In short, “social exclusion” itself never explained explicitly within the context of Indonesia and in particular in the project discourse. While introducing “social inclusion” as new fancy buzzword, rather than more popular policy language such as ‘poverty alleviation’ or ‘community empowerment’; this new idea became more attractive for Indonesian NGOs, national policy makers and the donor community who employ the language of “social inclusion”. For that reason, “social exclusion” that is initially produced as “problem” appear as logical domain for “social inclusion” program to intervene.

As PNPM *Peduli* introduced “social exclusion” as negative anti-thesis of “social inclusion” that should be avoided, this highly contested concept was accepted in the project environment without critical interrogation. Certainly, such development project like PNPM Peduli and its successor “*Peduli Program*”, placing “social inclusion” as their unique project identity has creatively use particular discourse of welfare (Béland, 2007; Du Toit, 2004) with a human rights perspective to realize or achieve something positive. The practice of formulating positive tone in vision statement is pretty common in carrying Theory of Change (TOC), which often become the basis of development programming among NGOs. Through such process, ultimate positive goal such as “social inclusion” is seen more reasonable to measure rather than reduce negative representation that implied by concept like “social exclusion”. In addition to that, while understanding of “social exclusion” in the context of Indonesia remains rarely elaborated, what was available were literatures within European or developed countries’ context. As a result, the project’s understanding of “social exclusion” was pretty much based on the dominant understanding, which was European conceptualization of this concept. Some social exclusion theorists, for instance De Haan (1999, 2001); Saith (2001); Pradhan (2006); and Kabeer (2000) have attempted to use this concept within the context of developing countries. However, it remains a huge challenge to understand “social exclusion” from Indonesian perspective, giving its complex

socio-cultural-political-historical and economic contexts, in which were not the case in European context.

During the re-design phase of "Peduli Program" – upon the termination of PNPM *Peduli* – the NGO partners were extremely confused about what "social exclusion" was. Moving away from 'empowerment of the marginalized group' (PSF, 2010) to "improve social inclusion for those who have been excluded" (Program Peduli, 2016b) was beyond 'business-as-usual' for the NGO partners that accustomed to activity implementation and less engaged in a more abstract way in programming development interventions. Not only the participating NGOs, but also government officers and development practitioners assumed that what the project has been done for the past 2 years, which was "empowering marginalized group", was a direct implementation of a concept called "social inclusion" due to the involvement of discriminated population. Therefore, with such perception, "social inclusion" then understood as a 'good' antipode to overcome 'negative' "social exclusion", which came a bit later in the project contextualization. Du Toit (2004) has warned us about the danger of dichotomizing exclusion as 'bad' and inclusion as 'good', and calls for "... A move beyond simple counter-positions of 'exclusion' and 'inclusion' and ... the use of concepts that allow a much sensitive analysis of the link between livelihood dynamics and the broader discursive, social and spatial formation of power" (p.1003). While representing "social exclusion" as problem about those rejected/problematic people, Du Toit continues that mainstream society is conceived to be normal, so exclusion from the normality is perceived as the "problem". Du Toit continues that the dominant way in which the concept of "social exclusion" has been applied in formulizing policies or designing intervention is inseparable from moralizing narratives, in which un-problematically pass over conflictive and heterogeneous character of social transformation. In this problem representation social transformation is free from constant contestation towards ambiguous modernization and development project and instead accept complex and ambiguous power relation at face value. Ratcliffe (2000) even adds that the excluded group may even 'pathologized' as deviant. Further Du Toit warns that it cannot be assumed that integration, incorporation and inclusion are necessary remedy for severe poverty. He then pointed out that by problematizing only particular process by which certain group of people are excluded from institutions,

system and network, it distracts our attention away from entrenched dynamic of inequality, impoverishment, and conflict in a wider setting.

The re-branded "*Peduli Program*", which was re-launched on April 2014, implied as solving problems of "social exclusion" through "*improving social inclusion for those who have been excluded*" (via three main channels namely "*Increased Access to Public Services & Social Assistance*"; "*Increased Fulfillment of Human Rights*"; "*Improved Policy on Social Inclusion*" (Program Peduli, 2016b: 7). Because "*Peduli Program*" has pre-selected their six categories of the project beneficiaries before conceptualized their own understanding of "social exclusion", the process of defining "social exclusion" was started from contrasting simple binary logic that answered to a reverse-type question of *what is the problem that social inclusion project should give solution to*. In responding such question, "*Peduli Program*" with its NGO partners then gathered sporadic negative experiences of the excluded groups to be solved by the project intervention. Further, based on similar characteristics or common individual experiences that were found across variety of different beneficiary groups, these experiences then were identified as some form of exclusion (Program Peduli, 2016a) in which becomes the key source of problematization in *Peduli's* representation of "social exclusion" as "the problem" to be solve through "social inclusion" intervention.

"Social exclusion" in the context of "*Peduli Program*" was elaborated in a dedicated report that intends to capture how "*Peduli Program*", in particular through the consolidated view of the local NGO implementers, understands "social exclusion" as "problem" that should be solved by this project. Building its argument from "*improving social inclusion*" (Program Peduli, 2016a: 3) as desirable objective, "social exclusion" is represented as 'problematic body with problematic relationship'. Without an intention to evaluate the quality of the report itself, I found the way in which "*Peduli Program*" represents "social exclusion" is simply problematic. The intention of "*Peduli Program*" to frame "social exclusion" in Indonesian context should be appreciated, despite its significant lack elaboration on the countries' complex nature. "Social exclusion" in the context of Indonesia is explained in 5 pages, stated by contextualizing Indonesia's economic growth and lowered poverty rate, which has not yet benefitted its people. Key opening statement says, "*(T)he benefits of this reduction have, however, not reached all members of society equally, and socially excluded groups in particular have found themselves*

disadvantaged" (p.3). As the socially excluded groups were initially mentioned, continued discussion about "social exclusion" in Indonesia focuses on consolidated individual experiences of these six 'pillars' around issues about discrimination, stigmatization, geographic isolation, negative stereotypes and prejudices, or violent physical attacks because of their individual attributes.

It is universally agreed that "social exclusion" has multidimensional nature, effects and causes; just like other similar concept such as poverty and disadvantaged which are more traditional concepts and have been established earlier in welfare discourse. In the context of a development project that is quite limited, the representation from "*Peduli Project*" about "social exclusion" somehow limited to these target groups despite its "*high degree of variance in the types of social exclusion experienced by target group*" (p.3). For this project, "social exclusion" depicted as an 'experience' or something that has been experienced by these beneficiaries, in which the word 'experience' or 'experienced' was mentioned at least 60x in the report (2016a). In the project context, "social exclusion" is represented as "problem" that only experienced by these beneficiaries' groups, which are seen themselves as 'problematic people'. Definition about this problematic people are depicted as part of beneficiaries profiling, for example "*children who do not enjoy conventional family life or who are not in school...*"(p.4); "*Indigenous community ... usually have traditions, common interest, and ties to specific physical localities and related national resources ... passed down from generation to generation*" (p.5); "*The term 'victim' may extended to the immediate family, or to dependents of the direct victims, as well as to people who have suffered harm assisting victims...*" (p.6); and "*The term waria describes people who are genetically males but who behave and dress as females.*" (p. 7). These explanations highlight their 'problematic body', in which result they are rejected and are not accepted by the society. In short, they are excluded. Through the process of Theory of Change Workshop facilitated by the project, NGO partners that implement "*Peduli Program*" "*thinks that changes in social acceptance will be the primary enabling factor in increasing access to services, and policy is often seen as a process parallel to improving social recognition and acceptance.*" (p.10).

Through "*Peduli Program*", "social exclusion" is pictured as rejection towards the beneficiaries' groups as the 'problematic body' that have been mentioned. Through this representation, the solution of "social exclusion" is to

accept, in which understood and translated as one feature of “social inclusion” intervention. As illustrated in “Peduli Program” campaign material titled “Social Inclusion Started from Us”, the video encourages its viewer – or whoever the Project tries to influence – to ‘accept’ these groups with all their related “problem”, for instance: disability condition, their religion and the way their pray, physical appearances, or the way their life (2015, 2018). The idea of acceptance also strongly enforced by the local NGO partners which designed small scale activities that are able to facilitate the sense of doing things together. Anecdotes in “Peduli Program” Snapshot (2016b) illustrate that NGO *“worked with communities to create space for social interaction, dialogue and exchange ... facilitated social activities such as yoga where Ahmadiyah families and locals could come together over shared interest and build people-to-people relationship”* (p.20). Others example in the report notes that increasing visibility, strengthening social acceptance and promoting the leadership of people with disability (p.24). Moreover, the idea of social acceptance becomes a new norm, for example: peaceful and harmonious community that these beneficiaries have to comply. In this context, discourse promoted by “Peduli Program” has failed to address wider issues that involve transactional relationship which is quite common in postcolonial society, like what Du Toit (2004) mentions that focus instead should be paid to the ways in which the effects of integration and inclusion into globalized system that are locally mediated. Such processes include *“... the re-negotiation and reconfiguration of discourses on ‘race’, gender and identity; the persistence, adaptation and mutation of patron-client relationship and their existence alongside process of modernization; the construction of poor people as ‘citizens’ – and their reconceptualization as the passive object of ‘delivery’; the continuities and discontinuities between the discourse of the ‘national democratic struggle’ and the increasingly hegemonic framework, offered by the technical discourse of development; and the persistence of long-remembered and bitter local antagonism and histories”* (Erasmus, 2002; Ferguson, 1990; Steinberg, 2002; Du Toit, 1998, 2004).

“Peduli Program” believes that the intention of development is to alleviate poverty, which regrettably does not reach the society equally. “Peduli Program” exists to deliver “social inclusion” to the excluded people, who are seen as the rejected due to their certain characteristic therefore experience “social exclusion”. This project breaks down “social exclusion” as caused by various factors such as stigma, geographical remoteness, stereotypes, and perception of threat.

Furthermore, this project portrays "social exclusion" is something that determined and constructed by the society, which in the worst case is legitimized by the state. It thus appears normal when society is the one that determine what is acceptable or deviant, for example in the case of transgender (2016a: 7) or religious minority (2016a: 5). In representing "social exclusion", "*Peduli Program*" sees that this problem only experience by the 'excluded people' that have problems in building relationship with the society. This confirms Kabeer's (2000) critique about "social exclusion" that focus on the idea of "problematic" like problematic group, problematic condition – such as poverty, unemployment, family situation, and isolation – and problematic process (political, social, economic) that tend to focus on categorical groups. In this stance, particular populations – the problematic ones – are constructed as a 'problem' of exclusion that need a 'solution' of inclusion. The project intervention, through its NGO partners, therefore continues to reproduce and to reinforce the representation of 'Orientalist discourse' by describing problems of 'social exclusion' with markers of otherness (Timmer, 2010: 269).

In this representation, "social exclusion" is represented as group phenomena (Kabear, 2000) through problematizing particular type of body with conflictive relations and tension with the larger society. Particular types of social subject that considered problematic according to "*Peduli Program*", among others are: youth, children, women, or transsexual persons. These are the problematic objects that develop problematic relationship due to their anomaly in comparison with the 'normal' circumstances occurred in the society. The presupposition of normal society reflects Javanese cultural ideology, as the dominant Indonesian culture, that sees society as harmonious and maintains peace. For most cases, where the society often comprised of the majority group, those that are deviant are likely to be excluded, to be pushed away or the worst case – to be expelled. Therefore, it is often understood that the excluded people also smaller in number, in which associate the excluded people with minority population, despite it is not always the case. As it is commonly practiced that those who are seen as deviant are expected to adjust themselves to be 'accepted' by the society; not only for being part of the society, but also as a secured mechanism to obtain basic service and entitlements as a manifestation of state-citizenship relationship. Furthermore, the state institution is represented by the project through behaviors of institution or individual from state institutions. The representation of Indonesian state in the project consists of central

government, local government, and security personnel – including military and police department, local police and prison's guard.

Certainly, the above description is quite different from what Silver describes in her Solidarity paradigm. She argues that in order to overcome "social exclusion", the problematic group should be inserted into society. This is important because of reciprocal interdependency between society and individual members, which might be disrupted when individuals get excluded from the society as Silver describe as *the rupture of social bonds*. In the context of Indonesia, like many other post-colonial societies, the relationship between State and citizens is not as clear-cut and as formal as in European countries for instance. This relationship often mediated by *broker*, which often maintain close relationship with the power holder that is commonly patron-client type of relationship. In regards to this matter, the project skips the discussion about rent-seeking behaviour of the State that translated into its bureaucrats as well as its practices that are closely intact with beneficiaries of the "Peduli Program". Likewise, the assumption used in representing "social exclusion" as problem is harmonious egalitarian society and neglect complex local political constellation and social structure. None of "Peduli Program" materials have challenged its assumption about the nature of the society – in which many communities of Indonesian context still required local patron figure that often play role as power broker in the community. This articulates what Hickey & Du Toit (2007) argue that despite for short period of time, clientelism is seen as a more secure mechanism for political engagement for the poorest people. Further, Blair (2005) adds that patron-client relationship, which often occurred – in this case – with the informal/local power holder, has provided temporary safety net for those who are excluded. This has reflected what Scott (1985) argues as 'weapon of the weak' which understood as survival mechanism that often manipulated as form of patron-client relationship from below.

Not only the "problematic body" that continuously represented as the "problem", representation of "social exclusion" as "problem" also emphasizes the idea of having "problematic relationship" which related to their capacity to harmoniously interact with broader community around them. To illustrate such problem, the "Peduli Program" often uses 'marginalization' to refer to the target groups as *"when people are systematically excluded from meaningful participation in economic, social, political, cultural and other forms of human activity in their communities*

and thus are denied the opportunity to fulfill themselves as human beings." (Program Peduli, 2016a: 1) This definition then reflects their inability to participate in the basis of political, economic and social functioning of the society as de Haan (1998) described. Furthermore, what is core in this representation lies on "social" that is attached to "exclusion" which makes reference to individual as part of broader society as well as their capacity that is understood as attributes for broader society.

The representation of "social exclusion" as problematic relationship in "Peduli Program" depicts excluded people as those whose 'relationship' should be corrected; but at the same time this representation ignores larger structural inequalities, growing tendencies of certain religious conservatism in which often seen as threatened national pluralism, and transactional relationship between State and citizens through the role of corrupt apparatus. Combination all these types of ignorance then re-produce standard of generalization based on monolithic assumption that the excluded people experience homogenous exclusion process. Such problem representation that defines "social exclusion" as problematic relationship experienced by the problematic people due to socio-cultural attributes emphasize more on the state and less on the process – despite the project's constant repetition about focus to dynamic process. Furthermore, when the NGO partners are free to determine their own definition and assumption about "social exclusion", often it is depicted as the worst form of the state of being poor due to certain socio-cultural attributes that cause them being poor. Since "Peduli Program" is branded as government 'benevolent' initiative to reduce poverty, analysis of "social exclusion" in this project is trapped into income-based poverty that influence the state of being excluded. Therefore, what the "problem" tackled by "Peduli Program" is the "problematic relationship" in which tightly associated with income deprivation that these "problematic people" are facing.

As a development intervention project, the underlying assumption in "Peduli Program" is everybody should benefit from development, in which ultimately lead to growth and economic improvement. It points out that some people cannot enjoy the benefit of development because they have "problem" of social relation with society/other. And because the excluded people are portrayed as those who are isolated from the rest of the society, "Peduli Program" encourages them to "*foster dialogue between excluded groups and their surrounding community*" (p.2) as a way to fix their relationship with other. Not only these problematic groups are represented

as outside of the society imaginary border, they are also characterized as those who lacks of ability to access development. By saying that the “*Peduli Program*” dichotomizes between the excluder, as the subject, and the excluded, as the object. In this representation, the excluded people constantly portrayed as victims, in which development intervention is design to save by correcting their deviant characteristic through social inclusion approach. Such portrayal strongly appears in the main materials of “*Peduli Program*” that use particular adjective to show the state of being victims, such as ‘powerless’, ‘victimized’, ‘vulnerable’, ‘have limited options’, ‘criminalized’, ‘exploited’, ‘ignored’, ‘denied’, ‘violated’, ‘repressed’, ‘abandon’, ‘suffering’, ‘need protection’, ‘innocent’, ‘ignored’, ‘stigmatized’, ‘discriminated’, and ‘threatened’. They are represented as entities without agency, in which appropriated their state of victimhood due to the absence of struggle, resistance or challenge. In this case, it could be understood that “*Peduli Program*” overlooked “social exclusion” as constructed based on class, gender and power, in which deeply entrenched in existing social structure in every local community. In addition, “social exclusion” also represented as interest-free, apolitical and ahistorical in which translated into idealized vision of *Peduli*’s egalitarian type of society that mirror European model. Similarly, in this the problem representation despite categorized differently, the excluded people are represented as composite category that are genderless, classless and powerless. The representation of “social exclusion” in “*Peduli Program*” is shown through the perspective of national and local NGOs, which are contracted to correct the deviant ones, for example, the project prescription in fostering dialogue aimed to correct relationship “problem” of the target groups.

Through “*Peduli Program*”, which mostly reflects NGO’s perspective about social problems does not recognize self-exclusion as one mode of ‘exercising agency’. On the contrary, Indonesian state and the society where the excluded live are those that assumed having ‘agency’ in which materialized into act to exclude. The excluded group that deliberately choose to pull themselves away often understood as normalized due to their lack of ability and lack of security. In the representation of social exclusion as the problem, donor and NGOs are projected as the ‘good samaritan’ that benevolently intended to rescue the excluded people from their despair and fix their situation. This representation implies that project donor and NGOs are seen as interest-free and neutral in delivering development

benefit to the excluded people that are left out. As a result, this representation then pictured the excluded people as apolitical, victimized by the state and society where they live, which in turn activate the assumption that exclusion has generic and neutral effects. Solving “social exclusion” that is seen as fixing problematic relationship of the problematic people has been carried out as simply therapeutic solution. Rather than call for fundamental changes in current power structure, participating NGOs in “*Peduli Program*” are prescribed to use less radical and non-conflictive approach towards the main power holder – as in many cases are local governments or religious and customary leaders – and instead focus to build “*dialogue to strengthen social relations*”.

To represent “social exclusion” as “problem”, I also found significant consistencies in utilizing nominalization of verb ‘to exclude’ as noun form of ‘exclusion’. Nominalization used in various texts of “*Peduli Program*” also accompanied by passivization – in the case of excluded people or groups – that characterized the identity of the subject of exclusion. Throughout the text, “*Peduli Program*” uses both nominalization and passivization rather than active verb ‘to exclude’, in which results in eliminating active agent that cause exclusion. Following Fairclough (2003) arguments that nominalization is a type of grammatical metaphor that represent process as entities by transforming clauses (including verb) into a type of noun. In this case, exclusion becomes metaphorical, nominalized representation – rather than saying who/what exclude who/what. Further as Fairclough mention, nominalizing process of ‘to exclude’ often silent the active agent in the representation of events. He continues that instead of representing processes, which are taking place in the world as process, signaled with clause or sentence with verb grammatically, they are represented as entities through nominalization. This nominalization further cause removing the agent of process, who initiate the process or act actively upon the process. Since in these texts, beneficiaries groups are represented as singular/monolithic entities as “excluded group”, this shows that the use of noun facilitated stereotypical and essentialist inferences about the traits and behaviour of other persons or groups (Carnaghi et al., 2008).

“Human rights” perspective used in “*Peduli Program*” seems to be partial, despite the word “right(s)” mentioned 106x in the *Peduli Social Exclusion* report. The elaboration of human rights in this project limitedly to those who are

economically disadvantage in which contribute to curb “social exclusion” discourse itself by limiting the discussion to income related measures. It can be said that in “*Peduli Program*”, cherry picking human rights discourse (Giaquinta, 2016) is used to select particular ‘problematic people’ with their ‘problematic relationship’ to be intervened and corrected. At the same time, this cherry-picking mechanism filters out those that are not poor, but excluded in terms of other aspects.

Report of the “*Peduli Program*” (2016a) details 23 types of exclusion, elaborated in 8 pages (p.19-27), experienced by various individuals that comprised the project’s target population. Ranging from ‘barrier to civil rights (legal identity)’ in which received 103 reported cases and ranked in the first position of exclusion table, to ‘imprisonment’, which received only one report. This form of categorization shows how individual related experience enter the public discourse by generalizing what they call unfair treatment. This type of ranking based on individually reported cases shows how problematic is the understanding about “social exclusion” in the project context. When exclusion is understood pretty literal as the result of the verb ‘to exclude’ rather than a social process occurred in the society due to certain construction, this ‘ladder board’ shows fragmented understanding which associate with symptoms about the core issues of exclusion.

“*Peduli Program*” instead could employ what Rodger has done. This type of understanding is an example of different interpretation of what Rodgers et al (1995) has described. He uses ‘pattern of social exclusion’ rather than describe “social exclusion” statically due to the failure of subsystem in a society. He argues that depend on the general level of development of an economy, there are types of exclusion that can be relevance. The first and the most basic type of exclusion is exclusion from goods and service – as a very close to traditional concept of poverty – in which exclusion is measured by income or by expenditure. This definition of “social exclusion” could also be understood as ‘consumption way of life’, which linked with the idea of ‘consumer society’. The second is exclusion for labor market, in which labor earnings is associated with both material and immaterial component. In the context of industrialized society, these are considered as the most threatening aspect of “social exclusion”. The third is exclusion from land, in which many have experienced such exclusion in the context of developing countries. In such context, exclusion from land is considered critical aspect that link

with poverty as well as economic and social insecurities. The fourth is exclusion from security in a broader context. It is not only social and economic aspect, but also includes physical security of individual as safety or freedom from physical violence. In addition, it also refers to environmental security. Lastly is exclusion from human rights that based on arguments that socially excluded groups often do not have appropriate access, in particular related to the health system, cultural system, or religion.

In conclusion, it is clearly seen that the "*Peduli Program*" represents social exclusion as "problem" from the perspective of NGO. Most NGOs that participate in "*Peduli Program*" are those that Fakih (1991) observed as reformist, which based their working philosophy in development theory and modernization ideology. According to Fakih, these types of NGOs see the need for increase people's participation in development and tend not to question the existing structure and capitalist hegemony that dominate development discourse. He argues that the main underlying assumption of these NGOs are the underdevelopment experienced by most people caused by something wrong with people's mentality and values. Therefore, this kind of mentality – in which later described as backward – is considered as the main cause of their lack of 'participation' in development. For that reason, NGOs tasks are to 'facilitate' improvement in people's knowledge, skills and attitude as modern subject, in which able to participate in development. This process occurs because 'participation' – as Fakih argues – is not considered as fundamental values, but instead an effective mechanism to coopt and motivate people to take part in development.

Reflecting on Fakih's suggestion above, the same thinking also applied to understand how 'excluded' people are seen failing to participate and to benefit from development. As excluded people are seen as having 'problem' in their body as well as in their relationship, they are seen as deficit in collective imaginary construction where society assumes as normal. For that reason, development intervention through the role of NGO here is targeted to normalize the 'problematic body' in order to be able to build normal relationship with the society and the state. Likewise, involving the 'excluded people' into development process – in the later stage is referred as inclusion – is not understood as recognizing their fundamental right, but as mechanistic intervention to normalize the 'problematic people'. Successful indicator in the process of normalizing the excluded people is achieved

when society has endorsed such normalization, through 'acceptance'. Therefore, when "social exclusion" is represented as problematic body with problematic relationship, the prescription is to correct the 'problematic people' so they can build normal relationship with the society.

5.5.2. "It is just too costly!": Representation from Development Agencies about "social exclusion"

Despite its wide criticism, "social exclusion" remains one of the main concerns of many multilateral development agencies. Not only the World Bank that is seen as quite active in promoting the discourse of exclusion/inclusion, the United Nation is also attracted to focus on this issue in order to accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. Despite do not explicitly target the exclusion, the notion of "social inclusion" as its proposed policy appeals to different composition of partnerships. Unlike the "*Peduli* Program" that represents "social exclusion" as problematic body with problematic relationship; institution like the World Bank mainly argues that "social exclusion" is threatening and risking development outcome. It does not deny that "social exclusion" experienced by certain populations however it can affect the whole population through risking economic growth. In this representation of "social exclusion", excluded groups are those that denied opportunity due to barriers so they are unable to benefit from development. Development here is understood as mainly economic growth that leads to betterment in income and improvement in welfare. But, due to certain barriers, the excluded groups described in the text are unable to move freely and access opportunity provided by the benevolent nature of development, in which prohibit them to improve in terms of welfare.

According to World Bank and United Nation, "social exclusion" relates to different type of identity marker such as gender, race, caste, ethnicity, religion and disability status as well as group attributes that can lead to lower social standing, which often accompanied by lower outcomes in terms of income, human capital endowments, access to employment and services, and voice in both national and local decision making (The World Bank, 2013: 5, 67; United Nations, 2016b: 1). Exclusion together with poverty and income inequality will create a vicious cycle (United Nations, 2016b: 4). At the global level, it is important to address "exclusion"

because it is just too costly to bear. "Social exclusion" has significant economic and social cost associated with foregoing the contribution of individuals and groups that cannot access education system, land or the labour market (United Nations, 2016b: 12). Other than that, it is also argued that exclusion has political cost as it associated with social tension and become root of many violent conflicts (United Nations, 2016b: 12).

Institutions like UN and World Bank refer "social exclusion" as multidimensional phenomenon that phenomenon that related with material deprivation, in which poverty is one of important dimension of exclusion (United Nations, 2016b: 17). These international government bodies describe social exclusion as state in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining such situation (state). The concept of "social exclusion" is used consistently in UN report as a general term to describe those that are lack of participation in the non-partisan or exclusion from economic, political, cultural, civic and/or social life, for instance *"Exclusion consist of dynamic, multidimensional process driven by unequal power relationship interaction across four main dimension – economic, political, social and cultural – at different levels including individual, household, group, community, country and global level ..."* (Mathieson et al., 2008: 2). Another definition that the UN report uses is from Levitas, et al., (2007) that say, *"Social exclusion is complex and multidimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services and the inability to participate in the normal relationship and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural and political arenas ..."* (United Nations, 2016b: 19). They argued that this exclusion affects both the quality of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole. UN argues that people at highest risk of exclusion and extreme poverty might not be represented in household surveys in developing countries (United Nations, 2016b: 26). This certainly leads to an assumption that excluded people often well recorded in the more developed society, because they are counted on the basis of formal relationship with the state in social insurance system. On the contrary, while registration system in developing countries like Indonesia is often untrusted; the quantitative data about these excluded people/groups are unavailable.

Assumption about "social exclusion" often accepted as face value and rarely questioned critically. The World Bank especially is very interested to ensure that

state, represented as government, should be managed efficiently which understood as cost and effectively that seen as professionalism and slim bureaucracy. These are reflected by World Bank president's speech as written in preface of the World Bank Inclusion report (2013), "*We need better tools to measure the cost of exclusion and for diagnosing its root causes ... develop more sophisticated analyses of which strategies are more likely to foster social inclusion ...*" (p.xvii). For the World Bank, it is very explicit that exclusion can cause diminishing human capital, constraint efforts (which can be understood as limiting general intention to take everyone to contribute) and becomes somewhat a self-fulfilling prophecy (p.14).

As mentioned previously, critics against social exclusion that tend to focus on categorical theme justifies those socioeconomic attributes are important as the signifier of exclusion. For those excluded people are described by UN (2016b) as 'those who left behind'. This description assumes that the excluded people are too slow for development – in this case with the orientation of modernity – due to the particular socioeconomic attributes that used as marker. In its report, UN mentions children from indigenous or other ethnic minority groups are less likely compare to the non-indigenous or non-ethnic minority, to complete lower secondary school. This caused by language barrier (p.59). This argument also supported by data from UNESCO Report (2016) that mentions at about 40% of the world population does not have access to education with the language that they under understand. 'Those who left behind' here is used to represent particular characteristic of children from indigenous people and from ethnic minority, which assumed speak different language, which in turns makes them fail to complete lower education level because they cannot cope with such education system. This generic assumption silences other aspect that contributes to such low results, for example: enforced clothing code, as occurred in many cases in Indonesia. In Indonesia, going to school is represented through a certain way – children wear school uniforms. Wearing uniforms become a particular symbol for those who access formal educational institutions, especially the basic and secondary education level. For most children and parents, uniforms often seen as passkey to schools. Both public and private schools mandate their students to wear uniforms every day, in which is more than one type of uniform sets. Generally, school uniform sets comprised of national uniforms, specific school uniforms and sports uniforms, which the students have to wear each in different days. Often, school uniforms become a source of

discrimination and exploitation in schools. It is not rare that poor families have to spend extra money to purchase multiple sets of school uniforms, in addition to other unnecessary expenses that they have to bear. Not to mention, some schools also obligate their students to apply religious clothing code⁴⁸, otherwise they might face risk to be expelled from schools. At last, mandatory use of school uniforms also is a source of mockery for children from indigenous population. In short, exclusion can be understood also from a generic policy like enforcing uniform code across institutions in formal primary and secondary education; and not only focus to categorical distinction per se.

World Bank in particular continues to focus on the notion that exclusion is simply too costly to bear (p.54), in which can be seen as risk to development effort. Examples cited in its report include Akerlof (1976) and Scoville (1991). With the perspective that exclusion can hamper development results, scholars like Stiglitz (2012) and Savoia, Easaw, and McKay (2010) highlight income inequality that can damage economic growth, democracy and pro-growth institutions. This concludes that inequality, which the World Bank associates with the state being excluded could seriously, risks development in general. Other than that, the same report quantifies how big is the loss of economy if it excludes certain segments of the population, which also effects on the whole society. World Bank report (2010) of de Laat in 2010 shows that annual productivity losses caused by exclusion of Roma range from €231 million in Serbia to €887 million in Romania. The same World Bank report also estimated potential losses in earnings as a result of the Roma's inability to complete their education. In Serbia, they can expect to earn 52% more if the finish the education, in Bulgaria 83% more, in Czech 110% higher and in Romania 114% more. Zoninsein (2004) estimates that Bolivian economy would have expanded up to 36% in 1997 if the human capital and productivity gap between majority and ethnic and racial minority had been eliminated. Other report from Rauch (1991) wrote that if entrepreneurial ability is randomly distributed across the population, any barriers to entry entrepreneurs from socially excluded groups may prevent new firms from developing and prospering. Cardenas, Cong and Ñopo (2009) estimate welfare loss of up to 22% due to lack of trust and cooperation among different ethnic groups in selected Latin American countries. Other study done by

⁴⁸ <https://www.insideindonesia.org/uniform-jilbab>

Molinas Vega (2012) as cited in WB report (2013) measure disparity in access to education, health and other public services among Latin American children based on predetermined characteristics like gender, ethnicity, education of the parents and place of birth. These organizations – Word Bank, UN, and similar organizations – also claim that experience of being excluded can have long-term consequences for human and social capital. It is interesting to highlight the emphasis on ‘capital’ (both human and social) rather than the point of view of rights.

Such cost-effective perspective in representing the social exclusion as an important problem that risks development also shown by a number of reports. A research report about LGBT exclusion in Indonesia released in 2017 uses approximation projected by Klawitter (2015) that estimate gay and bisexual men earn about 11% less than heterosexual men. On a similar note, lesbian and bisexual women earn about 9% less than the heterosexual women mainly because they appear to be less constraint from gender barrier. In the same report, economists predict that wages as factor that contribute to overall economic productivity. This means that 10% in LGBT will also increase about the same figure in the area of productivity. Employing the same model from similar studies in India, this study estimates that the country potentially lost around 862 million to 12 billion USD as a result of LGBT exclusion in labor market. Other study on disability tries to calculate the annual GDP loss, which was approximately USD 3.1 billion related with long term disability, about USD 32.5 billion related to household long term disability and about USD 15.5 billion related to short term disability. Overall, it concludes that about USD 55.8 million or around 7.7% loss of Canadian GDP in 1993 (Banks and Polack, 2014; Metts, 2000; Rioux, 1998).

It is apparent that international development agencies like World Bank and UN represent “problem” of social exclusion as cost-related problem. Both World Bank and UN explicitly calculate how big would be the loss of a country’s economy due to excluding certain population from accessing to job market. This in turn is portrayed as risking country’s growth as well as interrupting process of development. Despite in some text, these institutions also call for fulfillment of rights of the citizen such as access to education and health service. From their perspective, exclusion in service highlights the assumption that service is public goods, which should be freely accessed by people. Indeed, it is never mentioned in

any of the report that most service are operated through a market system, in which for most developing countries like Indonesia, public service system are not reliable and weak that shifted people's priority to the private system instead.

Like what Silver (1994) mentions that in specialization paradigm, separate spheres are created and market work best when States and institutions intervene the least. In this paradigm, it is believed that government income supports create work disincentives that engender long-term dependency; the traditional solution to poverty and unemployment is to create jobs and raise productivity by lowering wages and eliminating rigid employment regulations. Then, it can be interpreted that who are excluded from accessing service in return lowering their capability to be included in other areas. In determining those who are excluded, the World Bank distinguished three intersecting domains, namely: service, market and space, in where particular group of people are excluded and should be included. Furthermore, various topics are segregated based on how the World Bank's assumption how they should be regulated. For instance, issues like land, housing, labour and credit fall under the category of market (The World Bank, 2013: 9); on the contrary, social protection, information, electricity, transport, education, health and water are considered services (The World Bank, 2013: 9) – in which ideally should be provided by the state. For that categorization, it is interesting to examine further that most World Bank financing support to developing countries uses the language of 'investment' in which understood as intervention the area of services. For instance, such 'investments' are targeted to intervene how these services – health, education, transport, electricity, etc. – as public goods are being governed. These interventions then intended to transform 'bad' human capital to 'prospective' ones by improving the services area. Furthermore, results from this 'investment' to human capital are expected to increase the capability in other area, which is market domain.

What is constitute as service, according to the World Bank, is important to unpack the problem of social exclusion that represented here. Since services is understood as public goods – not necessarily as basic human right – exclusion from services is represented as barrier to public goods, in which lead to what Silver (1994) points out as 'discrimination' in specialization paradigm. Moreover, in order to justify who are discriminated to access public goods, identity marker is often used to show that certain groups based on particular characteristic are restricted to

such public goods. Continuing what Silver (1994) describes that individual liberalism, in which strongly underlined the specialization paradigms, allows voluntary deprivation in which emphasize on individual choice to accept or not. In addition, she also mentions that social differentiation – like in the case of many identity-based social groups – is a horizontal dimension of social structure. With this assumption, ‘discrimination’ that occurs between social groups in access these domains – market, service, and space – are seen to be individual experience, like what Silver mentions that ‘discrimination’ was the form of inappropriate distinction on group categories between free and equal individuals whose access have been limited or whose participation is restricted are constructed as individual experience.

The representation produced by international development agencies using perspective of specialization paradigm is the most dominant narrative so far. This representation is aligned with dominant discourse of development in which focuses on growth and modernity. As Escobar (1995) once said that development itself is problematic, because its existence opens up possibility to intervene the life of people’s, particularly in the third world. Based on Escobar’s view about development and its relation to social exclusion, there is almost no case presented in the text produced by the international development agencies about how “social exclusion” that occurs in relation to development in dominant population in developed countries. De Haan (1999) once suggests that because social exclusion is a theoretical concept and should be theoretical concept, Silver’s paradigms are useful as an analytical lens how to understand the reality and not about the reality itself. However, what has been done so far, either by international development agencies or by development NGOs are describing the reality itself. For that reason, “social exclusion” as a concept here used to problematize ‘body’ and ‘relationship’ as adopted by development NGO and to problematize ‘freedom’ by international development agencies.

In short, international development agencies represent ‘social exclusion’ as ‘problem’ that could risk development. Jackson (1999) criticizes in how social exclusion is being depicted and represents individuals as passive recipients of the effect of processes – in this case I see this as development processes – rather than their active agency. In this perspective, I agree with Jackson that point out the silence of agency in this matter, through the representation of controlling and static

institutions. Apassamy et al (1995) once argue that "*exclusion seeks to explain the condition of the social outsiders not in term of their personal characteristics, but in relation to prevalent economic, social and political condition*" (p.237) and in this perspective 'excluder' is the one that are seen as having agency. This problem representation of "social exclusion" also denied a process of constant construction by dominant group in societies where the 'excluded groups' are situated and fatally, when "social exclusion" is transported to third world countries, these groups are depicted with feeling of worthlessness and uselessness (Jackson, 1999).

5.6. CONCLUSION

Through employing critical self-reflection lens to explain my autoethnography as "development apparatus", I have unraveled different ways to underline power dynamics and social structures that associated with how Development operates as a mechanism which policy solution were formulated based on certain construction of "problem". This chapter has explained how "social exclusion" is constructed as a "problem" that poses risk to Development which came into existence through a series of problematization process. Such problematization processes were operated in such a way that determine "social inclusion" as the logical solution to address such "problem". The introduction of "social exclusion" in Indonesia's Development landscape mainly came from European discourse that is used to rationalize "social inclusion" as the predetermined intervention. Despite its possible use in the context of postcolonial society in the southern hemisphere, the conceptual explanation of "social exclusion" is viewed as ambiguous and slippery concept which generally applied in vastly homogenous context like in European states. In addition to that, dominant narrative of social exclusion is frequently associated with cultural and identity attributes rather than unequal power relation that structurally embedded in the society where social exclusion operates.

In this chapter, I have unpacked how "social exclusion" is represented as a particular kind of "problem" in many developing countries where "social inclusion" has been prepared as the main intervention to solve such "problem". Through What's the Problem Represented to be or WPR approach conceptualized

by Carol Bacchi, the problem representation of “social exclusion” emerged in two different ways. At the project level, “social exclusion” is represented as bad social relationship between the problematic body and their particular environment. In this level, the representation focuses on victimhood of the excluded people that consequently failing them to access public services in which various barriers restrict them to “participate” in Development. Failing to develop a meaningful relationship with the broader community where they live has enabled the “correction” that was to be performed by the projects like “*Peduli*”. Moreover “social exclusion” that was capitalized by “*Peduli Program*”, unfortunately, has neglected deeply entrenched issues that involve transactional relationship among various power holders at the local level in which rather common in the postcolonial society. This naïve portrayal overlooks more profound problematic relationship between state and the society that mostly characterized by informal patron-client type which is extremely fluid and always in constant change. Furthermore, like what Kabeer (2000) criticizes earlier that “social exclusion” focuses too much on the “problematic” aspects which emphasize categorical groups where they are constructed as the “problem” of exclusion that required “solution” of inclusion.

On the other hand, at the global level – through the representation that resulted from portrayal of the international institutions – “social exclusion” means unequal distribution where some people benefit more than others in accessing services and benefit from available opportunities. In addition to that, this representation also underlines inefficient governance where the excluded people are ill-invested who they are seen as unable to contribute to economic growth of the country. This consequently interpreted as cost that Development should bear due to significant loss due to excluding certain segments of the population from accessing to job market. Cost effective perspective by solving the issues of “social exclusion” is aligned with Silver’s specialization paradigm on social exclusion that underlines the dominant logic of neoliberal Development. Such representation that is based on economic growth and modernity has rendered “social exclusion” as “problem” that could jeopardize Development outcomes when “problems” that are faced by excluded populations are seen as individual experience that are detached from structural disadvantaged experienced by these groups.

**VI – “SOCIAL
INCLUSION” –
ENGINEERING SOLUTION
FOR “EXCLUSION”
PROBLEM**

VI – "SOCIAL INCLUSION" – ENGINEERING SOLUTION FOR "EXCLUSION" PROBLEM

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will describe how the concept of "social inclusion" was understood in Indonesia, as it was started in the context of PNPM *Peduli* – which I extensively involved in administering such development intervention – and its subsequent project "*Peduli Program*". Through a reduced and simplistic understanding of "social inclusion" as 'insertion'; the project, that I participated in its expansion, employed this narrow understanding through the involvement of NGO partners to target and to reach specific population in Indonesia. Such population was constructed in a particular way through popular method of situational assessments in order to justify their "socially excluded" identity as "project beneficiaries". By doing so, projects like those technically focused on aspects and attributes of the target populations to be intervened that ignore structural injustice that profoundly embedded in the society which exclude them in the first place. In this chapter, I incorporate my personal experience when I formed part of the project team through autoethnographic method of analysis and writing. This section starts with my autoethnographic account as development *bureaucrats* employed in the World Bank to administer a "social inclusion" project. It follows with an explanation how scientific methods were used to justify reorientation of the "social inclusion" project which led to "refining" the development intervention for a more robust structure, quantifiable target, and replicable activities aftermath the project closure. Further, I will explore the process of how the notion of "social inclusion" is transferred by the *western expert* that hired to facilitate the transmission of this concept that travels across context; and how this concept was being understood semantically, translated locally, and deployed incorrectly through rigorous process of reprogramming development intervention.

6.2. PROGRAMMING “SOCIAL INCLUSION” FOR THE “PROBLEMATIC PEOPLE”: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION OF A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMER

It was a quiet day in the middle of March 2013. Unlike the typical working days, the office felt empty. Most Jakarta-based staffs were travelling to supervise project implementation in the ‘field’. It has been 8 months or so, since I started to work in that office – a project management facility financed by The World Bank to support the implementation of one of the biggest Community Driven Development (CDD) operations in the southern hemisphere, called PNPM (*Progran Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat) Mandiri*⁴⁹, translated as National Program for Community Empowerment. At that time, the Project itself has been ongoing for 5 years, since 2009, and has given birth to smaller projects that centralizing on ‘empowerment’ approach to tackle various themes. These smaller projects used the same ‘PNPM’ brand with some other variations, in which aligned with their own theme, such as: PNPM Green, PNPM Justice, PNPM *Generasi* or PNPM *Peduli* – the project that became my full attention for some years.

Quite regularly, staffs were travelling outside of Jakarta – often to remote areas where the project was implemented – mostly to monitor the implementation or to host high-level visits from Washington, international delegation and government representative. On that day, the office was quite empty and the workload was not heavy as well. While I was reading the NGOs’ reports – as my routine task – Heather came in, an Australian woman who has been living in Indonesia for more than 9 years or so who was also the project coordinator. “*Good morning, ladies!*” as she usually called me and my other colleague Siti – an Indonesian lady – who was recruited at about the same time as me as the project’s Monitoring & Evaluation analyst. “*Are you guys busy today?*” as Heather continued while was approaching her desk, “*Hanna and Chloe are coming today. Hanna just landed from Bali last night. Shall we have working lunch outside to discuss the new Peduli arrangement?*” Hanna, a British woman, was our M&E Senior Advisor. She lived in Bali and worked for an Australian-funded project in the Eastern part of Indonesia. Once every two months or so, she came to Jakarta and spent a week or two for

⁴⁹ Mandiri means *self-sufficient*

catching up with us – the project team that based on Jakarta. Unlike Hanna that lived in Bali and had to travel frequently to Jakarta every now and then, Chloe, the Capacity Building Senior Advisor, lived in Jakarta. Chloe is a U.S. citizen and has been living in Indonesia for a short period of time back then. She joined her husband who was a high official at USAID⁵⁰ in Indonesia and was recruited as part-time consultant in the project.

"Sure..." we replied, *"Nothing urgent so far... So, I think I can bring those reports home. Besides the deadline for our quarterly report is not anytime soon!"* I added, signaling my agreement with her proposal. *"Shall I book a meeting room upstairs?"* I offered to secure available meeting room, so we won't be disturbed during our working lunch. *"No, no... we will have it outside of the office! I will check if our driver is available to drop us to Grand Indonesia. I have reserved for us in the 'Social House'. Ah... have you ladies ever been to Social House?"* Heather asked. We shook our head, *"Never heard that place before. Where is that exactly?"* Siti went straight away typed the name of the restaurant in Google, *"Ah, it's in BCA⁵¹ Tower, next to Kempinski Hotel..."* Siti continued browsing, tried to find more information about Social House, especially how much the cost of our lunch would be. I looked at Siti in a glance, tried to sending her message telepathically – wondering why we didn't get to choose where or at least gave our opinion. She looked back at me, with reciprocal look. Suddenly, I knew she knew what I meant.

Our office was a renovated Dutch house in one of the most exclusive area in Jakarta. During the Dutch period, that area was elite residential area for the Dutch bureaucrats, politician and high military personnel. Until now, there are still many houses with Dutch colonial styles which have been transformed into ambassadors' private residences, conglomerates private residences, or rented properties – like the house that The World Bank rented as our office. Despite the office of World Bank Indonesia itself is situated in one of the most expensive financial districts in Indonesia; but since the Government of Indonesian has requested to set up separate facility support office for the PNPM *Mandiri* implementation in a location that was fairly reachable from the National Planning Agency's office, The Bank ended up rented this house with a roofing price. It was a very nice, big, villa-style house with

⁵⁰ United States Development Agency

⁵¹ Bank Central Asia, one of the major banks in Indonesia

spacious terrace, and I recon it is approximately more than 1500m². It has cemented parking lot that can host more than 15 cars all at once and full with greeneries in its surroundings. I remembered we had some mango trees, but the fruits were not sweet and juicy. Instead, they were very sour with a pale white flesh. The house also has an inner courtyard that surrounded with a fishpond. Two white frangipani trees were planted in one of the corners of the courtyard and were directly sent from Bali. That house has 12 rooms, which were transformed into offices for each project, in addition to kitchen, a large dining room and a rooftop dining area, luxurious bathrooms, and several meeting rooms.

After almost an hour struggling with traffic jam, finally we reached our destination, "Grand Indonesia", the most luxurious shopping mall located in the heart of Jakarta. It is situated in the most expensive area in the country and filled with hundreds of high-end outlets of international fashion brands. The property itself owned by one of the most prestigious real estate companies that used to be Suharto's conglomerates allies. On the first floor of the mall's east tower, here is the Social House, a western-concept high-end restaurant with wine lounge and bar. Siti and myself, threw meaningful look at each other and wondered, "*This is going to be our most expensive lunch...*" I muttered almost murmured, while Siti wrinkled her brow slightly signaled her anxiety "*Let's get the cheapest one... Maybe Nasi Goreng⁵² or something...*" At the table on the center, I saw both Hanna and Chloe were chatting. Apparently, they have arrived earlier than us. Suddenly I heard someone said, "*Shall we order the food? I am starving...*"

As predicted, the food price was just beyond what usually we spend for daily lunch. The *Nasi Goreng* was not there, and the cheapest menu was instead Fish and Chips that cost us like 15€ or so per portion. It was just too much, because for regular lunch, it usually cost me less than 2€ for something that I can get in the street vendors. While waited for our orders, we started to talk about our project, "*Peduli*" that required some kind of alteration as soon as possible. It was started more than six months ago, when the donors' consortium had requested to conduct a project review before they extend the project and add more funding. Results from the review were somehow unsurprising and have been predicted earlier. The main recommendation was to reshuffle the project architecture completely and to

⁵² Fried rice. A standard menú that most restaurants have

streamline its "empowerment" approach into a "social inclusion" one with a robust infrastructure that can generate quantifiable results and replicable innovation. Consequently, it was meant to completely change the implementing scheme in order to achieve better and clearer development outcomes. For that reason, there was a small talk among the donors and influential persons that had 'backdoor' connections about the future of PNPM *Peduli* implementation team. We called ourselves, the implementation team as Task Team. The rumor circulated at the staff room, during the morning coffee sessions and in between the lunch break, that PNPM *Peduli* Task Team would be dismantled for efficiency reason. One likelihood option was that to reduce the number of staffs under the World Bank contract through the management of the Program Support Facility (PSF) and to transfer some project's aspects to an international NGO that is seen as more experienced in administering projects like PNPM *Peduli*. As a consequence of this process was not only the activities and the relationship that has been built with the local communities, but also jeopardizing the trust from the NGO partners. Besides that, a number of local NGOs should find new target population that fit within the new design with the expenses of leaving the existing local communities behind which were not match under this new structure. Lastly, this also affected our job security which means that we should be prepared to be jobless anytime, once the project transition was settled. For some of us that work long enough in aid sector, loosing job due to "strategic changes" of the donor or the government, is not something new; and it was just another regular day for many of us, laborer in development industry.

During that lunch, the discussions were not only focus on the project architecture, but also what's the future implication for the current project beneficiaries. At that time, the plan was to finance five national NGOs, which in turn would give funds to their local NGO partners to implement "social inclusion" activities with the approved target population. Each one of them has their own particular advantage in working with different types of excluded groups, such as: indigenous people that reliant with natural resources, religious minority, victims of gross human rights violations, youth and transsexual person, and poor peasants. But, once we introduce the new architecture, that composition might not be the same anymore. Some current beneficiaries might continue to be part of the project; some might be terminated due to un-match priorities. We knew for sure that one

national NGO network that work with poor peasant would be terminated from the project. I remember what Heather once said that, "*They (the NGO) still don't get it! They insist to work with poor peasants without clear problem and even more fuzzy solution.*" She continuously expressed her dissatisfaction when the NGO that provided 'weak' link between "social exclusion" and poverty among the landless peasants during their pre-proposal presentation a few months ago. She thought that poor peasants were not excluded community – not as obvious as female sex workers, which this NGO had worked with in one of the sub-projects. Heather continuously 'encouraged' this NGO to work with female sex workers which she believed as the perfect target population for the new *Peduli* scheme. Even she slightly 'thread' them that if they continued with the landless peasants, their proposal might not get through. Now, I might respond to her differently. It was perhaps not the "social exclusion" that we understand, but it was other form of exclusion that we didn't understand. After I thoroughly learn about what kind of "social exclusion" that we were used to employ in order to justify the rationale of a project intervention, I obtained an alternative view that has shifted my understanding about dominant narrative on "social exclusion". If I would have such alternative view around "social exclusion" experienced by a particular community, I would have argued that landless peasants are one of the most vulnerable groups in Indonesia, as they are forced to let their land go due to massive industrialization project in many areas in Indonesia. In addition, their vulnerability due to unprotected exposure in the market mechanism is inevitable. Unfortunately, according to the 'expert' that it is not an exclusion issue, it is just simply poverty issue.

Personally, I quite like to hang out with those expatriate ladies. They were nice individuals. Often, we were not always talk about work, but also about more personal topics. But there were some moments that dealing with them was ethically irritating. Like today, when we discussed about what could have happened with the current project beneficiaries, who might be terminated due to the upcoming changes. We then talked about a young female sex worker from Manado in Northern Sulawesi, whom we met during our monitoring and evaluation visit. Her name is Fitri and at that time she was 18, already a mother of a young baby. For almost 2 years or so, Fitri and her fellow female sex workers have received training to be hairdresser financed by PNPM *Peduli* project. This training was expected to

help them out from the exploitative sex work and to start a new 'dignified' life. Unfortunately, with the new project scheme, these girls would not be part of the project anymore. Besides Fitri and her friends, there would be many more project beneficiaries that might be terminated, among others were the poor widow victims of domestic abuse, the poor fishermen community, the transgendered groups and the landless female farmers. During such a lavish lunch meeting, where each one of us enjoyed a 20€ meal; it felt like such a contradiction because we also talked about the life of marginalized people that had to rely on less than 2€ to 3€ daily income. Throughout that meeting, I tried to digest this perplexing paradox between enjoying opulent lifestyle in the circle of international development workers/consultants and the life of the marginalized people, whose life were to be intervened by the development project that we engineered. Sometimes I questioned my naïve-self, asking how unethical was it.

The image of lavish and flamboyant life of international development workers, especially those that hired by international agency like United Nations, the World Bank or donor agencies, has perpetuated profound critics against that. Fechter (2012) found that public perception and strong criticism about international development workers that live 'well out of poverty' are based on moral dimension of their lifestyle in comparison to others. For many years, Indonesia has become one of those places that Apthorpe (2011) calls as *Aidland*; especially during the great disaster of Tsunami, which has collapsed the northwestern part of Indonesia in 2004. The definition of Indonesia as a kind of *Aidland* has also attracted specific kind of people, namely Aidmen and Aidwomen (Fechter, 2012), which are dominated by western expatriates hired by international aid institutions and were deployed to the third world countries to intervene the life of the population in those countries by fixing their "problems". The behavior of the inhabitants of *Aidland* was described very well through Fechter's observation in Cambodia. Her findings confirm that the motif of 'living well' came up strongly in all the narratives of Aidmen and Aidwomen, despite their stories were represented in many different ways. It is even more shocking realities that the way these professionals maintain the condition of 'living well' was through the commodification process analyzing, writing and giving recommendation about poverty (p. 1485). Therefore, it could be argued that such activities are constructed as neutral through the process of professionalization of development, which blanketed under the idea of

strengthening the capacity of local organization to be better development bureaucrats and professional and managerial institutions in the *Aidland*.

Later I learnt that for urban-middle class national development workers like us, or maybe white international development workers/consultants like my other colleagues, this project was just a profession, a job, and we get paid because of our expertise in designing projects, developing result frameworks, conducting capacity building activities and writing evocative change stories about them. This description was just one of many similar occasions such as lunch meetings, design workshops, and stakeholder forums that conducted in various fancy places which I attended during my tenure in the project. Ironically, while we were talking about the life of the marginalized group and how to intervene their life by engineering a project to change their behavior or their way of living; we comfortably sat in our ivory tower – consoled by lavish lifestyle of ‘international’ development workers – detaching ourselves away from the reality that we tried to construct.

Despite the PNPM *Peduli* project was formally launched on June 2011, but on the ground activities with the beneficiaries were just implemented only 9 months prior to the project evaluation. Delay on the implementation with the target population mainly due to complicated and rigid administrative requirements imposed by the World Bank as the main host of this project which should be followed by the national NGOs before granting the fund to their local partners. Consequently, the local NGOs have just started to implement their activities together with the target population once the administration and project paperwork have been fulfilled by their national donor. As mentioned in the previous chapter, what the project defined as *marginalized groups* were not crystal clear, which in turn led to various interpretations from the NGO partners. In that stage of project implementation, *marginalized groups* can be *any* groups under the bracket of loosely defined ‘poor people’. Some activities that they conducted include small-scale livelihood activities ranged from duck farming, food and snack production, and rubber seedling; had helped these *marginalized groups* to access public facilities and services such as civic registration and administration, education, and healthcare; and building partnership with local government around key issues that these groups face constantly. At other level, national NGOs have started to carry out their dual functions as local donor as well as capacity building provider for their local partners.

During that time-frame, the project claimed that as a result of its intervention, some changes at the local level started to emerge. As mentioned in the project update report (2012a), it mentions that, "*marginalized men and women involved in the Program are already sharing stories of personal and collective changes related to: i) improved livelihoods; ii) access to services; iii) citizen empowerment; and iv) engagement with government, private sector and the broader community*" (p.6). The project claimed that it has helped its beneficiaries to establish 71 new small home-run businesses with the support of local NGO partners. This result made about 88% of the total local activities that focused on improving the livelihood of the marginalized groups. Illustration about livelihood improvements were accompanied by a number of beneficiaries' testimony, especially by the women, how the project has helped them in establishing small business, generating income for the first time as well as enabling them to have their own saving, also for the first time. One popular approach to attract their interests to participate in the project was revolving saving and loan groups among the marginalized group – in particular among the women – which was often claimed able to facilitate beneficiaries' access to financial resources for their small businesses. Such approach of small-scale income generating activities was indeed very attractive and effective enough to tease out their interest due to the financial component that appear as an incentive for being active participants of the project.

Beside claim about economic improvement, PNPMP *Peduli* (PSF, 2012a, 2013a) also proudly reported that it has contributed in improving marginalized people's access to services, especially healthcare and education. This was done through directly providing such services to those who are out of government's outreach; providing information for the purpose of raising awareness; or facilitating the target population to obtain basic public services through connecting them with the government service providers. To show that there were significant improvements in accessing public services, the project quantified the result by counting how many birth certificates, identity cards, district health cards, family registration card, and marriage certificate were obtained by the target population as a result of facilitation by the local NGOs (p. 8-9). In addition, the project also claimed to contribute in empowerment of the marginalized people that increased their level of confidence and ability to speak up (p.10). All these sporadic changes and improvement in the life of the target population were regularly reported by the national NGOs to the

PNPM Peduli Task Team. By the Task Team, these were understood as the project's progress to the right direction according to its design plan. However, because of the previous agreement with the donor consortium, an 'independent' evaluation process should be carried out as soon as possible prior to additional financing.

I remember my very first mission with this project, which occurred in August 2012. For a new development worker like me, this mission brought a certain type of excitement and expectation, which I believed that this project brought benefit to the people that were being ignored by the social welfare programs. Besides, I was also genuinely believed that this project would make a difference to their lives. It was a visit to a prison, where we met about 30 'problematic' teenagers that were locked up due to criminal cases of juvenile delinquency, such as drug misuse, theft, or pornography acts. But it was not just a usual project supervision mission, instead it was a "VIP mission" – as we called it that way – which involved *very important persons* in the circle of high-level Indonesian bureaucrats, because two vice ministers would join that trip. Since it was a VIP mission, PNPM *Peduli* Task Team together with the national and local NGO partners were racing against time to prepare this highly bureaucratic mission. In short, as the mission was successful, there was some discussions during three hours land travel followed by one and a half hour of flight with the vice minister. Mr. SR – the vice minister of poverty alleviation and community empowerment – who passionately involved in conceptualizing PNPM *Peduli* project since the beginning, concluded the whole trip by saying that this project was different from the generic PNPM Rural that only focuses on empowering the rural community. For him, PNPM *Peduli* was instead a "social inclusion" project, which attempted to incorporate the marginalized group into mainstream government-led social welfare development program that often overlooked the existence of these groups. He continued that what PNPM *Peduli* did was "*regaining back their dignity*" which have been destroyed and torn apart because of various stigmas and negative stereotypes from the society which lead to their exclusion. For him, the NGOs were better placed in comparison with the government to reach these marginalized groups because they are more flexible and tend to be trusted by the community, especially the disadvantage community. It was quite a surprise to hear a high-level bureaucrat like Mr. SR spoke about how NGOs are often more reliable than the government in delivering *development* to the marginalized group. From that on, PNPM *Peduli* was baptized as a "social

inclusion" project with the intention to solve "social exclusion" problem experienced by the marginalized.

It was probably the first time that PNPM *Peduli* Task Team and the national NGO partners heard about the term of "social inclusion"; as opposed to a more popular terms like poverty alleviation or community empowerment. Certainly, information about "social inclusion" as a concept and as a policy approach was limitedly discussed on Indonesian context. The term "social inclusion" itself sounds *good*, benign and desirable intention, as PNPM *Peduli* Task Team and the NGO partners reflected about how the project would benefit the target population and bring *development* to those that were being left out from the system. It could be said that the kind of "social inclusion" that PNPM *Peduli* project understood was a kind of sympathetic intention towards the target population that never benefit from any *development* program. They are those often were skipped and overlooked by government service provider due to various problems, such as their absence from government database because of failing in civic registration, nomadic lifestyle or rejected by the community due to deviant behavior and considered immoral. For the above reason, PNPM *Peduli* Task Team and the national NGOs partners conceptualized that the best way to ensure better access to public services and livelihood improvement through development was through "social inclusion" approach that would 'include' those who are excluded. Furthermore, to shift the focus from "community empowerment" to "social inclusion", an external evaluation was needed to justify a need to re-focus the objective of PNPM *Peduli* project.

The requirement to have an 'independent' evaluation process to assess the PNPM *Peduli* project actually has been discussed early in 2012. The donor consortium group or Joint Management Committee (JMC), a governing body that comprised of representatives from donor agencies, national government and the World Bank, mandated PNPM *Peduli* team to conduct an independent evaluation to evaluate the project's pilot phase to identify any valuable lessons to inform the new design moving to the next phase. This evaluation then was treated as a prerequisite to obtain new tranches of project funding. As the reason to conduct evaluation was to see whether the project has progressed into the direction according to the design, it was intended to be broad and *general*, which focus on a number of things, like the emerging changes around the life of the project's

beneficiaries; the project's effectiveness in targeting and promoting *participatory approach*; its usefulness in capacity building; satisfaction from the project's beneficiaries'; the project's business model on providing grant to NGOs; as well as partnership aspects between different stakeholders – NGOs, target population and the local government. As a start, we started to navigate our individual contacts to recruit *expert consultants* to carry out this independent evaluation. Guided by a very broad and generic scope of evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToR), what matter the most for the project Task Team was more technical administrative rather than the structural process to address marginalization, exclusion and eventually poverty. For us what important was whether PNPM *Peduli* as alternative business model would work effectively to deliver projects through local NGOs by addressing their weak programming capacity and lack of professionalism. Consequently, to ensure that this evaluation fit the purpose of technical programming including the team's expectation, the recruitment of the team was not an open competitive process and it rather focused on selecting the consultants who can do the job and understand the donors' expectation.

As the focus of the evaluation mainly to find out whether this alternative model would bring the expected results on aid effectiveness, it was not intended to evaluate poverty alleviation effort for the target population which require more complex calculation and longer duration on the implementation side. This objective was explicitly articulated in the ToR (2012c) that this evaluation was "not expected to assess impact at the beneficiary level but will however look for evidence of emerging changes in terms of beneficiary awareness, knowledge and skills and organizational development" (p.2). Unfortunately, the articulation of what it means as "awareness" and "knowledge" were rather generic and frivolous which did not go through an in-depth explanation about these terms and how they would be measured. At the end, what "awareness" and "knowledge" were meant simply translated as "*knowing*" – which do not necessarily mean understand or comprehend– certain processes or practical skills which are useful in their daily life. This shows that reductionist approach of this evaluation has started since the beginning of the process.

Programming PNPM *Peduli* was about testing alternative delivery channel to complement government-run PNPM *Mandiri* program. This modality focused on activating effective and efficient nature of NGOs for project delivery in comparison

to the government-contracted personnel. It is used to underline PNPM *Peduli*'s main assumption that poverty alleviation scheme would benefit the marginalized group *if* the NGO were equipped through capacity strengthening and additional financial support to facilitate marginalized and underserved communities as its target population. Moreover, a series of problematization should also be in place as part of the programming, subsequent to designing technically rendered solution (Li, 2013). Explicit narrative about how the 'marginalized groups' were largely absent in current poverty alleviation program was repeatedly used to justify such 'genuine' intention, while at the same time the project machinery prioritized effective and efficient delivery through optimizing NGO's function as benign facilitators. With this narrative, the absence of marginalized groups from government's program's outreach was seen as 'problem' that prevents them to engage and to benefit from the poverty alleviation programs.

Vibrant civil society was often used to proxy the quality of democratization (Howard, 2010; International IDEA, 2000). This was employed to rationalize donor intervention to strengthen the capacity of Indonesia's civil society as an immature sector and weak (Antlöv et al., 2012; Sidel, 2005). In PNPM *Peduli*, NGO was treated as singular representation of civil society organizations which were portrayed as the main correction target to reach their maturity. The 'problem' of NGO's weak capacity came into existence in respond to the predetermined corrective mechanism which has been conceptualized beforehand. It was initiated as a project to solve 'problem' in aid delivery that failed to bring the target population into the broader PNPM Mandiri scheme by devising NGO as the most suitable agent to execute this intervention in a way that government-contracted facilitators failed to deliver. By having squad of local NGOs to implement this type of intervention, PNPM *Peduli* Task Team and the donors were confident that better result would be achievable *if* NGOs were able to facilitate the target population to self-organize, to negotiate, to build network, to voice their concern and to access information (Akatiga, 2010: 40) in efficient and effective manner as prescribed by neoliberal theorists.

The PNPM *Peduli* project logic was straightforward. It was derived from an assumption that the marginalized groups would voluntarily participate in government-sponsored program like PNPM *only if* they were properly facilitated. Here, special facilitation mechanism through NGOs was idealized as the

prerequisite neoliberal intervention that would enable the marginalized group to compete in a market-based system through various short-term project-based activities (Whitelum, 2003). The relationship between national/local NGOs with their donors, facilitated by multilateral agencies like the World Bank, shows what Foucault explains as subject of governmentality (Foucault, 1991; Gordon, 1991) which describes NGOs that are composed into governable subjects (Brigg, 2001; Lemke, 2002; Schiavo, 2014) whose 'problems' should be corrected to enable the well-functioning neoliberal orthodoxy in aid delivery. Through this logic, the project simply saw that both NGOs and the target population would benefit from the project intervention at different levels. Through 'open-menu' approach as non-interference mechanism, activities conducted by the local NGOs and target populations were extremely diverse. Activities that addressed practical needs of the target populations were particularly popular. PNPM *Peduli* continuously reported significant 'changes' occurred in the life of the marginalized group that signaled their 'improvement' in respond to the diagnose 'problem' as explained in the study. 'Changes' were recorded in terms of newly obtained practical skills, increased confidence, better literacy skills, wider network and improved awareness on various issues related to administrative procedures or government welfare support programs. PNPM *Peduli* project also reported 'positive changes' of the NGO partners in terms of their professionalism in building and managing relationship with local government and private sector as well as their improvement in project compliance. These 'changes' were collected, narrated and presented as impactful evidences resulted from project's intervention which then transformed into "change stories" and "best practices". Such achievements were evocatively narrated into meaningful 'changes' in the life of project's target population which were presented as their 'first time ever' experiences. This 'first time ever' experiences cover a wide range of issues such as poor women obtained income for the first time, poor widows had sense of independence and control over their lives for the first time and indigenous people got access to public health first time ever (PSF, 2012a: 4–5). Such evidence of "positive changes" led us to reflect on what Cornwall (2007) has previously argued about 'empowerment' that has been circumscribed and simplified into a "simple act of transformation bestowed by a transfer of money and or information" rather than a complex process of "self-realization, self-actualization and mobilization to demand change" (p.7)

As previously mentioned, this evaluation was not intended to evaluate impact/result of the program; it was intended to evaluate whether PNPM *Peduli* as alternative delivery model was effective and efficient to insert the target population into the existing poverty alleviation scheme. For this, the instruction on the ToR was made clear and explicit in ensuring the expert consultants to focus on technical aspect rather than answering poverty problems of the target population. This evaluation was interested to review 4 program aspects, as its study foci. The first aspect was Partnership between CSO and marginalized groups for development activities that focused on *'emerging changes for marginalized men, women and transgender in relation to livelihoods, access to services and knowledge of rights and the drivers for those changes that are attributable'* to the project. The second aspect was the capacities of local NGOs, which emphasis on the *improvement* of their operational system, engagement with the beneficiaries as well as capacities to implement activities and to achieve targets such as increase number of beneficiaries. Such *improvement* also includes local NGOs network with other stakeholders to promote collaboration and shared learning. Third aspects to look at was the capacities of the national NGOs with whom PNPM *Peduli* Task Team has direct relationship through formal and legal contract. Like the previous aspect, it also focused on *improvement* in their operational system, capacity to work with their local NGO partners, size of their network, innovation for building the capacity of their local NGO partner as well as to increase the size of their target population to reach (PSF, 2012c). These aspects were clear priorities of this evaluation which centralize on NGO's technical aspects that include some elements of modern and professional organization model that theorized as better facilitators than the state bureaucrats for the marginalized groups as devised by the PNPM *Peduli*'s programmer. And lastly was the aspect of program coordination, which carried out by the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team. Compare with the previous ones, the last aspect seems to be more complex, which emphasized its importance on the work performance of the project Task Team. In this aspect, the assessment team was directed to focus on *effective mechanisms* for coordination as well as touch upon leadership on strategic features, capacity building strategies, Monitoring & Evaluation aspects around data for implementation, results and learning. Besides that, it also shall focus on *responsiveness* to handle problems in the program management, which can be seen through NGOs perception towards the work of

the Task Team. Lastly it also shall see actual or potential contribution of this project to wider agenda on government's poverty reduction programs.

The evaluation process was carried out for about three months, which include preparatory works, design and test the instruments, data collection and analysis, and report writing. The evaluation team visited 17 local NGOs projects (out of total 66 NGOs participated in the project), in which represented about 26% of the total local project. They also interviewed almost 80 beneficiaries that participated in the project as well as more than 100 NGOs staffs at national and local level. Certainly, the proportion in selecting the interviewees was lean towards the NGOs' personnel rather than the target population. This was in accordance to the overall objective and strategies of the evaluation, which aimed to see how the project machinery works rather than the results itself – whether it really did improve the socioeconomic condition of the target population, as stated in the project development objectives. In addition to that, the sampled project locations were selected purposively on the basis of convenience, time consideration as well as other logistical considerations. Consequently, this selection neglected sub-projects that really show impactful activities and created significant changes for the target populations. Furthermore, due to the logistical comforts, the evaluation team tend to select sub-projects that concentrated in four areas that were less complicated to reach namely Jakarta, Jogjakarta (in Central Java), Mataram (in West Nusa Tenggara) and Pontianak (in West Kalimantan). As a result of this arrangement, the evaluation overlooked a number of good projects or initiatives that were really work with excluded groups, which experienced multidimensional disadvantaged. Such projects were mostly located in hard-to-reach areas that required more than two days to reach the community which bring significant consequences to financial aspect as well as evaluation time frame.

The evaluation followed particular program logic, which hypothesized that “CSOs (singular definition of NGO according to the program language), *if effectively resources, can mobilize their comparative advantages to reach and empower marginalized groups*”. These marginalized groups were depicted from economic point of view which are described as “*an under-utilized national asset who have been failed by the system*”. In this evaluation, the expert consultants were tasked to collect ‘hard evidences’ which support the donor’s investment argument that financing CSOs was far more effective and efficient solution to incorporate the marginalized

groups. This is written in the report that "PNPM *Peduli* should continue in its effort to establish and strengthen CSO network as a key strategy for both advocacy and capacity building" (Holden et al., 2012: 23). Moreover, to present evidences on NGOs' improvement due to PNPM *Peduli* intervention, the evaluation emphasizes on some anecdotal testimonies about NGOs' new abilities in technical programming, developing monitoring framework, writing change stories and mastering project's financial and procurement system (p.18-19). Furthermore, the evaluation also reported that PNPM *Peduli* has changed the life of marginalized groups by pointing out emerging 'changes' around new practical skills and information. Unfortunately, these emerging 'changes' remained problematic as the project focus more on survival skills rather than more political awareness to resist or challenge the domination. This kind of change was written in technical language as "*skills related to livelihood*". Other change was about marginalized group understand more about how complicated the bureaucracy works that phrased as "*access to public services in education and health services*". Besides that, other changes that the evaluation described was the increased of "*personal confidence level*", that actually highlighted their psychological deficit, which has been altered by the project intervention, and new "*opportunities to engage in community life*" as the way out from their isolation and exclusion. These types of changes then were declared as the project's indicator of success. By following the above logic, all those changes were made possible because of additional resource provided by the project to strengthen the capacity of national and local NGOs which lead to change in the life of the marginalized groups. Such sources were theorized and used to correct the NGOs' way of doing their project, in a more appropriate and correct way of operation. This correction was presented as *strengthened technical capacity* in targeting beneficiaries, managing grant, working with marginalized groups as well as engaging with government and other stakeholders on issues related to social and economic exclusion. Moreover, as the evaluation found that NGO partners were becoming more capable to adopt the empowerment approach that dismantle social and economic barriers that cause exclusion. This implies that such correction was indeed extremely potent to teach the NGOs on using powerful tool of *empowerment*, which has been coopted by neoliberal agenda.

The evaluation process also confirmed what PNPM *Peduli* project wanted to hear. Its report argues that the project has built relationship as well as business

model that will become the cornerstone in establishing effective mechanism on how to reach and to empower the marginalized group. Furthermore, the evaluation also confirmed that the project logic was relevant as it responded to the government's priorities – not the priorities formulated and established by the marginalized groups – which was justified by the formulation of development intervention that considered *evidence* of what marginalized people *need*. Furthermore, the evaluation also highlights that some early evidences of “social inclusion” outcomes have emerged indicated by certain ‘changes’ that the project expected to see, as explained above. Throughout the evaluation process, I could argue that it was intended to be apolitical, as Apthrope (1999) argues that results “are presented analyzed regardless of strength and weaknesses of endowments of national and other national resources, of what happened last year and how things stood the year before.” (p.539) For that reason, the emerging *evidence* of social inclusion that identified in this report quickly interpreted as an answer to solve the marginalized groups’ situation of exclusion without critical scrutiny of what defines “social inclusion” and how it plays out in different historical, political, cultural and social context.

6.3. THE THEORY OF CHANGE EXERCISE – A NEW GAME PLAN IN TOWN

The evaluation results were somehow anticipated. Those were not great surprises for the project Task Team, despite there were some unanticipated facts but certainly they were minuscule. As soon as the evaluation findings were formally shared and were thought through, the project Task Team aspired to do things *right* this time. Unlike the previous phase, which was treated as a pilot – full with trial and error – in this phase, the project Task Team aimed to completely restructure the project implementation in a more sophisticated way, by engaging new discourse of “social inclusion”. The complete project restructuring was not only redesigning its implementation arrangement, but also the overall Project Development Objective (PDO), the whole Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework that comprised of measurement indicators on intermediate and final outcomes, and the capacity building strategies for the NGO partners. For that reason, the project Task Team contracted an international consultant who was considered as expert in Theory of Change (ToC) framework and flew him from

Cambodia to Jakarta in order to facilitate a programming workshop. At that time, the use of ToC framework was quite popular among the international NGOs in designing their development intervention so they achieve what the intended changes are. Surely, the use of ToC was not something that the World Bank would normally do while designing its conventional projects. As mentioned in the previous chapter that the PNPM *Peduli* project was unlike the conventional Bank project, the nature of the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team also shows its unconventionality. In fact, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team operated like grant-making organization that provide financing support to its implementing partner – usually the national/local NGOs – to carry out activities under its direct supervision. This was also the reason why the team was very much drawn into employing ToC Framework to re-design intervention as well as to further guide the implementation of project intervention.

As a common practice in project programming exercise in many development organizations, project team usually 'isolates' itself for a few days out from the office premises in order to get optimum result, while free themselves from office work disturbance. At that time, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team booked a suite in one lavish hotel, located in the heart of Jakarta, where the ToC workshop would be hold. Started by a fanciful morning coffee where we were greeted with assorted and beautifully decorated sweet delights to accompany our coffee and tea, the discussion was started by introducing how the project has been implemented so far and what we have expected to happen in the future proximity as long as the project existed. Heather, our project coordinator, briefly explained how the project was started and what was the vision behind the birth of PNPM *Peduli*. Gradually, the theme of *social justice* was started to appear sporadically during the initial conversation while at the same time, it was camouflaged with the discourse of poverty and inequality, which PNPM *Peduli* tried to escape from. It can be said that the project's ToC workshop has marked the beginning of our denial that social exclusion and poverty were two distinct domains that separated from one another, despite in some cases they intersect. Here, the ToC workshop that we did was a way to technically split the discussion between poverty and social exclusion, where "social inclusion" is then rendered as technical solution to solve the exclusion problem that were understood not as poverty problem. For that reason, what the PNPM *Peduli* project needed was not really a participatory process to uncover and to understand how and why the marginalized groups are excluded and how their

exclusions were created and maintained throughout. Instead, it seeks to justify the predetermined solution that was available in the project mechanism, through the role of expert consultants.

In the process of reshaping PNPM *Peduli* – as prescribed by the evaluation process – this ToC workshop was understood and intended as a mechanism to refine the rule of the game. By doing so, the project expected to achieve what it was designed for, namely to incorporate the ‘left-behind’ community groups into the existing scheme that has been prepared by government social welfare program. To achieve that objective, the ToC workshop was expected to help the project Task Team in identifying learning areas and knowledge that would shape *pathways to inclusion* through the involvement of the marginalized group that constitute important parts of PNPM *Peduli*. Therefore, to achieve such *pathways*, the Task Team decided to select NGOs that have been working with the excluded groups/communities to be part of this intervention. For that reason, the programming team developed a set of selection criteria and eligibility requirements for the participating NGO which would be ‘assessed’ by a group of expert consultants to mark their programming quality. This assessment would also inquire what kinds of *target populations* that were appropriate for the designed intervention which the ToC workshop defined as ‘*targeting to ensure activities reached the most marginalized*’. Here, the idea of improved *targeting* was explained by Ferguson (1990) and Escobar (1995) as creating client categories based on the available expertise of the institutional apparatus that doing the “development”, which became extremely essential to ensure the functioning of the offered solution and “social inclusion” was one of the available solution to offer. Ensuring robust *targeting* steps to find appropriate intervention target was explained by Escobar (1995) as process that “*focusing on a narrow target and usually involves pathologies or lack that can be isolated and treated through some sort of technological fix*” (p.110). However, since the project still utilized the same logical framework that focus on donor’s investments to strengthen NGOs’ capacity to provide solution for the marginalized group; the main strategies remained focus only on the technical capacity to meet the project’s quantifiable target. Besides that, the project task team also explored different ways of creating the popular term of “collaborative partnership” among NGOs and local government that lead to “sustainable” financing once the project had finished.

In the ToC workshop, the narrative about marginalized people was repeated and was continuously reproduced. They were pictured as 'under-utilized national assets', which government's programs were unable to reach nor to empower. To tap these 'under-utilized national assets', PNPM *Peduli* was intended to reach them and to 'unlock' their potential by empowering them; so, they can be more self-reliant, live more dignified lives and make positive contributions to Indonesian society. The Ministry of Social Welfare defines these types of marginalized groups as *Penyandang Masalah Kesejahteraan Sosial (PMKS)*⁵³ which were depicted as people that cause social problem for the society and colloquially were often called *sampah masyarakat*⁵⁴. Therefore, for a development project like PNPM *Peduli*, intervening the life of these marginalized people were intended to convert them into "valuable assets" through a series of processes to 'unlock' their potential in order to help themselves out from misery, to hold head up high, and to contribute to the society – as opposed to be the bearer of social *problem*. This ToC workshop then highlighted social and economic exclusion, combined with external stigma that was internalized by the marginalized people themselves, in which prevent them to access development program offered by the government or donor. Due to such exclusion, the ToC workshop highlighted the marginalized groups' invisibility and their *lack* of opportunities as significant impediment to participate in social life and to contribute to the society in a productive manner. Furthermore, the assumption of internalization of stigma was used to emphasize their invisibility – as in public presence and in government's database – that justified their low sense of self-worth and felt less entitled which contributed to their physical isolation from the society. Such internalized stigma and label among the marginalized group themselves was one of many identified deficits that PNPM *Peduli* Project would correct through a new approach called "social inclusion".

Escobar (1995) once said that, "*planners take their practice as a true description of reality, uninfluenced by their own relation to that reality*" (p.121). Such planning practices also encompass planning sequences that include identifying the "problem", determining the "target groups", specifying the objective(s), analyzing the cause(s), and providing alternative solution(s). Among the development

⁵³ Translated as the bearer of social welfare problem

⁵⁴ Translated as "the trash of society"

programmers, this sequence is called system approach (p.116). As part of programming sequence, this ToC workshop started from a big vision that portrayed a utopian ideal image of how society shall look like that envisioned *“a just society where every man, woman and transgender person is recognized, respected and valued and has the freedom to act and make choices about the quality of his/her life.”* (PSF, 2013b). Furthermore, to pursue that vision, PNPM *Peduli* project believed that pathways to inclusion was the only way, namely through influencing government policies and regulations in a way that would enhance people’s ability to realize their potential. This vision was translated into new PDO with measurable goal which aimed to *“improve access to services and greater personal agency, more choices and improved participation for people who have been marginalized”* (PSF, 2013b) in order to create inclusive, accountable and harmonious society.

Unfortunately, due to very limited understanding about the concept of “social inclusion” in Indonesian context, the programming team simply collated various definitions that are mostly from European context to conceptualize how the *Peduli* program should move towards to. By adopting European model and definition on “social inclusion” which was often criticized because of its blindness when trying to homogenize contextual reality in post-colonial developing society, this new framework emphasis on the *“removal of institutional barriers and the enhancement of incentives to increase the access of diverse individuals and groups”* (The World Bank, 2013: 256) by ensuring that *“those at risk of being left out gain opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life and enjoy a standard of well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live”* (European Commission, 2004). Evidently, such *imported* definition was conceptualized with a very little consideration on the specific Indonesian context, localities and realities. The presence of ToC as system approach was a critical foundation in a chain of causality, in which the solutions were designed to respond to the problems that have been identified. To make the chain of causality more explicit, Mosse (2005) describes that development projects must be constructed as a predictive model, in which various aspects are systematically compounded and have causal relationship where outcomes are definite (Stirrat, 2000: 36). The ToC processes then resulted in four interrelated project components that interpreted as *“simplified set of problem-solution linkages that connected activities of key results ... and outputs to impact as cause and effect”* (Mosse, 2005: 37). The four

project components are the following: (1) Making sure that excluded people able to develop their self-worth and agency and obtained society acceptance; (2) Persuading government to focus on inclusive growth through providing services to excluded groups; (3) Assuring that NGOs are capable to form engagement between excluded groups and societies where they live, so it may improve their participation in economic, social and cultural life; and (4) Producing and disseminating knowledge about a way to inclusion in order to influence policy and practice. Under the refined project scheme, these four outcomes shall be carried out not by the project Task Team, but instead by the implementing organizations, comprised of national and local NGOs that worked around issues of "social exclusion" faced by marginalized groups as the project's target population.

To realize the objective of inclusive society that envisioned by PNPM *Peduli*, the programming team also developed NGOs' selection criteria that match with the revised framework. For instance, the participating NGOs should be able to articulate how PNPM *Peduli* project would strengthen their own organizational vision and purpose. These NGOs also should demonstrate strong credibility and longstanding experience working with the target population. This step was taken because many local NGO partners tried to work with target groups whom they never worked with before. Consequently, as argued by the M&E advisor, it would weaken the project's pathway to achieve its objective. In addition to that, a good track record in implementing relevant participatory development project in accordance to the outcome level guided by the project framework and ability to propose relevant intervention that respond to the contextual analysis of social exclusion were key to be part of the project. Lastly, the potential NGO partners also required having collaborative experience with other stakeholders, especially the government and private sector. However, despite the 'promotion' of having partnership with NGOs, unfortunately this form of partnership was far from equal. Such design programming was illustrated by Mosse (2005) as *"donor power and imposed designed had to be veiled behind the rhetoric of 'partnership' and through rituals of collaboration, including carefully orchestrated joint planning workshop"* (p.40). The ToC workshop prepared by the PNPM *Peduli* programming team was just a minor part of the whole process of technical rendition in crafting a kind of solution provided by the development apparatus. By defining particular target groups as whom the project will intervene, PNPM *Peduli* referred them as categories of target

groups of whom items and services can be delivered (Shaffer, 1985: 375) through policies which construct problems in a particular way. Through this workshop, chain of programming development intervention can be described as composing linear mechanism that operates through creating causal relation based on the assumption that was built from the existing logical framework.

The PNPM *Peduli* ToC workshop has marked a significant change in the game plan of the project. Despite PNPM *Peduli* claimed to work with similar *kinds of people*, namely the marginalized, the rejected or the deviant ones; but the new project design appeared as what Mosse (2005) has explained as, “*the project design was synthesized into the project management tool – the Logical Framework (or logframe) – which summarily conveyed to outside decision makers the rationality (and manageability) of a scheme with logically related and technically specified activities, measurable output, and ordered sequence and the functional integration of different components and institutional actors (donors, implementing agencies, field staff and villagers).*” (p.38) With this new blueprint, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team invited five existing national NGO partners, that have been promised to continue receive funding under the new scheme and conditionality, to attend the project workshop in order to introduce the new design. As part of the engineering sequence, national project stakeholders – including the Task Team, NGOs, government and donor – conducted 3 full day planning workshop to discuss the new framework with each participating NGOs while mentoring them to craft intervention that suitable with their particularity. The process to *introduce* this new framework and to *discuss* with the NGO partners can be understood as the way to induce the new game plan in which every NGOs participant were expected to abide by. Furthermore, *support* in terms of financial as well as technical advisory would be provided by the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team to ensure that the NGO partners develop their own project designs along the same model with the new framework.

The first day of planning workshop focused on the experience (“learning”) faced by the NGOs partners and the programming team, which included overall project achievements through slight elaboration of the evaluation process. Unlike the previous ToC workshop, which was felt posher and more exclusive, this planning retreat was a bit more modest. Despite managed by the World Bank, PNPM *Peduli* project always communicated to the public as a government program that implemented by a network of NGOs for the benefit of the marginalized group.

Mr. SR as one of the main initiators of PNPM *Peduli* project, once again reminded everyone in the planning retreat by saying that "*PNPM Peduli is about justice... It exists to support marginalized people to develop bargaining power with their government and within their community,*" as he said in his opening speech at the workshop. However, the narrative of justice that supposed to be the core of PNPM *Peduli* remained blurred as it overshadowed the reality of deeply entrenched poverty that complicatedly intertwined with inequality.

PNPM *Peduli* project claimed to be the first of its kind in Indonesia that worked with government in addressing issues of social exclusion through social inclusion approach in partnership with the NGOs. By positioning itself as a unique project, the programming team indicated that PNPM *Peduli* has portrayed its consistent effort that aligned with the national's development plan and strategically responded to the government's needs in accelerating poverty reduction plan. For that reason, the program Task Team also assert that PNPM *Peduli's* uniqueness focus on the capacity building component in strengthening Indonesian NGOs in order to understand complex and multifaceted issues of exclusion in Indonesia. Despite the project has been implemented for less than 3 years, the project Task Team claimed that PNPM *Peduli* has indeed brought some changes in relation to the life of marginalized people and changes around NGOs capacity improvement in managing development projects. Moreover, the project also claimed that its intervention has facilitated around 12,000 marginalized people to improve their lives. Such improvement includes new skills, like snack making, sewing, and new farming technique; better access to information; increased confidence and assertiveness to speak publicly; and improved access to basic services, especially education, health and administrative registration. Not only at the beneficiaries' level, the programming team also reported some changes at the NGO level, especially those that related with administrative capability in managing grant, technical facilitation skills and compliance to donor's requirement on accountability standard. Through technical capacity building type, the NGO partners were trained well as to be proficient development broker, while at the same time it drifted them away from their constituencies. Not only that, due to their participation in PNPM *Peduli* project, the NGO partners have reported improved relationship with the government – both at national or local level, in addition to the beneficiaries – in dealing with issues around exclusion and learned how social

inclusion approach could contribute in reaching the development goals which were determined by the national government as reflected in the national development plan.

As reported by the PNPM *Peduli* programming team, the independent evaluation highlighted a number of important aspects in the project structure, but emphasized less on key changes occurred in the life of the target population. One important evaluation finding that was anticipated by the programming team was a 'design-implement' nature of PNPM *Peduli* project, whose structures were not firmly established since the beginning. It was a "trial and error" approach in implementing a hands-on development project because the programming team did not really have profound experience in managing such project. Compare to the national NGOs, which are more experienced with donor-funded project, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team itself lacked of understanding about the dynamics in which many NGOs, especially the grass-root ones, operate. During the first three years of implementation, PNPM *Peduli* project's structures were built together through learning by doing with the implementing NGO partners that lead to frequent modification and processual adjustment which the programming team had never experienced before. Such dynamic also included in cutting the red tape of bureaucratic hassles and cumbersome paper works that restrict the project implementation, which the programming team referred as *innovation* based on *real* experiences about what worked and not.

The independent evaluation also found that the cascading type of project structure also intended to create more flexible implementation at the local level. However, despite acknowledging its flexibility as pilot project, this newly refined project design was intended to place a stronger and robust implementation structure as well as clearer mechanism to support activities on the ground. Moreover, in order to support the implementation, PNPM *Peduli*'s new project design was intended also to capture and to generate the "know-how" about pathways to inclusion as envisioned by the programming team. Besides that, the evaluation also mentioned that it was apparent that PNPM *Peduli* has facilitated a number of relationships between local NGOs with the local government as well as donor institution. Despite so, it cannot be said that those relationships were equal and free from manipulation. Such relationships were also evolved into a *business system* that was claimed to support PNPM *Peduli* project to move forward in

developing and understanding *effective* approach to reach and to empower marginalized group. But, since PNPM *Peduli* project was started as a design-implement, the evaluation found that it had very little room for contestation, problematization, and critical reflection. Despite so, the project itself can be strengthened, apparently through developing *more* (technical) *tools* – implicitly implies that *tools* used for the past few years were weak and inefficient – to target the appropriate population for the project.

Despite the project planning retreat was normatively claimed as collaborative effort between the Task Team, government, donor and NGO partners; but what actually occurred during the planning retreat was a process to educate the NGO partners on how to work with the new rule of the game that was designed by the Task Team. In this process, the NGOs were not only taught to employ the new project framework, but also were *encouraged* to adopt that framework to develop their sub-project which should fit the new blueprint. Throughout several years of PNPM *Peduli* project implementation, relationship between the Task Team and NGO implementing partners were extremely dynamic. The presence of PNPM *Peduli*, through the facilitation of local NGOs, had filled the gap of service delivery in which the state had failed to reach the marginalized group in its social welfare program. Some authors noted that this type of arrangement – by designing the NGOs to fit this gap – have brought some risks to state legitimacy. Gideon's (1998) work in Latin America and Gray's (1999) research in Vietnam reveals that some government directs social funds towards social welfare provision for politically sensitive group in order to minimize opposition to the state. Similar situation also faced by Indonesia, where two key ministries that responsible in directing funds for social welfare, namely the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Coordinating Ministry of People's Welfare, always filled by key politicians from political parties that formed the Government coalition. This pattern was very apparent, especially after the political reform that brought down the authoritarian regime. This exact same practice occurred in PNPM *Peduli* project showed that NGOs involved in this social state funds and development project '*become harness by the state and [have] been used as a tool to implement the neoliberal model.*' (Gideon, 1998: 308)

In Indonesia, like many other aid receiving countries, NGOs are perceived as closer to the community, engaged in a more participatory development process – in comparison with the government – reliable and promoter of good governance

agenda (Duffield, 1997; Fowler, 1991; Migdal, 1988). However, despite all the above characteristics, it has been observed that NGOs are not politically neutral. Despite their strong criticism towards the corrupt practice of many government apparatuses, especially in the context of Indonesia where such practices were common and were normalized in order to obtain government services, support for the NGO sector was indeed facilitated the ascendancy of neoliberal invasion (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Petras, 1997). In terms of promoting the dominant neoliberal policies, donors' objectives were very explicit which were supporting the growth and to strengthen NGOs – that often used to refer CSO – in order to respond the state's weak capacity. A number of scholars for instance Antlov (2010, 2012), Hadiwinata (2003) and Aspinall (2004, 2005, 2010), have noted that increased financing to support the NGOs have started before the political reform, which terms exclusively for 'partnership'. As part of the support, the NGOs were capacitated and tasked to introduce new mode of development, such as "bottom-up" and "participatory planning" instead of "top-down" planning, "empowerment", and "gender equality" through partnership between international and national NGOs via fund flows. Not only that, many NGOs also work together with line ministries, government technical agencies, and local authorities as well as mass organizations to carry out government policies at different levels, mobilize community for various different reasons, and represent the interests of the local communities which then described as their constituents (Aspinall, 2010; Banks et al., 2015; Kamstra and Schulpen, 2015).

This process has marked clear separation between the previous phase (referred as "the Pilot Phase") and the upcoming phase of PNPM *Peduli* (referred as "the Phase II"). To distinguish the design for "the Phase II" with "the Pilot Phase", PNPM *Peduli* team attempted to focus on gathering all experiences in the "pilot phase" to build a "body of knowledge" which understood as *technical know-how* about what works well and how in promoting pathways to social inclusion. Ideally, this process was intended to orient the participating NGOs to translate the *technical know-how* in designing project intervention that is able to provide policy input for the national government and local authorities about how to target marginalized and disadvantage population that are excluded from the public system and services. Furthermore, the newly developed project framework for PNPM *Peduli* Phase II focused on four key components that would be measured

according to the project's objective. These four components were developed around NGOs' capacity in facilitating the target communities, community's participation in socioeconomic life, policy making, and knowledge generation through accumulating know-how and learning about pathway to social inclusion.

Second day of the planning workshop focused on re-orienting NGO partners into the desired programming ideal through mentoring their designing process. Unlike the first day, which was more focused on reflecting the learning experience obtained from "the Pilot Phase"; on the second day, the activity was centralized on facilitating the national NGO partners to craft their intervention proposals that was guided by problem-solving type of technical questions which they should answer. In this workshop, the NGOs were working to fit their programming strategy with the broader theme of "social inclusion" which they were still struggling to understand. Guided by the prepared ToC framework as their new programmatic compass, the vaguely understood "social inclusion" concept should be materialized in their proposal as we desired. Moreover, to orient the NGOs into programming "social inclusion" intervention envisioned by PNPM *Peduli*, the task team focused on organizational aspect of the NGO partners such as vision and mission, organization strength and expertise, and organizational expectation regarding PNPM *Peduli*. As this workshop only served as initial avenue to brainstorm and to check-up, it enabled the NGO partners to test their project design before starting with full fledged proposal development stage. At the end of the workshop, NGO partners expressed consolidated interest to focus on "*inclusive and accessible health service for poor, marginalized, socially-excluded, and underserved youth*" (PSF, 2012d: 4), while some other NGOs were more comfortable to target "*people living in, by the border and around forest area, exercising economic rights and addressing issues of basic rights, by focusing on creating models in selected geographical areas and policy prioritization*" (PSF, 2012d: 6).

At the end of the planning workshop, the NGO partners were asked to focus their programming based on what it was termed as "*evidence-based design*". This "evidence-based design" would be evaluated and approved by the Task Team, together with the *expert* consultants, that were selected from an extended pool of advisors, according to particular issues that were brought up by the NGOs' proposals. Not only that, the NGOs were also "encouraged" to incorporate what kind of *learning* experience during "the Pilot Phase" implementation which

contribute to the organization's mission and vision as well as might "improve" their organizational capacity according to what the donor's desire. Our demand of that kind of program proposal was not cost-free and we keenly provided extra financing for the NGOs to carry out "fieldwork" to supplement their evidence-based proposals that incorporate "quick and dirty" research and analysis about social exclusion issues to be addressed by "social inclusion" intervention. To finish the technical separation between "social exclusion" and "poverty reduction" that has been done through ToC workshop and NGO programming process, the NGOs had to eliminate some of their local NGO partners which were seen as unmatched with the priorities and criteria that have been determined by the Task Team. These terminated NGOs were then transitioned into the "*phasing out*" stage as a way to cleanse the partner with bad targeting performance.

This collaborative planning retreat workshop between the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team and the national NGO partners is perfectly illustrated by Mosse (2005) that argues despite the rhetoric ideal of *partnership* and *cooperation*, the negotiation between the representations never be equal. He commented that donors' power and their imposed designs, like what we, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team, did with the ToC framework, had to be camouflaged behind the rhetoric of '*partnership*' and through rituals of collaboration, including carefully orchestrated joint planning workshop. Furthermore, the independent rationality of donor designs, in this case represented by the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team, was symbolized by independent evaluation studies, regular reporting and accumulated data of various kinds, and making reference to national policy – especially to the Mid Term National Development Plan – and made more attractive by manipulating the rhetoric – *social inclusion* – to the implementing agencies themselves. The above process exactly shows how PNPM *Peduli* has reproduced the discourse of "social inclusion" that is created as a solution to the "problem" brought by the deviant and problematic others which do not conform with the *normality* and *naturality*.

6.4. THE ROLE OF WESTERN EXPERT IN TRANSLATING "SOCIAL INCLUSION" TO THE LOCAL CONTEXT

It has been widely argued that the role of expert consultants is extremely critical in knowledge production (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1990; Li, 2007; Mosse,

2005; Stirrat, 2000); especially in the context of social inclusion in Indonesia, which at that time remained rarely elaborated. Easterly (2013) has reminded us about the technocratic illusion where the technical experts, despite unintended, have given birth to new type of power and legitimacy on the state to implement such technical solution. Build on Easterly's conception, I would like to add that this new type of power, which he describes as *authoritarian development* that grounded on the idea of *technocracy*, is also played by NGOs that have developed and implemented similar type of new power. Easterly's *authoritarian development* model then coins what he refers as "rule by experts" in which critically important to solve problems.

In the context of introducing new development jargon, like in this case is *social inclusion* which was presumed as the appropriate policy solution to solve the problem of *social exclusion* that have been signaled earlier; the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team saw that it was necessary to bring *foreign western* expert not only to introduce but also to justify that this new jargon was indeed an important approach to take in shaping the pathways of Indonesian development. In comparison with the more popular discourses such as "poverty alleviation" and "community empowerment", the concept of "social inclusion" has not attracted much significant currency due to its foreignness. Unlike in the European countries, where most of their social policies comprised of a set of social inclusion interventions and not poverty alleviation; the application of the concept of "social inclusion" in Indonesia remains debatable, especially in relation to social exclusion, which often misunderstood then misused as its polar opposite. Despite of its novelty on Indonesian discourse of social welfare, some people have been attracted to socially benign connotation that this concept carries. In addition to that, in comparison with poverty alleviation or community empowerment discourse, the concept of "social inclusion" also sounds morally correct and appropriate in dealing with social problems, in particular the problem of exclusion, which the PNPM *Peduli* project tried to tackle.

The baptism of PNPM *Peduli* as "social inclusion" project would be complete if the notion of "social inclusion" was to be elaborated by an expert, a *western* expert to be more precise. For that reason, in the third week of February 2013, as a part of the process of engineering the solution to solve exclusion "problem", the PNPM *Peduli* Task team invited a distinguished American sociologist, whose works have become the main reference around the issue of "social inclusion" and its relation with social exclusion. The PNPM *Peduli* Task team flew her directly from

Washington D.C. to Jakarta in order to deliver a half day seminar about “social inclusion”, how it can be understood and how to apply this concept within the context of Indonesia. The seminar itself hosted by the PNPM *Peduli* Task team, on behalf of the government and invited representatives from donor countries, government agencies and ministries, NGOs, research institutes, and also universities. It was then claimed as the first formal forum to publicly discuss “social inclusion” agenda as policy means to achieve equitable growth in Indonesia. In addition to that, the expert would become the key resource person in an internal project workshop held by the PNPM *Peduli* Task team to assist the NGO partners to develop their social inclusion project.

The seminar started by a certain frame that “social inclusion” was a necessity in the realm of social welfare policy. This discussion framing was around the newness of “social inclusion” concept, which remained overshadowed by the dominant notion of poverty reduction in policies on social welfare. Mr. SR as the representative of the government mentioned that despite the importance of “social inclusion” in the arena of policy making, there were limited initiatives, on the part of the government side, to actually take “social inclusion” seriously. Moreover, the introduction about “social inclusion” was also framed and encircled around the necessities to include the needs and voice of those who are rejected by the system and society, those who remain invisible and voiceless, and those who are excluded from the social interaction and decision-making process. This kind of framing then led into a certain understanding about “social inclusion” which require the insertion of the marginalized people’s basic needs and rights into the policy discussion.

Unlike in European countries, which focus their “social inclusion” policies on promoting people’s involvement in formal employment through labor market; the application of “social inclusion” in most developing countries remain limitedly discussed. With that background, the expert’s presentation in the “social inclusion” seminar was heavily loaded with Anglo-European context and blind to the deeply entrenched legacy of exclusion caused by centuries of colonialism. From the expert’s point of view, “social inclusion” is open door policies, which means providing access and welcoming individuals to take part in the society. Such policies, the expert argued, should also applied to the social institution whose members allowed new comers to establish their connection, in which also

understood as realizing their formal rights. Having said that, "social inclusion" also a process that may be socially disruptive in the short run but eventually leads to social solidarity and cohesion. Interestingly, in this description, it implies the idea of "deviant minority" that the society refuses to accept due to anomalies that do not have similarities with the majority. Furthermore, the expert indicated that "social inclusion" serves multiple purposes and commonly are around universal human rights and capabilities (as it relates with maximizing freedom); basic needs that are satisfied (as it refers to enabling and meeting minimal needs); full social participation through combating social isolation; recognition and respect on identities (as it also means combating invisibility and stigma).

The expert then warned that despite "social inclusion" is often linked with "social exclusion" as theoretical concepts; however, they are not dichotomous category, in which imply, as one is not the reversal of other. Both concepts are operationalized through series of processes and social relationships in various sphere of life that through different mechanism and motives. The expert further added that there is significant distinction between "*reducing exclusion*" that means equality for opportunity and "*promoting inclusion*", which means ensuring equality of results. Policies that focus on *reducing exclusion* alone do not mean anything to level the playing field and instead these could be understood as the type of policies that ignore differences, especially to color, gender and other visible markers. On the contrary policies that *promote inclusion* for the expert is ironically require some kind of positive discrimination as a form of affirmative policies within the context of *targeting within universalism* that seek to treat everyone the same despite one could get more benefit than the other.

In her presentation, the expert highlighted the notion of agency and the important role of agent. These two notions were clearly overlooked by the PNPM *Peduli* project in which often related with the idea of *insider* (referred as those who are included) and the *outsider* (referred to those who are excluded). The expert pointed out two different explanations about these two related ideas. For the part of the *insider*, to reduce "social exclusion" seems to address 'their' problem'; while promoting "social inclusion" was actually address the question of who 'we' are. But on the contrary, for the *outsiders*, reducing "social exclusion" applied to removing obstacles, opening doors and providing access, in which is considered more passive than "social inclusion". Social inclusion itself indeed requires real

participation – not only just normative participation but also critical involvement to any decision making which concern their life – and asks *insider* to make an effort to reach out, to welcome and, in some cases, treat the newcomer differently. Finally, the expert warned that “social inclusion” is not free from cost, it has undesirable connotation too. She argues that *outsider* may lose cherished identities, values, practices and places; and might feel that they were placed under great surveillance and control. To summarize, the expert stressed repeatedly that “social inclusion” is not poverty reduction, “*if poverty is a narrower idea than exclusion, then livelihood programs are not enough to ensure social inclusion*”. Often, “social inclusion” is understood narrowly as the way to tackle social exclusion in a similar way that poverty is to be overcome through poverty alleviation strategies that commonly used income generation approach. On the context of poverty, excluded people can be represented by the pariah groups and the ‘underclass’ and on the contrary respected *family members* or *leaders* in poor area cannot be understood as excluded.

From the expert’s presentation, the seminar’s participant seemed to agree that “social inclusion” is a way to combat “social exclusion”, and in order to really have “social inclusion” policy it was argue that knowing the drivers of “social exclusion” might serve as first step on how to recognized different variation of exclusion. Towards the end of the seminar, which also can be understood as a way to create a closure with some takeaways, the participants were encouraged to discuss in groups and reflect around the drivers of exclusion that they witnessed on day-to-day basis. From that discussion, a number of themes emerged quite strongly, in which mostly related with particular categories of excluded groups. A theme around patriarchal culture in Indonesia that limit women participation in decision-making process came quite frequent. Participants that subscribed to this view thought that this have limited women’s bargaining power in the family, which led majority of women, do not have assets. Other theme that appeared was lack of freedom of expression and lack of acknowledgement of self-identity in which perpetuate stigmatization and negative stereotypes towards certain people. Besides that, other themes were also emerged from the group discussion, which was around geographical isolation that worsened exclusion and discriminatory public policies that enforced social exclusion at all level.

Interestingly, the focus of social inclusion as a remedy for social exclusion often accepts the underlying assumption at face value. Hickey, Sen, and Bukenya

(2014) suggest that we should move away from narrowly defined "social inclusion" to inclusive development. According to them, inclusive development occurs when social and material benefits are equitably distributed to all segments of societies regardless gender, ethnicities, religions, income groups and other attributes. For these scholars, the word 'inclusive' in development means moving away the notion of development from its dominant concern of economic growth to wider focus and understanding on equity and the notion of citizenship. Despite the notion of "social inclusion" that was introduced in the seminar intended to share broader notion of "social inclusion", but most NGOs that participated in the seminar tend to understand 'inclusion' literally as the reverse of 'exclusion'. Binary understanding as expressed by many NGOs might pose significant danger to the critical discussion about social inclusion as well as social exclusion.

Due to such dichotomization, Spandler (2007) criticizes that the notion of 'social inclusion' as dynamic terms focusing attention on the power dynamics that involved in social practices of exclusion and marginalization that has given way to notions of socially 'excluded' people as a particular set of individuals who require an intervention called "social inclusion". Therefore 'exclusion' has been turned from a process (with identifiable causes) into an outcome, a 'condition people are in' (Fairclough, 2000: 54), which can be measured, monitored and rectified by initiatives to change the behavior of the excluded by influencing choices made about their lives and welfare services. Similarly, Ryan (2007) argues that to understand why social inclusion is increasingly promoted and accepted as key driver for policies and services, it is necessary to explore the way modern western societies seek to achieve social and economic legitimation through 'inclusive governance'.

6.5. LOST IN TRANSLATION: MISUNDERSTOOD DISCOURSE OF "SOCIAL INCLUSION"

The discussion of "social inclusion" in Indonesia was initially covering issues around the context of disability. Even in the National Mid-term Development Plan 2015-2019, "social inclusion" aspect of development remains focus on improvement of social welfare of the disable, which include health services, education, civic registration, labor, housing and other type of public facility for

people with disability. Having said that, albeit only in the scope of project context, discussion about “social inclusion” has expanded which also covered a number of themes in relation to *identity*, especially the ones about race and ethnicity; religion; and ‘forbidden’ political ideology, that were practically silenced during three decades of authoritarian regime. Despite it did not appear very clear and explicit, the conversation about “social inclusion” also evolves around ideas on how to include certain disadvantaged people which current social welfare development program unable to cater. For that reason, talks about “social inclusion” often overlaps with poverty alleviation agenda in the same way when employing the notion of “social exclusion” as interchangeable concept with poverty. This narrow conceptualization of “social inclusion” that PNPM *Peduli* project understood simply as giving ‘flavor of the month’ to the poverty alleviation discourse by streamlining its targeting strategy to reach only particular segment of the poor as its population target.

This follows the logic that was used to develop “the Phase II” of PNPM *Peduli* project, which was formulated with certain underlying assumptions that the benefit of economic growth, a generalization of generalized as development, was not distributed equally and its benefit does not trickle down to the most disadvantage population. Due to such argument, there were certain groups of population that continue facing risk of fall into poverty slope, including those who were labeled as PMKS that described above. During the conceptualization of “the Phase II”, the notion of “social inclusion” was never been interrogated critically, which resulted in a narrow understanding about what the concept entails and what it tries to pursue. Some thought from Spandler (2007) might be helpful to interrogate this increasingly used concept. Spandler criticizes the concept of “social inclusion” in the context of mental illness by arguing that the assumptions which “social inclusion” lay its foundation is problematic, where it underpins the strategies of inclusion that focus on ‘exclusion’ to ‘include’. She added that this problematic assumption might lead to individualized practices based on dominant judgments what entails as ‘normal’. It is true that the notion of “social inclusion” has been very attractive, which often used to replace policies on poverty alleviation to be more politically correct. Unfortunately, it has been used and reproduced uncritically (Ratcliffe, 2000) that lead to policy prescription that ‘normalizing’ the deviant ones.

The excluded people who were targeted by the social inclusion project, like PNPM *Peduli*, often depicted as problem. Schrover and Schinkel (2013) metaphorically describe society as concrete and spatially bounded, which positively bestow 'insider' and place the 'outsider' as the problematic ones. In the context of Indonesia, most excluded people are often associated with some segments of the poor who are not part of the broader poor population, whose lifestyles, norms or values do not conform with the greater society's norms and values. For some cases, the minority population could also be included in this segment. Due to that segmentation, the excluded people often experienced certain violations of rights, discriminated, negatively stereotyped and isolated. In response to such situations, Schinkel (2010) states that division between 'society' and 'outsider of the society' has constructed the conception of stable and normal type of society, which considered an authentic arena that free from social problems. This construction made those who fall out of the society as the 'problem' that has to be cured through inclusion – or to be precise insertion – to the society. This will further cure the society from 'problems' caused by excluded people (Schrover and Schinkel, 2013).

Because of its lack of contestation, in particular for the context of Indonesia, concept of social inclusion is understood literally, which is to *bring* those who are perceived as excluded into a system of mainstream *normal* society. The process to *bring* those *in* (Graham and Slee, 2006, 2008) are through giving them access to opportunities – which translated as paid employment; providing them access to basic rights and services – which focused narrowly on health, education, and civic registration; and encourage their participation in development – especially as target population of development projects. This implicitly justified that what constituted as exclusion practices refer to an act with agent(s), such as individuals, groups, or institution that have the *power* to exclude (Atkinson and Hills, 1998; Kleinman, 1998) in which further rationalize that inclusion tend to indicate as benevolent effort on behalf of these agents to include the excluded. For that reason, the concepts of "social exclusion" and "social inclusion" were treated as polar opposite as if one was the unproblematic negation of the other (Levitas, 2004). If we return to Spandler's criticism about *normalization* of the excluded, the policy shift to 'inclusion' could potentially invisibilize social structure and division of labour that produce and sustain exclusionary practices in the first place. Such

production, as Spandler argues, further constructs a delusion of individual choice and responsibility rather than questioning and challenging particular form of oppressive, constraints, and extractive structure that contextually embedded.

Many scholars have argued that both social exclusion and inclusion are slippery concepts, which have not been theoretically explored (Béland, 2007; de Haan, 2000; Hickey and Du Toit, 2007; Lister, 2007; Pease, 2009; Saith, 2001; Silver, 2010, 2015). Therefore, due to lack of critical contestation of these two concepts, formulation of social policy often treats them unproblematically and dichotomizes them in binary terms, in which are very obvious in policy discourse. This treatment was also occurred in various distances in the arena of policy making and programming development intervention in Indonesia. Very often that the solution to the *social* problem caused by exclusion – which then re-labeled as ‘social exclusion’ – is by promoting the insertion of individuals into existing structure that sometimes accompanied by moral dimension which depends on local context. This brought us into what Popperwell (2007) describes that (social) inclusion is seen as universally ‘good’ where any criticism against it is constructed as resistance to change or syndrome of institutionalization. Through this, inclusion is semantically created and constructed as ‘moral imperative’ due to its good nature (Spandler, 2007). Following to that, Spandler (2007) added that social policy formulation or development intervention programming which employ social inclusion approach might be interpreted as a legitimate effort to insert these excluded individuals into the mainstream which actually confuses the identification of root causes of exclusion by *toning down* the enforcement of inclusion through semantic description like ‘promotion of inclusion’. What Spandler has described was very much clearly explained what PNPM *Peduli* project has operated the notion of exclusion and inclusion as dichotomous polar. The underlying assumption that PNPM *Peduli* employed was from what these individuals are “excluded” from, which would then dictate ways on how to formulate the intervention as to “include” or to “insert” them in.

There are numerous evidences that “social exclusion” has brought destructive impact to certain segments of the population (Bodewig and Sethi, 2005; Gatti et al., 2016; Koenig et al., 2018; Márquez et al., 2007; The World Bank et al., 2008; World Bank, 2011). Having said that, there are also many studies sponsored by international (mostly western) development institutions found that “social

inclusion" should be pursued as a key pathway to achieve sustainable results of development and economic growth (Das et al., 2015, 2017; Gatti et al., 2016; The World Bank, 2013, 2014; UNDP, 2011). By using this argument, "social inclusion" in Indonesia that operated through PNPM *Peduli* project is justified as a 'common sense' solution in which incorporate the idea of *inserting* those certain segments of the population that are seen as *problematic* to have a chance to contribute in Indonesia's development. However, often we overlook that this 'common sense' also problematic, as Levitas (2004) and Fairclough (2000) point out that promoting inclusion, in practice, implicitly assume that the type of mainstream society is desirable, unproblematic, legitimate and normal (Spandler, 2007). Similarly, the deployment of "social inclusion" as "intentionally good" social policy highlights another un-interrogated assumption about what Gray and Panter (2000) illustrates as 'ideal of common life', which assume that everyone should pursue that kind of life within utopian society. Adding their point, Burden and Hamm (2000) complement the idea with such idealization with basic values and norms of participation in communal life, such as community, family, social events, religious activities, and even for this particular case is involvement in development projects. Therefore, to be 'included' in these various conditions are then considered as desirable, where cohesive and integrated community refers to Javanese value as the dominant culture, which is very influential in shaping Indonesian society. This situation can be seen that the use social inclusion discourse implies to a conception of comfortable and satisfied 'included' people – often majority – and a dissatisfied 'excluded' people – which often are minority as Spandler (2007) argues.

In most European context, social inclusion policies are directed towards paid employment and increase people engagement in labor market. But for countries, like Indonesia, where labor market segmentation heavily relies on informal sector, "social inclusion" policies like what implemented in European context can be very problematic. This may bring to an alternative argument that what "social inclusion" might entails are those desirable aspects of life according to the ideal conception of particularly dominant communities. This certainly gears towards further uncontested assumption that those who fail to conform to the 'ideal' model of the society are most likely to be excluded from it. Under Indonesian context, this is often the case that 'ideal' form of society strongly reflects Javanese model of perfectly *rukun* society. To understand this, it is worth to refer to Geertz's

prominent work about Javanese society that can explain entrenched Javanese ideology, values and social practices in constructing 'ideal' Indonesian society. Geertz (1976) notes that the concept of *rukun*, which dominates in idealization of a society in Indonesian context. He writes, "*Rukun, as a value, ties together a group not of oversocialized primitive communists but of rather self-contained peasant materialists with a clear realization of where their own interests lie; and it does so not so much by appealing to vague notion of universal brotherhood as by defining actual modes, means, and forms of specifically limited inter-individual cooperation within clearly defined social contexts.*" (p.61). Geertz continues that perfect society – according to Javanese value – is comprised of perfectly polite and altruistic society, where everyone feeling as one with everyone else and as sensitive to other's feeling as to his own. This definition further can be used to understand how "social inclusion" means in Indonesian context, where taking into account individual sensitivity and to some extent also their identity as part of certain social groups.

"Social inclusion" strategies that merely adoption from western-led social policy prescription often focus on changing individual's choice and aspiration, but lack of attention to social and cultural context. When "social inclusion" as a policy concept was introduced and operationalized within Indonesian context, development workers and its affiliates retrofit "social inclusion" not as theoretical concept but instead as literal translation and semantic modification into idealization of normal Indonesian society. This semantic and literal adoption of "social inclusion" further constructs those who are not conform with the prescribed model in the normal society as the excluded people that are perceived as lacking of crucial elements in shaping such normal societies. Since the model of normalized Indonesian society is that of Javanese type that underlines the idea of *rukun* and cohesiveness, "social inclusion" often targets those individuals and groups whose behaviors are problematic and to be corrected. Often the way of correction is a form of encouragement to behave in a more appropriate manner in a way that these problematic individuals and groups can *berbaur* that is translated as socially merged, assimilated and integrated peacefully with those whose values conform the idealized norms of the society. Therefore, to understand "social inclusion" in the context of Indonesia, it often focuses on romanticizing the idea of communalist ownership of being part of a peaceful Javanese model of society and neglect

individual choice, where sometimes privileging other choice over the other. This in turn pathologizing and problematizing those that are non-conformist as deviant.

Overcome "social exclusion" through the deployment of *promoting social inclusion* discourse as a way to insert *problematic* people into normal society tend to portray what Foucault's notion of 'discipline-normalization' (1977b: 52). Through this way of judging, "social inclusion" can be interpreted as normalizing tool against the aberrant members of the society. In Foucault's conception about disciplinary form of power, such normalization produces particular domains that accept or reject way of being. Graham & Slee (2008) describe that on one side, the normative discourse comprised of valorizing and affirming statements of the desirable and the normal subject; on the other there is statement of deficits which conceptualizing the other than normal that implicitly punish the minority and the Other through pathologizing them. Therefore, those who were punished defined through transgression of these limits via practices of identification and disqualification, recognition and non-recognition and always being at the fringed of the society. Graham and Slee (2008) describe that those who are privileged are those whose characteristic align with the predicated social norms, which are dependent upon marginalization and subjection of the Other. They further continue that inclusion functions as mass sweep mechanisms through particular technique that justifies dominant version of normality (Foucault, 1977b). This brings to what Ferguson (Ferguson, 1990) argues about normative practice that visibilize variegated forms of differences to include, through *normalization* and *naturalization* particular ways of being.

Various criticism points out that social inclusion as normalization and naturalization through what calculated mechanism which Foucault describes as "*measure, supervise, correct*" that operate through "*binary division and branding*" (Foucault, 1977b: 199). The creation of such dichotomized segregation of normalization versus marginalization of the Other created a certain representation of inclusion where the *dominant* ones, particularly in the context of Indonesia in response to the existence of the marginalized population, maintain single image and understanding of normality, mainstream, and natural-born that pushes the Others away into their marginal existence and give substantial justification of the *non-excluded*. The way of creating dichotomized category in social inclusion policy according to Graham and Slee (2008) refer to the *inclusion* of the marginalized

people with particular identity attributes that rationalize such policy to normalize and naturalized their way of being and living. Both authors point out the language of power to analyze how *inclusion* operates as normalization discourse by deploying Derrida's construction of French-word *difference* that has dual meaning; which refers 'to differ' and 'to defer'. Therefore, these dual meanings of *difference* are produced through differentiating and setting aside (Derrida, 1982: 14) those who do not conform to the normality. By doing so, labeling – which often the case of stereotyping – operates to bring certain characteristic more apparent than others; while at the same time also maintain these differences by naturalizing what are not discernible. Like what Stiker (1999) says that, "*when we name, we point up a difference*" (p.5), PNPM *Peduli*, through its attempt to improve targeting by focusing on issues that experienced by certain marginalized population, can be seen as maintaining power imbalances and structural inequity by substantiate social, political and cultural attributes that they carry.

Burden and Hamm (2000) and Humpage (2006) argue that "social inclusion" often has provisional element where coercion is deployed to ensure conformity. Adding to that, Stewart (2000) wonders if "social inclusion" diverts our attention to change individual behavior and choices; this might undermine collective solution. Despite "social inclusion" is adopted in Indonesia's development programming for a good intention, Bates and Davis (2004) warn that risks in deploying narrow definition of "social inclusion" may indeed resulted what they describe as 'slotting in rather than transforming society', which again sounds like 'normalization' and making people more normal so they can be accepted (Secker et al., 2007; Wallcraft, 2001). On a similar note, Ryan (2007) argues that social inclusion, involvement, and participation become important ways of ensuring that the marginalized, the disadvantaged and the excluded feel 'good' as they might feel to contribute in being part of modern society. It is further added that government-led social policies often attempt to pursue inclusion to solve social problem promote regulations to conduct citizens' conduct (Rose, 1999a), which conventionalized and prioritized certain principles, values and behavior that are conform to the dominant ones. This brought to what Cooke and Kothari (2001) assert that it is not necessarily reflect deepening democratic ideals of liberty and equality, but instead established a way for conforming uncontested ideas, which in turn might expropriate a more progressive approach to social welfare policy.

PNPM *Peduli*, as government-led social development project relies its participatory 'bottom up' process that were evolved around the concept of 'beneficiaries' – the target groups whose lives are to be intervened and whose behaviors are to be corrected – and the 'benefactor', which mainly referred to the development agent, authorities and experts who have the knowledge and expertise to perform the correction. Salemink (2006) articulates in his work that formulating development projects in Vietnam utilized both 'top down' and 'bottom up' approaches at the same time to constitute the beneficiaries. He continues that 'top down' approaches used by assuming that the beneficiaries and skills that required technological intervention that might be deployed through activities like capacity building and training on skills. Concurrently it also deploys 'bottom up' participatory development, which assumes that they are technically knowledgeable, but just need awareness through series of trainings and education that are key to this approach. Moreover, the notion of participation introduced by the development project aggravates dependency relation with donor institution, in addition to ideological bias against the role of government in development (Salemink, 2006).

It has been said that discussion about social inclusion often neglect the positive identities which are crucial to identifying group identity as well as social movement which are able to collectively challenge oppression and discrimination (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001). Following to what Shakespeare and Watson mentioned, Ratcliffe (2000) argues that there is very little sense of agency that included in the discussion of "social inclusion", which appear to construct individuals as agentless recipients of development intervention. Therefore, the demand of "social inclusion" is paradoxical, which is to provide benign intention to solve the consequence of social inequity and at the same time also being co-opted as a kind of moral order that reproduce and legitimate existing socio-economic order. De Haan (2015) points out that the analysis on social inclusion includes cultural modernization idea that is seen how individual perceived norms. He implies a cultural modernization as a transition from traditional (patriarchal) to modern norms and social relation that involved greater individualism value.

6.6. ENGINEERING PROCESS CONTINUED – REPROGRAMMING “SOCIAL INCLUSION” PROJECT

When “social inclusion” as project technical concept is in place through the role of western expert, the process of engineering development intervention continued. Acting as benevolent donor that understand the ‘long’ process proposal development through participatory approach, PNPM *Peduli* Task Team provided additional financing of USD 250,000 for 5 national NGOs partners to develop their “social inclusion” program in 6 months by involving their prospective target population. Each of these NGOs were allowed to choose any theme that fit with the overall narrative of realizing “social inclusion” in Indonesia which consist of a collection of smaller projects working with particular population of ‘problematic people’ that share similar ‘problem’ one with another. Despite providing additional financial support for the national NGOs in developing their project proposal, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team somehow set some restriction regarding the use of the funds. For instance, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team only approved activities that directly related with proposal development activities like to hire consultants, to conduct workshops, or to held participatory meeting with potential target population. At the same time, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team was occupied to test out new project architectures on how to maximize the result of the development intervention, including private lobby to the donor, the government and the World Bank senior bureaucrats to support this change.

During six months of project redesign, PNPM *Peduli* Task Team as ‘development bureaucrats’ started to navigate our personal network and support to ensure that the newly re-design project secured enough financing, at least for the next two years. Various lobbies with donor, international consultants and advisors were done outside of the formal avenue in order to mobilize stronger support from the only interested donor that would be interested to finance the “Phase II”, which is the Australian. Beside the work of lobbying, the PNPM *Peduli* Task Team also focused in designing project implementation structure by establishing what they called as the Managing Partner (MP), which ideally is an International NGOs or international consultant companies that are assumed to have large capacity, knowledge, and international network to replace the role of the current task team. By designing such kind of project implementation structure, the PNPM *Peduli* Task

Team, which was managed by The World Bank, detaching itself away from national NGOs whose capacities it intended to strengthen in the first place. With the reason of changing project objectives, focus of strengthening Indonesian civil society was no longer the main target. Instead, it would focus on the "social inclusion" of the marginalized groups, which seeks to achieved through the NGOs as its vehicle.

Looking back to the recommendations from the evaluation process, it was acknowledged that the existence of PNPM *Peduli* Task Team was perceived as quite successful in building project structures as well as managing relationship among national project stakeholders. The Task Team was also recognized to be able to respond to what the national NGO partners need in terms of project implementation. Unfortunately, that kind of business model in implementing development project was seen as too financially burdensome in comparison with the common model World Bank loan projects. Back then it was argued that hosting all implementation support under one roof was seen as economically inefficient; consequently, PNPM *Peduli* Task Team was under heavy criticism and was pressured to discontinue this model going forward. Heather, my coordinator in the project, once told me that during the early phase of PNPM *Peduli* implementation, a contractor company was previously hired to provide a number of key aspects to support the implementation. Support provided included regular monitoring, evaluation, and reporting; communication; and capacity building. However due to their bad performance, the contract was terminated which brought all aspects of project support back to the Task Team. For that reason, moving forward to the "Phase II", the Task Team remodeled the implementation arrangement by introducing a 'stronger' and more professional NGO, which play a bridging role between the Task Team and the national NGO partners, namely the MP.

In conceptualizing the role of MP in the new implementation structure, PNPM *Peduli* Task Team designed that MP to technically support national NGO partners, especially in conducting what the new ToC framework has described, which was focus on advocacy or "knowledge-to-policy" work. In addition to that, whatever organizations that were selected as MP were expected to identify issues around "social exclusion" that cut across NGO programming and to facilitate dialogue for a more comprehensive "social inclusion" program. For that reason, the MP would also be responsible to build on existing good relation with the Task

Team, Government, the donor and also the national NGO partners. For such qualifications, the Task Team decided that the ideal institution that best suited to do this role is an international NGO which already has prior credibility, longstanding experience in working with grass-root organizations, and certainly has profound understanding about the issues of “social exclusion” in Indonesia.

Prior to the formal bidding process, some prominent international NGOs were personally lobbied by the Task Team, if they were interested to put forward a full proposal to be the MP of PNPM *Peduli* “Phase II”. With the approximation that the selected organization will manage approximately USD 20 million for the next 2,5 years; this was certainly an attractive package for many international NGO to apply. Result from the informal lobbying, a number of international NGOs have placed high interest to compete in the MP selection process managed by the Task Team. This brought to a number of 4 organizations that made through the final selection stage, which decided to grant the MP position to an international NGO, The Asia Foundation – a US-based organization – that surpassed other contenders in the bidding process. As the MP selection process was finalized, this also meant that the Task Team who were previously sat in the World Bank would be dismantled and consequently meant discontinuing the contracts of almost everybody in the Task Team. From the 6 personnel in the Task Team that employed by the World Bank, the management decided to keep only 2 staffs, which would follow conventional World Bank project team model. With such a big layoff in the internal Task Team, various informal and personal lobby occurred among the expatriates, especially with those fellow expatriate friends that work in the donor institution that finance the project or some acquaintances that happened to work in The Asia Foundation that won the USD 20 million bidding. When the Task Team personnel were busy finding safe space for their future employment, another institutional dispute also arose which resulted in closing down some projects. This also included transferring the PNPM *Peduli* “Phase II” project, directly to The Asia Foundation to manage the whole implementation of PNPM *Peduli* which means removing any relationship between the World Bank and the “social inclusion” project.

At a much lower level, these five national NGO partners underwent re-programming exercise of their social inclusion project that shows what Mosse (2005) describes, “*there is a subtle relationship between the framing of problems and the*

social process of enrollment in the design of a development project" (p. 34). According to Mosse, in order to be able to sell the problem-solution, especially to the financiers, the development project should be able to fulfill five important aspects. First of all, the design should be *consequential*. This means that the project should create big effect and it should be able to build a narrative that link specific technical interventions to the larger blueprint of social changes and vision of the future. In explaining this, Mosse added that an aid project is a '*globalizing technology*' (Appadurai, 1997; Luthra, 2003) that skillfully crafts the art of persuasion through correcting behaviors of its *problematic* beneficiaries into an imagined Javanese ideal conception of society, which are harmonious and unity that dominantly represented Indonesian model of society. Secondly, the project design should show *innovation* that represent the quality of novelty and has to mark a new start. Thirdly, the design should be *replicable* and involve approaches that can be taken up by government is another key important aspect for the donor to be interested in. Fourthly, programming intervention should be *technical* as Mosse said that, "*the language of international development consensus (and ultimately legal and intergovernmental agreement) is always technical and never political. To retain its legitimacy and support the project had to be presented at one level as if it had no political or institutional context.*" (p.37) Lastly, the design should be created as a *predictive model* so that the elements are systematically and causally related, and where outcome are certain (Stirrat, 2000: 36). Therefore, these five aspects represented above show that the project model that was defined by a 'theory of participation', which was a depoliticized causal theory asserting that persisting poverty and isolation (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Mosse, 2005).

In order to re-design social inclusion programming, the Task Team gave 6 months for each national NGO partners to do their participatory project design. These NGOs were 'advised' – which implied "subtly enforced" – to carry out evidence-based program design with particular excluded groups that would be their potential target population. Introduced by Chamber (1994), participatory approach to programming development intervention has become very attractive. Among the grass-root organizations as well as NGOs that often receive large amount of external funding, the PRA approach is used to justify those processes in designing development intervention projects based on the needs of local community. Despite its popularity, Mosse (2005) questions the PRA as privileging

a certain type of knowledge that was “*explicit, codified, recognized as such and expressible in language to outsiders as rules, norms, or ‘indigenous theories’*” (p.83). He cited Bloch (1991) that recommends we should be careful in using this tool by continuously asking what kind of *particular* knowledge that it tries to assert in such explicit language form (p.193-194). Taken into account the objective of “social inclusion”, which was misperceived; in the beginning of 2013 the NGO partners started to elaborate various themes on “social inclusion” that can be deployed to create a project for socially excluded group. During the 6 months, besides injecting financial resources; the Task Team also provides access to these NGOs to technical experts and advisors, who are mostly western foreigner, about particular issues that the NGOs required to designing their program. Deployed consultants to assist in NGO programming were those experts on indigenous people issues, public health, conflict specialist, human rights, and livelihood, which are key issues that the NGO partners would like to focus on.

For 6 months, the national NGO partners travelled across the country to ‘find’ potential beneficiaries that fit with the categories of ‘excluded people’ that experience thematic issues of social exclusion according to the NGOs’ focuses. One national NGO that focused on forestry issues navigated their network to find potential target population from the indigenous people’s group who live in forested areas. Similarly, the NGO that built their program on issues around human right violation also worked through their local NGO network to find potential excluded groups that face such violation. Among the 5 NGO partners, there was one NGO that selected issue around social exclusion that the Task Team did not support, which was land holding issue for landless farmers. Despite this NGO has fulfilled the same logical thinking and argued that issues around lack of access to land tenure and land security experienced by landless farmers caused by land grabbing and agricultural land conversion to massive plantation for commodities; the Task Team insisted that landless farmers are not excluded community and land issues are too generic for be social inclusion issues.

At the end of the quality assurance process, where these national NGOs had to present their “social inclusion” project design in front of an expert panel, proposals from 4 NGOs were accepted and one proposal about land tenure issues for landless farmers was rejected. Regardless it was an interesting proposal on land-related issues, the Task Team argued that choosing that topic was not suitable

with the goal and objective of the "Phase II" of PNPM *Peduli* project. Moreover, the Task Team pointed out that problem solution logic provided in the proposal was indeed ambiguous, which lead to incomprehensible offered solution to tackle such problem. The Task Team then insisted that they have not found any concrete "social exclusion" problem presented by the NGO, especially by linking the lack of access to land and massive urbanization. Lastly, on the rejection letter, the review team wrote "*in program (like) Peduli, poverty should not be used as focus of the problem, the focus of the project should be something that related with exclusion*" (Internal document – letter from the proposal review team). Moreover, despite extensive negotiation with the Task Team by trying to accommodate their formal demands; the NGO did not see any good result and finally their relationship with the PNPM *Peduli* ended by 2013, while the other 4 NGOs were moving forward with their project design under the new scheme of the "Phase II". These selected NGOs brought with them majority of their existing local NGO partners that have worked with the current beneficiaries and some new NGO partners with potential beneficiaries to the project. These 4 NGOs have successfully passed the liturgy of problem-solving mechanism in development universe (Ferguson, 1990; Li, 2007; Mosse, 2005), which characterized by 5 elements that Mosse (2005) argued, by complied to the rule of the game set by the Task Team, including defining social exclusion problem according to the PMT and how the logic of problem solving can shape the NGO strategy to intervene the life of the beneficiaries. Further, the excluded people whom they called "beneficiaries" were called "project pillar", as a way in which "social exclusion" issues were organized around the life of specific beneficiaries' category. They were: indigenous people and natural resources; victims of gross human rights violation; youth, children and transgender; and religious minority.

As the re-programming PNPM *Peduli* almost complete by establishing more robust implementation structure, unforeseen institutional changes occurred due to internal World Bank evaluation on its operation as trust fund in Indonesia. Besides that, there were some other key changes that also influenced PNPM *Peduli* project's existence. First of all, World Bank country leadership in Indonesia has significantly changed. The new country director was intensely focused on large-scale conventional loan projects that would give more return on investment rather than PNPM *Peduli* type of project, which provided small grants that actually inefficient

in term of staff cost. Such perspective from the new management often called *wholesale approach vs retail approach* in managing development aid. This *wholesale approach* ostensibly led the World Bank to let go some pilot projects that similar with PNPM Peduli and continue to maintain large-scale loan projects. Secondly, Australia as the biggest donor for national program for community empowerment project in Indonesia has underwent significant political changes. Due to the arrival of Tony Abbott, as Australia's new elected Prime Minister at that time; AusAID, the Australian Aid Agency that operated under ministry of Foreign Affairs, was merged and became DFAT – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This change has brought a number of concerns in Indonesia, especially when many AusAID Indonesia's staffs were leaving the institution due to some changes in the country policy. Thirdly, the PSF as project management institution also faced routine evaluation, which held by the Donor Consortium Group. Despite the PSF's good performance in managing many community-empowerment projects; but considering the previous two factors mentioned above, it would be risky to continue keeping small grant project like PNPM *Peduli* in their portfolio as these kinds of projects required big investment in staffing as well as timespan. In addition to that, rumors that were spread mentioned that the PSF – on behalf of the World Bank management – let PNPM *Peduli* out of its management and transferred the whole program structure directly under DFAT management. For that reason, implementation of the new re-programmed social inclusion was named "*Peduli Program*" – removing its association with PNPM as the World Bank engineered social development project – which managed by The Asia Foundation as the Managing Partner that gave grant to a number of national NGOs to implement "social inclusion" program through a network of local NGOs.

6.7. A NEW HOPE FOR "SOCIAL INCLUSION" PROJECT?

Social inclusion becomes one of important key social policies in many countries in handling poverty and inequality. According to the World Bank, social inclusion is understood as "*the process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people disadvantaged on the basis of their identity to take part in society.*" Such processes seek to include people in three domains as defined by the World Bank, namely: market, service and space, which represent both barrier and opportunities

for "social inclusion" (The World Bank, 2013: 91). This is indeed not easy to measure (Das et al., 2015). Based on definition of social inclusion developed by The World Bank, Report on the World Social Situation 2016 issued by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs articulates that social inclusion is defined as "*process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voices and respect for rights*" (United Nations, 2016b: 20). Described as both process and goals, policies on promoting "social inclusion" are expected to tackle "social exclusion" primarily by removing barriers for people to *participate* in society also by taking active inclusionary steps to facilitate such participation. By reading World Bank's and UN's definition about "social inclusion", it can be interpreted that inclusion might be realized through providing opportunities, access to resources, voices and respect to those who are excluded in order to ensure their participation in society. Therefore, the key to "social inclusion" in this definition is participation that signals processes of building relationship with others.

Despite several attempts to articulate "social inclusion" from non-European perspective through providing a more inclusive understanding, the dominance of European-centric paradigm about this notion remains prevail. Realizing "social inclusion" in Indonesia is actually much complicated that what European conception of social inclusion has predicted. Aspects of "social inclusion" are not only poverty and marginality of the groups that are excluded; but they are also intertwined with behavior of state apparatuses that tend to corrupt in entrenched system of patron-client relationship, which allows these bureaucrats to do so. However, it should be acknowledged that what PNPM *Peduli* project tried to do was copying European model of "social inclusion", without really understanding the significant contextual differences between the two. For instance, while the notion of "social inclusion" in European context lays its foundation on the broader idea of citizenship; however, in countries like Indonesia, the idea of citizenship often understood in a shorthanded way and described simplistically as *nationals*. Therefore, the complex notion of citizenship, under the PNPM *Peduli* project context, was curtailed as proof of legal identification and other forms of material possession of administrative registration documents such as birth certificate, family card, and marriage certificate. It is indeed important to point out the reality that many poor and marginalized group unable to obtain their legal identity and other

form of civic registration document due to various causes; however most NGO partners that involved in PNPM *Peduli* project are those categorized under community development type (Eldridge, 1988; Fakhri, 1991; Korten, 1987) which have strong base in facilitating community not to demand service from the government, but instead to bring the community 'closer' to the service without changing much substantial things from the government side. In this context, rather than focus on advocating meaningful changes through engaging in a more critical way to the government as service providers, NGOs in PNPM *Peduli* played a role as *broker* that bridge between the beneficiaries as the client and the government as the service providers. Therefore, it can be argued that in the context of PNPM *Peduli* project, NGOs did not engage critically questioning the discourse that has been produced; but instead, they participated in reproducing such discourse, in particular on new discourse like "social inclusion".

Due to its novelty, "social inclusion" discourse is significantly absent from the discussion of public policies in Indonesia. Rather than critically engage in "social inclusion" within the context of social policy, the discussions often focus their attention to the socially excluded group which are neglected from social service provision, including access to education, to healthcare, to housing, to civic registration and many more. Since its conception, PNPM *Peduli*, which was designed as 'NGO-driven' project, did not really crystalize "social inclusion" as a contested concept. Instead, it focused on the creation of *problematic people* as the subject of exclusion, for "social inclusion" discourse to operate and "social inclusion" project to intervene. This might be able to explain why, what PNPM *Peduli* operationalized was a misunderstood conception of social inclusion which was simply inserting *problematic people* into current existing system without further interrogating wider structure that create and reproduce exclusion.

These definitions of "social inclusion" are those that often referred by PNPM *Peduli* project under its new configuration, which now being called as "*Peduli* Program" under the management of The Asia Foundation. In its current formation, the project tweaked and adjusted its ToC so it represents the NGO-liked approached. Despite maintained the grand narratives of bring "social inclusion" into the life of project's target population, the current ToC framework heavily focused fostering relationship between *the excluded* and *the excluder* as well as provision of public services. In the new ToC framework developed by "*Peduli*

Program", despite an attempt to define what "social inclusion" is; the project remained focused on the linguistic description rather than deep understanding or contesting the dominant narrative of "social inclusion".

According to the new "Peduli Program" framework, "social inclusion" is defined as effort to place individual dignity and self-reliant as main capital to achieve ideal life with quality. Here, "social inclusion" is seen as an approach to realize a condition where all elements of the society shall receive equal treatment and obtain same opportunity as Indonesian citizen, albeit its differences. By employing the notion of "social inclusion" as an approach, "Peduli Program" itself remains a community empowerment project that partnering with NGO to reach population that are still facing various type of exclusions from government social welfare program and other type of public services due to discrimination, prejudice and geographical remoteness. Under the project new ToC framework, "Peduli Program" aims to realize "social inclusion" for the marginalized, disable population, and whoever that remains excluded and isolated in Indonesia due to differences that they have. For that reason, to realize "social inclusion", the pathways that the project was aiming for were state recognition on the existence of this group by facilitating them to get their legal identity, which is seen as a legitimate form of recognition. It is perhaps worth to see that the vision of this program is quite a utopia as stated, "*no one in this country would experience discrimination, intolerance, intimidation, oppression, social exclusion, isolation, violence, torture and killing, injustice due to differences in religion, physical characteristic, ethnic background and others*", which focus on the reality itself rather than using "social inclusion" lens to understand the unjust reality that people experience.

"Social inclusion" perspective that "Peduli Program" understood is encompassed with a set of key aspects. First of all is *recognition* that highlights state's acknowledgement on the existence of marginalized groups and social excluded groups. This *recognition* includes a way to encourage them to obtain social identification, including non-discriminatory treatment. Besides that, national and local government regulations that recognize this group are also encouraged, so the marginalized groups have the same rights as well as responsibility with other citizens. Secondly, aspect of "social inclusion" according to the project is *respect*, in particular related with the basic human rights of the marginalized groups and excluded people. This form includes the fulfillment of basic rights according to

Human Right Statue as stipulated in TAP MPR XVII/MPR/1998, which should be guaranteed. The aspect of *respect* also includes providing access to public facilities, such as administration registration, health, education, security, economy, socio-cultural and government support to these group. The third aspect according to the project is *partnership*, which is seen as important elements. For that reason, the project was encouraged to build *partnership* with other social groups in form of livelihood skills improvement to support economically productive activities that bring mutual benefit for those who involve in the *partnership*. Last aspect is the idea of *social integration*, which semantically associates membership in society as familial relations, which is “the nation’s brothers and sisters”. “Social inclusion” under the project perspective imagines no negative social stigma to groups, no dispute and conflicts due to differences on religion, belief, social status, ethnic background, physical differences, and social cultural diversity.

With the refined ToC framework, the “*Peduli Program*” was designed “to improve social relations and strengthened the social inclusion of a range of excluded groups underserved by government social protection programs” (Holden and Basjir, 2016: 6). In this framework, the excluded groups here are defined as those who are underserved, in particular by government social protection programs; despite the notion of social protection program itself remain problematic in the context of Indonesia. Furthermore, compare with the previous ToC under The World Bank’s scheme, which focus on access to services and opportunities, greater personal agency and improved participation; the modification of ToC’s objective focuses on “improved social inclusion for those who have been excluded” (Holden and Basjir, 2016: 7). By treating “social inclusion” as a particular situation, “social inclusion” in the project context is understood as the opposite of exclusion. Therefore, throughout the project, we can see that in order to realize inclusion, the excluded people are to be inserted into the community that exclude them based on certain attributes. This application of inclusion as insertion is consistent throughout “*Peduli Program*” implementation.

By understanding “social inclusion” as inserting the marginalized population and the excluded people, “*Peduli Program*” segregates “social inclusion” into three key components, which are: public services and social assistance; human rights; and policy aspect. In the first component that focus on achieving *increased access to public services and social assistance*, which include on

livelihood assistance, on health services, on education service, on social protection, and legal identity and justice services. Second component focused on *increased fulfillment of Human Rights* of the project beneficiaries. This can be measure through a number of intermediary outcomes, which are: sense of empowerment, civic participation, protection against violence and exploitation, and recognition and social acceptance. In this context, human rights fulfillment can be seen if these people are empowered and their 'sense' can be measured or if these marginalized groups participate in civic-related activities such as government-led community development planning, their presence in such activities can be considered as measured of improvement. Lastly, the third outcome relates with policy, which comprised of knowledge on social exclusion to be shared with policy makers so they could develop social inclusion policy to counter exclusion. In addition, this outcome indicator also emphasizes national and regional policies in particular related to economic and social aspect of the need of marginalized individuals. Having said that, the focus on economic and social elements eliminates the political aspect which actually important to create inclusive policies.

In conclusion, it is apparent that the project is focusing on development intervention as its source to intervene the life or marginalized people. With the basic assumption that these marginalized groups are lacking of sense of being included, they are created as inclusion subject. Further it is crucial to understand how the project characterizes people's inability to participate in the basic political, economic and social functioning of society. As the project claims to learn from their experience working together with marginalize group themselves, "social inclusion" is understood as value, process and outcomes, in which contradictory with other's definitions about the "social inclusion" itself. Spandler (2007) describes that unlike social exclusion, which exposed to different type of contestations, social inclusion was somehow overlook and does not get as many contestations as a concept. It is interesting to see how the project defines that marginalized and excluded groups face multiple cause of exclusion and its auxiliary experience of isolation and powerlessness which often result in their self-exclusion and/or limited ability to exercise voice and power; but the "*Peduli Program*" itself never really discuss about constellation of power relation in specific localities that contribute to maintain and reproduce exclusionary practices. In addition to that, the "social inclusion" approach utilized by "*Peduli Program*" operates like problem

of “social exclusion”, which should be solve due it is aggravating impact to the society. To operate the “social inclusion” approach, “*Peduli Program*” started from grouping out the marginalized people and find some “exclusion” characteristics that shared across the identity groups. Furthermore, it finds common theme about experience of exclusion or who/what excludes these marginalized groups then provide justification that “social exclusion” is a critical problem that these groups face constantly.

6.8. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have elaborated the findings that the concept of “social inclusion” used in this project is understood simply as insertion. The selection of Chinese *Benteng* women to be part of this social inclusion initiative resulted from series of construction through popular method in which their state of exclusion was justified as “project beneficiaries”. Moreover, “social inclusion” initiative like “*Peduli Program*” was a kind of project that technically focused on different aspects and attributes of the target population’s identity in order to be intervened while at the same time ignored structural injustice that profoundly embedded in the society that exclude them in the first place. Through autoethnographic fragments, I also reflect the perplexing paradox between enjoying lavish lifestyle among international development workers that hired to deploy modernization technologies and the life of the marginalized people whose life were to be intervened by Development project that we engineered.

Following the framework that is synthesized by Tania Li (2013), I have elaborated that designing Development project like “PNPM *Peduli*” as I have participated in the past, were a process of what she calls as *problematization* and *rendering technical solution*. Such process of *problematization* was encompassed an evaluation process of problem identification of the specific “problematic” communities and predetermined intervention activities that suitable to rectify the diagnosis “problem”. Through an intelligent mechanism to refine the new rule of the game, development engineers who are mostly international experts from the northern hemispheres were tasked to conceptually separate “social exclusion” and “poverty” into different domains. Furthermore, by problematizing the state of the

targeted population, "social inclusion" intervention is rendered as the desired solution to solve such problem.

As the concept of "social exclusion" and "social inclusion" were treated as polar opposite as if one was the unproblematic negation of the other; it is very often that the solution of the *social* problem caused by "exclusion" is simply by promoting the insertion of individuals or groups into existing, which often problematic, structure that sometimes accompanied by more dimension which depends on local context. Therefore, it becomes a "logical" common sense solution to include those who are excluded in order to "benefit" from Development advancement. Consequently, the notion of "social inclusion" that merely blind adoption of the western-context social policy prescription then focus on liberal model of individual's choice and aspiration; but lack of attention to social, cultural and historical context that are crucial in understanding recurring exploitation in the global world.

This chapter also discussed about the role of particular type of local NGOs that received supports from international donor. These organizations are functioned as broker of basic public services that bridge the beneficiaries as the client and user with the government as the service providers, which most of the case were absent. In the context of "social inclusion" project, the NGOs unfortunately did not engage critically in questioning the discourse that has been produced; but instead, they participated in maintaining such discourse by focusing on the creation of *problematic* being as the subject of exclusion in such as way that "social inclusion" discourse was to operate as the desired solution. Lastly, "social inclusion" discourse that promoted by "PNPM *Peduli*" project that I unpack here is not simply the remedy against poverty and marginality of particular groups that are excluded, but also it is important to understand that state-citizens relationship in the post-colonial society like Indonesian for instance is intertwined with corrupt behavior of state apparatuses and strongly entrenched system of patron-client relationship.

**VII – IN THE MAKING OF
NEOLIBERAL SUBJECT**

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“in order to act freely, the subject must first be shaped, guided and molded into one capable of responsibility exercising that freedom through system of domination”
(Dean, 2010: 193)

7.1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, relationship between anthropology and development has always been characterized as a problematic one. It is often described that development is “anthropology’s devil twin” (Gow, 2002) and such relationship is not always black and white as commonly generalized by observers. Mosse and Lewis (2006a) point out three types of engagement between these two, namely instrumental, populist and deconstructivist. The most popular view is *instrumental* where development policy is used as rational problem making solution that directly shaped the way in which development is operated. Here, many anthropologists are hired as ‘applied’ researchers in development agencies to diagnose the maladies and to solve problems faced by certain populations where “development” should intervene. Second view is *populist* where trained skills of anthropologists are used to counter dominant model of development and gave birth to some alternatives to the hegemonic practices, such as a wide range of participatory development with “bottom-up” model and the promotion of “indigenous knowledge”. This type of engagement is closely affiliated with prominent work of Chamber’s (1997; 1989) that increasingly adopted by NGOs as symbol of alternative development. Lastly is *deconstructivist* approach, which mostly build from the work of Foucault. Here, development is analyzed as “discourse” that understood as “a system of knowledge, practices, technologies and power relationships that orders and limit description and action within its field.” (Lewis and Mosse, 2006a: 4). Among others, Escobar (1995) and Ferguson (1990) are those anthropologists whose works characterized deconstructivist elements of their anthropological critique toward development.

Here I am interested to focus on the *instrumental* engagement through the lens of critical deconstructive perspective about how such engagement is unraveled as continuous process of governing (DuBois, 1991; Foucault, 1988b; Gordon, 1991) and brokering (Bierschenk et al., 2002; Lewis and Mosse, 2006a; Salemin, 2006). First of all, there is no better way to explain how development operates in a particular domain as a mechanism of correction from Escobar's "Encountering Development" (1995). In this work, Escobar argues that "development" as a constructed idea, which frames the Third World as domain defined by the West where the life of its population is to be intervened by it. He warns us to deeply look not only at the elements in which objects are rearranged, but also at the system of relations established among them where it allows systemic creation of concepts and strategies that determine what can be thought and be said. It is clear that in his work, Escobar brings power analysis in understanding what development entails, as he mentions "*the system of relations establishes a discursive practice that sets the rules; who can speak from what point of view, with what authority, and according to what criteria of expertise; it sets the rules that must be followed for this or that problem, theory, or object to emerge and be named, analyzed and eventually transformed into a policy or a plan*" (p.41). For that reason, Escobar concludes that development continues to be top down, ethnocentric and technocratic practice that treated people and cultures as abstract concept and statistical figures that measured by the scale of "progress". This series of recurring practices have made development not as cultural procedures, but as universally applicable technical intervention to deliver some "hardly needed" goods to a "target" population. Certainly, it comes as no surprise that "development" becomes a force that is operated as destructive mechanism that dismantle diversities across the Third World where it operates and deploys its technologies to correct certain population.

Other works of anthropological criticism that is found extremely helpful in understanding how the practice of "development" project is not free from particular engagement of anthropologist in conceptualizing, designing and deploying various technologies are "Cultivating Development" from David Mosse (2005) and "The Will to Improve" by Tania Li (2007). In his work, Mosse (2006) describes that "development" has provided a remarkable stable framework within which the relationship between the West and the rest has been understood. However, along with widening inequality gap across society at various levels, in

addition to cultural domination that embedded in the notion of development itself; this framework is not free from continuous criticism despite Edwards (1999) argues that development policy always oriented towards “future positive” (Lewis and Mosse, 2006a). Ferguson (2005) in his contributing chapter (Edelman and Haugerud, 2005) points out the irony of new collaboration between anthropology and agencies responsible to implement capitalist development policies. He further argues the shift towards ‘basic needs’ and ‘real development’ for the poor, represented in human welfare terms such as literacy and nutrition, as the strategic focus of development agencies might cause by the failure of conventional development intervention. In that respect, Escobar (1991) describes that the work of development anthropologists increasingly aligned with the bureaucratic demands of development agencies, at the expenses of its intellectual rigor and critical self-consciousness, which made anthropology as “[...] *done no more than recycle and dress in more localized fabrics, the discourse of modernization and development*” (p.677).

Along with the increasing demand of bureaucrats in development agencies that favor problem solution type of intervention, the role of anthropologists is more and more necessitated to find the right maladies for already available prescribed solution. In the light of such trend, Mosse (2006) found increasing tendencies that international development has moved away from narrow technology-led micro managed projects to wider sector reform that require more complex and elaborated model of development by linking continuous process of negotiation, technical inputs and its linkage with intended results (Brinkerhoff, 1996; Mosse, 1998). In order to fit such increasing demand, Lewis and Mosse (2006a; 2007) describe that many anthropologists are hired as consultants, researchers and project managers in large-scale development industry to play instrumental role – a predominant role that connects their anthropological skills with recurring demand in the sector. They are employed by top development corporations to interpret, to translate, to tailor and to technically deploy various populist concepts like “empowerment”, “social capital” and “participation” into development bureaucracies (Lewis and Mosse, 2006a) as *knowledge product*. Furthermore, such *knowledge products* are to be offered to their main clients – the government of developing countries – to be adopted and to be replicated in industrialized scale. Despite these anthropologists are less dominant in the large-scale development agencies, in comparison to the

economists, Mosse (Mosse, 2005, 2008) writes that their roles as “bureaucratic entrepreneur” are extremely crucial in designing, developing and selling “Development” projects to clients (2005: 12) in a delicate form of intervention that intended to correct certain behaviour of certain population in which development will intervene. Lewis and Mosse (2006a) write that these anthropologists are hired to “adopt the instrumental ‘means-ends’ rationality that characterized these policy worlds, paying their way with knowledge products that are normative/prescriptive, predictive and usable in enhancing development effectiveness” (p.3). Lewis (2005b) calls them “the reluctant participant” that offers their professional service as advisors to policy makers in exchange for convenient livelihood opportunity. For their delicate skills in interpreting and translating locally conceptual meaning, they enjoy niche privilege in prestigious institution with very little contribution of knowledge and skills to development process due to top-down development model that mainly focus on economic oriented approach (Escobar, 1997).

Increasing engagement between anthropology and development has brought its own new dynamics. Together with the increasing presence of development anthropologists in development institution, the formulation of “Development” project oftentimes utilized anthropological ethnography as method to find the ‘problem’ for the available solution. In this chapter, I will follow the line of thought proposed by Tania Li (2013) that elaborate tricky engagement between Anthropology and Development. In her work, Li (2007, 2013) illustrates how anthropological service in development gives meaning in identifying “problem” or “deficit” that “Development” project will be designed to solve. She describes that there are two sets of activities that are constantly used to explicitly translate *concepts* into model of project delivery. One is *problematization* in which described as process of “identifying deficiencies that need to be rectified” (2007: 7) and the other is “rendering technical” – a terminology that Li coined in referring to a set of practices that represent what Rose (1999a) describes earlier as “the domain to be governed as an intelligible field with specifiable limits and particular characteristics [...] defining boundaries, rendering that within them visible, assembling information about that which is included and devising techniques to mobilize the forces and entities thus revealed” (Li, 2007: 7, 2013: 228). Li added that these two processes are inseparable, because the identification of *problem* indicated by certain deficiencies is unequivocally connected to the available solution provided by *expert* who have the authority to

diagnose and to prescribe with what technologies that deficiencies should be corrected. Furthermore, in explaining *rendering technical*, Li (2007) points out on the practice that visibilize the boundaries between *trustee* which described as those who has the capacity to diagnose deficiencies and the subject of technical expert to direct. Li advises that in doing these two practices, 'working backwards' is necessary; while first is to identify a plausible intervention within the scope of agency expertise, followed by selecting and compiling the data and analysis that would support such operation. By following Li's suggestion, this chapter intends to show how the process of social inclusion intervention was conceptualized, developed, and operated in the context of *Peduli* Project on social inclusion.

To operationalize *problematization* and *rendering technical* in "Development" intervention, the role of development anthropologists is extremely crucial. Their delicate skills are highly required as "cultural interpreter" (Brokensha and Little, 1988: 11) between the international development agencies and the targeted population, where "development" is to be operated. Inspired by the work of Ferguson (1990), Li (2007, 2013) underlines that these two processes are very important steps to where defined boundaries visibilize the "improved" domain that distinguish with the origin. It is obvious enough that the process of *problematization*, as Li argues, is seen as a very straightforward operation towards the funding direction. Furthermore, the process of *problematization* often followed, or goes hand in hand, by *rendering technical*. Li mentions that to design *technically rendered solution*, working backward is necessary, which refers to a series of processes that unravel how available solution or intervention is predetermined prior to diagnosing the "problem", in which supported by compiling data and analysis that would support the first claim. Li emphasizes that key feature of *rendering technical* is apolitical in which experts are tasked with particular improvement that deliberately exclude structural political-economic relation from their diagnose and the prescription. Furthermore, *experts* also focus on particularly deficit capacities of the poor rather than on how institutionalized practices through which dominant social groups impoverish others. To perform this, *experts* are trained to frame problems in technical terms, which can be corrected according to their capacity that match with their field of expertise to supply appropriate solution within available repertoire.

What often occur is that research projects and studies are instrumentalized to find 'problems' in specific populations. However, rather than reveals structural and politically embedded practices where power differentials play particular role in a certain population; research projects and studies are oftentimes carried out as a diagnostic mechanism of maladies. In Foucauldian terms, such process is straightforwardly operated as *problematization* as many governmentality scholars have described (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1990; Lewis and Mosse, 2006b; Li, 2007, 2013). Foucault himself mentions that *problematization* "does not mean the representation of a pre-existent object not the creation through discourse of an object that did not exist. It is the ensemble of discursive and non-discursive practice that make something enter into the play of true and false and constitute it as an object of thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc.)" (Foucault, 1997: 257). In Foucauldian analysis, *problematization* does not seek solution and instead focused on identifying differences and multiplicity at various levels through recursive methodology that seek differences and complexity in thinking. This process is key initial step of identification of fluid condition that produces both problems and solution at the same time, in which to be altered to produce other forms of thoughts and practices (Foucault, 1998). In the light of this, Ferguson (1990) ones argued that hegemonic problematic understanding of "development" is that it becomes the main and only stream how the question of poverty is depoliticized through normative solution of "improvement" in social, economy, and physical landscape in which are found to be deficit through diagnostic study and to be corrected by "Development" projects.

The whole series of *problematization* and *rendering technical* therefore are intrinsic processes in which "Development" operates as a way to govern specific population. This set of practice is an embodiment of Foucault's notion of *governmentality* that is described as the *technologies of the self* that connects with *technologies of domination* which make possible the way "to shape human conduct by calculated means" (Li, 2007: 5). In sort, it refers to technical and apolitical framework where society is rendered governable (Foucault, 1977b; Lemke, 2002). Li (2007) notes that the purpose of *governmentality* is to secure the "welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc." (p.5) through educating desire and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs. Thus, in operating "development" in this context, as Li (2007) highlighted above, the role of

trustees (2007: 7, 15, 24) or what Mosse and Lewis (2006a) (2010) define otherwise as *broker* is necessitated and skillfully played by “Development” NGOs that traversing various domains where technical problems are to be corrected which lead to a particular definition of improvement in the intervened population. To some extent, these *brokers* also play important role in translating certain discourse that describes as “traveling rationalities” from Western donors to Southern recipients. For that reason, it is needed to have well-functioned broker to operate “Development” as a corrective mechanism towards certain population in order to achieve what Li (2007) described as new and improved domain.

As mentioned in the previous chapters that *problematization* process in the project occurred implicitly. As a social inclusion project, it is obvious that what “Peduli Program” tried to tackle and to solve was “social exclusion” which was portrayed as “the problem”. Like what Li (2013) mentions that defining “problem” to be solved – which in this context was “social exclusion” – rendering it in technical terms is often straightforward in the context of emergency. However, this technical rendition operates in a different way in relation to development, in which problematizes different *lack* and *deficiencies* that are always very fluid, contextual and a wide room for debate about which “problems” that are more or less urgent than the others; which effects; and how to solve them. In this sense, “social exclusion” is *rendered technical* in terms of what anticipated intervention(s) can actually address which are depend on the available expertise of the NGOs that operates such technology. The outcome is problematizing “social exclusion” as lack of sense being invited or included due to problematic behavior of the ‘excluded people’, in which how Chinese *Benteng* people are represented in this project.

This chapter will focus on the research question about “social inclusion” as technical solution that operated through technology of women’s empowerment. Analysis results from the previous chapters show that “social exclusion” is represented as “relationship problem” at personal level in which transferred into larger “problem” in which represented as “bad investment” at the macro level. It is interpreted that problematic people have problems of “social relations”, in which makes them unable to benefit from development effort. This “problem” results in them lack of ability to engage in what the society views as “normal” that is represented as able to develop a cohesive community. Furthermore, because these marginalized people are the one that bear this “problem”, intervention in the form

of “fixing their social relation problem” was seen as the main solution in which resulted from a process of what Li (2007) describes as rendering technical that is “*the practice through which experts define a problem and circumscribe its boundaries in such as way that social forces can be managed and technical solution applied.*”(p.7). Moreover, in the case of Chinese *Benteng* women in this project, because the ‘problem’ is seen as technical, therefore the solution is prescribed also as ‘technical’.

7.2. GOVERNMENTALITY FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE “PROBLEM” FITS THE TECHNICAL SOLUTION

It was a sunny yet hot and humid morning in the busy train station in Jakarta. I was waiting for the train, which would take me to Tangerang area – further west to Jakarta, which is part of greater metropolitan area together with other urban cities of Bogor, Depok, Bekasi, and South Tangerang. Back in the 70s, following massive urbanization to city of Jakarta along with urban development and modernization, the term *Jabotabek* – an abbreviation from Jakarta-Bogor-Tangerang-Bekasi – was commonly used to refer to Greater Jakarta as the urban metropolitan megacity. Further, the area of Depok was included into this administration in which enlarge the spatial size of the urban megacity. Therefore, Depok’s inclusion into this area has transformed the megacity *Jabotabek* into *Jabodetabek*, which currently are interconnected with KRL Commuter Jabodetabek – a suburban integrated rail that connects Jakarta with its surrounding urban areas, i.e. Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi.

At 11.00 sharp, the train that I was waiting for has arrived. It brought so much surprise to me, as I rarely trust the public transportation system in Jakarta. As inborn *Jakartans* – this is how we call ourselves which means someone that was born, grew up, and lived in Jakarta – I was accustomed to commute by *mikrolet*⁵⁵

⁵⁵ *Mikrolet*: A kind of semi-public transportation vehicle (minibús or minivan) operated in the main city of Jakarta. Generally, the vehicles are painted in light blue color and numbered that mark their routes. Beside operate in the main streets, *mikrolet* also reaches almost all urban areas, including small alleys in combination with other types of semi-public transportation system. Until recently, *mikrolet* remains a reliable mode of transportation of many urban settlers in Jakarta, before the massive proliferation of application-based motor-taxi that radically change the landscape of transportation sector. Despite included as public transportation system, *mikrolet* is owned by private individuals

that passed by my neighborhood every minute for a short travel distance; or getting a *bajaj*⁵⁶ was also very common way of commuting. On the contrary, for a much further distance, getting a taxi was quite affordable for me – otherwise taking private car often was the most preferable way to commute around the city and its surrounding districts. In addition, I have always lived in the center of Jakarta, I was spoiled with various types of comforts that to some extent had given me certain privilege over the other. Besides that, having been away from Indonesia for a few years, I grew accustomed to certain types of punctuality in terms of relying my mobility with public transportation. But as my habits towards public transportation system has changed during my time abroad, my perception about public transport in Jakarta remained – chaotic, uncomfortable, stinky, dirty, dangerous, and always late. This may explain my complete surprise on how punctual the train blew my mind.

The train itself was not bad; despite it seems as second-hand train that was purchased from other country as I spotted some build-in instruction label with Japanese characters. For the standard of public transport, it was quite clean. Every now and then, I saw some cleaners swept the train's floor and sprayed them with cleaning liquids. It was pretty impressive. At 11 o'clock in the morning, the train was not full, because the morning rush hour has passed. Despite my habitudes on using modern European public transport system, I saw myself as a newcomer in using this type of commuter train in my own country. In the beginning I was quite confused and nervous, worried if I jump on the wrong train and it brought me to the opposite direction. It was a long ride, although at the end I learned that shortcut was actually available, that took me more than an hour to reach Tangerang. Once I

called *juragan angkot/mikrolet*. Individually, they own a number of vehicles that transformed into *angkot* or *mikrolet*. Literally, the word *juragan* itself means lord, boss or owner. *Juragan angkot* usually informally hired a number of people as the drivers of his vehicles and are given daily financial target. At the end of the day, the drivers give him the agreed number of money and they can keep the rest.

⁵⁶ *Bajaj* actually is an Indian-brand vehicle. In Indonesia *bajaj* refers to Jakarta's motorized pedicab taxi. Unlike *mikrolet* that operates as mass transportation vehicle, *bajaj* operates exactly like taxi. Normally, before passenger gets into the *bajaj*, there's price negotiation with the driver based on approximate distance.

arrived in Tangerang train station, I received a text message from Ibu⁵⁷ Tuti – a field officer and community organizer from WRDC, a woman organization that work with Chinese *Benteng* women for “*Peduli Program*”. She was the one who guide me to *Kampung Wetan* where these women live. Her message was short, “*I am waiting near the exit gate*”.

Stepping out from the train, I tried to locate the exit gate. Swamping in the middle of passengers, I roamed around to find such gate as Ibu Tuti told me. Tangerang train station is a small one, unlike the other train station that is close to my house. This station is an end-station where trains that travel between Tangerang and Duri – a dense and highly populated neighborhood in West Jakarta – park prior to its next departure time. This train station is strategically located – in the middle of the oldest, largest, and busiest market in Tangerang, called *Pasar Lama* (old market). This is the area where most population of the Chinese *Benteng* resided during the Dutch colonial era. Until now, the majority of Chinese *Benteng* people remain living in that area, own small shops or food stalls in the market area, or pray in the oldest Confucian temple named Boen Tek Bio. Approaching to the station’s exit gate, I saw a lady, which I reckoned in her mid-fifties, wore a *batik*⁵⁸ blouse and complete headscarf that covered her head and neck until it reached her shoulder. In a glimpse, her face somehow looked familiar to me. Slightly I remembered that we did have met before. She was the one that escorted me in one of my supervision missions with PNPM *Peduli* to visit poor urban women’s group in the Northern Jakarta who received the project grant.

“*Ibu Tuti?*” I asked while I approached her. She nodded and smiled. *Yes, she is the same woman that escorted me back then.* To confirm my guess whether she is the same woman, I asked her, “*Do you still remember me? Haven’t we met before in*

⁵⁷ *Ibu* literally means mother. In English, it is often associated with Mam or Madam. It also refers as the most polite and appropriate way to call Indonesian woman. Often women that called as *ibu* were associated as being married or much older than the speaker. However, some Indonesian feminists question the way Indonesian women are addressed as *ibu*, in which normalize being a woman, i.e. being a mother (Suryakusuma, 2011)

⁵⁸ *Batik* is typical nationwide fabric pattern, that named after traditional Javanese drawing technique on fabric. Despite adopted from Javanese culture, different áreas in Indonesia own their typical motives that represent particular meanings in its áreas or cultures. It is also commonly known that *batik* is associated with outfits for formal occasion, despite there has been many that also more casual.

*Cilincing*⁵⁹? Right? When you took us during the monitoring visit and we recorded some videos, right?" Ibu Tuti's expression suddenly changed and grinned, as if she remembered something, "Yes... Right... Right... You're right. Of course, I still remember that time. How are you?" We continued chatting, remembered onetime memories that we have shared a few years back with the previous project. Realized that the time passed so quickly, Ibu Tuti continued, "Shall we start moving to *Kampung Wetan*? I guess the ladies have started their weekly cooperative activities. From there, I will show you around." During our way to *Kampung Wetan*, Ibu Tuti told her experience when she approached the location for the first time, "It was extremely hard to approach those women. In the beginning they were so suspicious against me. I was suspected, as I am outsider and I wore *jilbab*⁶⁰, which not many locals wear *jilbab* there. When I arrived in this *kampung* for the first time, everyone looked at me weirdly. When I asked them about Pak Heri's house, they pointed to the wrong direction or they just refused to tell. I had to come every day to that *Kampung*, travelled more than almost 4 hours in total from my own house, just to win their heart and trust."

At a glance, *Kampung Wetan* resembles my own neighborhood in Jatinegara, East Jakarta. The ways in which houses are organized also depict similar arrangement, that are tightly attached one with another and interconnected with narrow alleys. While we were wondering around in the *Kampung Wetan*, I noticed that this area seemed segregated into two distinct zones. First is the housing zone that near the main Confucian temple, in which also closer access to the main road. In this zone, most houses that I saw are typical residence of Chinese *Peranakan* families that have relatively high level of welfare and status. These houses are surrounded by spacious front yard, which mostly used as parking lot or simply abandoned by the owners. In this zone, houses are well-organized, like the one in modern housing compound, that each one of those is gated and the smaller thoroughfare within that area are covered with concrete pavement blocks. Because it was so organized, I could not believe that inhabitants in this area faced threat of being evicted, as Ibu Tuti informed me during our conversation.

The other area is a housing zone that deeply located further close to the riverbanks, in which appear like informal settlements that comprised of temporary

⁵⁹ A subdistrict located in northern Jakarta.

⁶⁰ Headscarf.

shacks. Contrast with the first housing zone, this settlement area is far from an image of housing area in urban area. Instead, this area represents what Abeyasekere's (1989) illustration about *kampung*, which is segregated space from *kota* (city) where usually most white European population lived and carried sounded negative connotation of backwardness, poverty, stupidity, dirt, crime, immoral, filth and so on (Coté, 2002) that painted the colonial narratives about urban *kampung* like this one. In this colonial narrative, *kampung* areas are where most local natives live which represented negatively as illustrated above. Unlike the first zone, where small streets were treated with neat pavement block, in the riverbanks zone there are no streets. The area is also dark due to lack of lighting facilities. Houses are directly built on top of soil, which often affected by minor landslide or muddy flood during monsoon season. Once in a while, when water rose due to heavy rainfall or sewage clog, the *Kampung's* inhabitants have to evacuate their family outside of that area for a few days. These two zones are completely distinct settlement area marked by different quality of public facilities available for the inhabitants.

Strangely, I did not feel foreign to be there, which may be due to my physical similarity with majority of the inhabitants in *Kampung Wetan*. Sometimes, we greeted the locals, stopped and chatted for a while about some random issues. As I have elaborated earlier in the previous chapter that in 2010, more than two hundred inhabitants faced eviction threat planned by the local government. From that point on, as Ibu Tuti told me that the inhabitants of that area often tend to be suspicious with new unfamiliar face like hers, especially as she wears *jilbab*, which is not very common attributes that people of that area wear on daily basis. Ibu Tuti recalled that on her first visit to that area, nobody would talk to her, just stared at her in a strange way. But she kept going and did not stop there. Despite being rejected and ignored by the community, Ibu Tuti went there everyday, spent her days with Chinese *Benteng* women in the *kampung*. After a few visits, she learned that many of those women and their family relatives did not have formal registration papers, such as birth certificate, ID card, family registration card, or marriage certificate. She believes that by continuous and endless approach to these women, she expected that though "*Peduli Program*" they would obtain the formal registration documents, which legalize their status as legitimate Indonesian nationals; they could obtain better public services; and they would be able to voice

their practical concerns and needs. These goals would be achievable by organizing these women into a common platform, i.e. saving and lending cooperative group, where they could learn to work collaboratively as a team. Such approach has been practiced widely by WRDC-Jakarta in many development intervention projects, which considered effective tool to empower women.

7.2.1. NGO as Development Broker

As mentioned earlier, my encounter with WRDC started when I worked in PNPM Peduli. During three years involvement in the project, WRDC has facilitated the establishment of some women's groups – both in the rural and urban area – in which majorities of them are poor. WRDC itself is a women-NGO that established in 1986 as a branch of another women organization. The establishment of WRDC can be seen as a response towards increasing concerns on how women were excluded from development program, in which also advocated in The World Conference on Women 1985 in Nairobi that led to the mushrooming of economic-focused women empowerment projects. During its initial period, WRDC laid its theoretical foundation on the work of Esther Boserup (1970), which marked the birth of Women In Development (WID) approach that pointed out the failure of development in the third world countries in reaching poor and marginalized women. This work also criticized how massive development projects have neglected women's involvement in the whole process. With such reference, WRDC used this approach to build their mission on involving and providing access for women to development projects and resources to empower poor women's group, which focus on activities around economic improvement through livelihood generation projects.

Strong WID paradigm that emphasized women involvement in development underline economic oriented approach of WRDC. From years of facilitation experience, poor women whom they facilitated are found to be vulnerable due to lack of access to the family's economy. According to Ibu Tuti whom I often speak to, these women are the ones that usually manage their husband's income that oftentimes are insufficient to finance the whole family expenses. For that reason, these women are often become secondary breadwinner or sometimes also the primary ones if they no longer have husbands. Therefore, economic activities are

often seen as useful 'entry point' which might lead them to understand other social issues that can be overcome along with the growth of the women's group. Another aspect might also interest the poor women to participate in development project is through provide them access with financial capital, which could help them start new income generating activity that are organized in a form of women self-help group (SHG model). According to them because of lack of access to financing in formal financial institution, these poor women are unable to obtain financial capital easily to create small home-businesses. In addition, besides providing access to financing, WRDC also sees that capacity strengthening – which often understood interchangeably with training – is a key aspect to complement this whole approach. Therefore, rather than implement the training by themselves, WRDC performs brokering function – despite they often call it as *facilitator* – to connect external services/resources that can bring various expertise that the women would need.

Since 1998, WRDC was fully evolved independently into a full-fledge legally recognized institution that branched out to a number of regional basis organizations in which act independently. Since its inception, the main goal of WRDC is to empower women, especially those who are considered as poor and low economy class that reside in urban slum area and in rural area. In its approach, WRDC focuses on key issues that many communities are facing especially economic problem, health issues as well as education and literacy as the entry point in community organizing, in particular the women's group. With this focus, WRDC's vision is to empower women and realize social transformation towards women's status and role in the society through improving women's access and control to available resources to create structure in the society that are egalitarian, democratic and embrace gender justice. In order to bring about their vision, WRDC focuses on a number of goals, which are: improve live standard, knowledge and ability of women at the grass-root level; improve women leadership and their local institutional capacity through decentralizing resources; and socializing concept of gender equality in all levels.

Originally, WRDC's involvement with "*Peduli Program*" on social inclusion have started since 2011, when the project was still managed by World Bank managed support facility. Back then WRDC's target population was poor women that lived in densely populated poor neighborhoods in a number of urban areas in Jakarta. Unlike in the predecessor project where there were three other WRDC-

affiliates have participated; in the *Peduli* social inclusion project, WRDC was the only one that participates as project's grantee. Following WRDC's broad conception of integrating poor women into development arena by deploying and activating popular development 'buzzword' like "empowerment", "participation", "poverty reduction", "good governance", and "civil society" (Cornwall, 2007; Rist, 2010); WRDC replicated the same techniques and tools, namely to establish self-help group in a form of saving and lending cooperative as a women platform, in which they will be empowered in order to improve their livelihood and welfare. As women platform, this group is also designed to facilitate their members' practical needs, especially to navigate corrupt and shady process of bureaucratic administration in the area where they live. In short, they are shaped to broker administrative registration needs of their members and its relatives. Often, WRDC also offers a number of social courses under the *capacity building* component of the project that focus on improving the beneficiaries' understanding about a wide array of issues in which become key concerns of Development and its implementation strategies, such as reproductive health, women leadership, women entrepreneurship, life-skills, gender and justice, and many more in which geared towards building reliant, responsible and independent individuals.

The involvement of NGOs in many development projects is viewed as crucial. Following the work of Cada and Ptackova (2014), NGOs that focus on work around the issue of social inclusion are categorized into two types. The first is those organizations that are institutionalized, which are mostly deliver services that oftentimes are neutral professional knowledge and build their competencies to engage in policy discussion. Cada and Ptackova note that this type of NGOs considers their project beneficiaries as *client* to whom they will provide services and temporary support until a certain period that the beneficiaries do not longer need them. Cada and Ptackova continue that NGOs' support continue until everything works well, such as beneficiaries have the required capacity to solve their own problem and obtain necessary services and 'rights' needed from the government. The second type according to them is the activist group, which utilized their expert knowledge to assist citizen in exercising their own agency in fighting for their own interest in policy contestation. For them, the ultimate goals are to increase citizens' policy capacity and to mobilize them to contend their interest without any assistance. Therefore, according to such typology, the

involvement of WRDC in “*Peduli*” social inclusion project can be seen as those NGOs in the first category that Cada and Ptackova have defined.

As the current project’s focus is “socially excluded” groups, in which experienced discrimination, negative stigma and some kind of spatial isolation, WRDC chose to work with poor urban women of Chinese *Benteng* community as their targeted population. These women were selected based on specific criteria of the target population determined by the project, which focused on the experience being “excluded” in various contexts. Evolution of the “*Peduli Program*” toward stronger idea in bringing “social inclusion” for the “excluded” groups has obliged the NGOs that receives project fund to target communities with specific characteristic and identity markers classified by the Project as the “excluded community”. Unlike the previous project where “excluded group” were loosely determined, *Peduli*’s classifications of the target populations were relatively rigid and has narrowed down into six clusters, namely: disable, trans person, children, victims of human rights violation, religious minority, and indigenous people and isolated local communities that rely on natural resources. Among these six available options, the only “possible” category that WRDC is able to work with was the last one due to their limited experience working with those of the other five categories. However, as they also did not have adequate experience in working with indigenous people, in which mostly live in remote rural areas; somehow they had to retrofit their experience in working with poor urban women into the category of “*indigenous people and isolated local communities that rely on natural resources*” by creating poor urban women, in this case the Chinese *Benteng* people, into “*isolated communities that rely on natural resources*” and to re-imagine them as “*indigenous people*” by romanticize and exoticize their “unique” culture, in comparison with the native population. By doing this, WDRC has actively problematized economic and socio-cultural aspects of Chinese *Benteng* community as a domain of development intervention.

Following the previous granting mechanism, “*Peduli Program*” channeled its project financing to several national NGOs that focus its intervention to particular target groups which are called *pillar*. These national NGOs then provide small grant to a number of local NGOs, which implement activities with their selected beneficiaries. With this scenario, WRDC received “*Peduli Program*” financing through “Partnership for Governance Reform” (PfGR) – a national NGO – that

manages the pillar of “indigenous people and isolated local communities that reliant with natural resources”. PfGR itself is a well-known national grant-making organization that has longstanding experience in managing large-budget development projects from multiple development agencies, both state and non-state actors. In the previous phase of the “*Peduli Program*”, PfGR was one the three executing organizations that received funds directly from the World Bank, which they channeled to local NGOs in order to implement project activities. In this scheme, PfGR plays the role of mini-donor, since they channeled the project fund and have the liberty to select local NGOs with whom they were partnering to implement the project. Moreover, a number of local NGOs that has the experience in working with “indigenous people and isolated community that rely on natural resources” competed in a proposal process to obtain project funding, in which was regulated by a series of internal selection procedures and proposal guidelines. These guidelines and procedures were developed by PfGR in order to consolidate “seemingly holistic” social inclusion intervention to their target population namely indigenous people and isolated local community that reliant with natural resources. According to PfGR, which has longstanding experience in working with forestry issues under “United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation” (UN-REDD) initiatives, indigenous people and isolated local communities are those groups that severely affected at most because of high tension and conflicts in forest management. PfGR also see them as “excluded groups” due to diminished cultural aspect, which closely link with indigenous people’s ecological system, value, and beliefs that are always ignored throughout the policy formulation process. Beside those reasons, they are often experiencing grave discrimination by state apparatus or other community groups in which lead to significant absence in the fulfillment of their basic right, especially those that related to access to public service.

As previously elaborated in the earlier chapter, the term of “social inclusion” is understood differently within this project. Conceptualized as social inclusion project, “*Peduli Program*” was defined as government-led initiative specially designed to reach marginalized people, namely those communities due to particular circumstanced have experienced treatment of injustice in a form of discrimination in social, economic and political arena. The “*Peduli Program*” described that such discrimination might occur because of negative stigma, absence

in formal statistical database, or geographically isolated that made them hard to reach by existing government development projects. By emphasizing on “social inclusion” as a way to tackle discrimination that experienced by the excluded people, this has made “social exclusion” appears logical as *the problem* that the Project seeks to solve. Using this logical chain, the participating NGOs theorized that due to *discrimination* – including negative stigma – the proposed target groups were prevented to actively participate in existing government-led development projects, which would improve their welfare and brought changes to their life. Furthermore, in order to disconnect the “Peduli Program” with its predecessor, P4GR emphasized the significant difference that PNPM Peduli was focus on poverty alleviation of the marginalized group and the focus of “Peduli Program” was “social inclusion” of the excluded.

The novelty of “social inclusion” in development discussion in Indonesia has led to multiple interpretations. The dominant interpretation of social inclusion in Indonesia is depicted with the idea of solidarity in a ‘peaceful society’, as depicted by orientalist value of Dutch colonizer that constructed ‘Indonesian culture’ as communalist, organically integrated, harmonious, spiritually oriented and other characteristics (Bourchier, 1997). In a more contemporary way and related to that depiction, Tania Li (2007) in her book “The Will to Improve”, she argues that Indonesia’s constitution conceptualized the state “*as a family, organically united in love, and governed by father-head who best understands the needs of its member*” (p.52). Li added that in this family model, “*harmony and consensus rather than open debate and majority decision, unitarism rather than federal or contractual relations, the primacy of group’s needs over individuals’ needs representation through ‘functional groups’ rather than competitive parties, and rejection of the standard elements of liberal constitutionalism such as separation of power and individual rights.*” (p.52). Li cited Benedict Anderson’s idea (1983) that such conceptualization of power and a Javanese aristocratic worldview in which “*leadership flowed naturally from wisdom and spiritual strength and conflict were overcome by cooperation and by recognition of wise leadership rather than by class struggle or majority vote*” (p.52). In this analysis, Li showed that based on the Constitution, consensus was scarce following independence as were politicians and state bureaucrats capable of providing the needs of the “family” nation.

In line with the above description how Indonesian society conceptualize its ideal model based on “family” model nation, understanding of “social inclusion”

in the context of Indonesian society is thus oriented towards this direction. Therefore, such conception also translated in to “*Peduli Program*”, which articulates social inclusion as a “*process to build relation and social solidarity*” that further described as “*process to open access and opportunity for individual, family, group, community or other part of society that are isolated (excluded) to participate in social, economic and political life*” in the PfGR’s project concept. The end goals of what the Project was trying to do was to ensure that these marginalized people would not be ‘excluded’ anymore by government development programs, through open up opportunities for them to integrate themselves with their surrounding communities. In addition to that, the NGO implementing partners are also expected to reach these excluded groups, which are discriminated and stigmatized to obtain basic services and to involve them in social interaction. In this way, as specified in the PfGR’s proposal guide, proposed activities should be those of “*social inclusion program that could ‘invite’ them that are socially isolated, marginalized, or ‘ignored’ to establish connection and actively involve to realize their formal rights*”. This means by implementing “social inclusion” activities that ‘invite the socially excluded people’, it will open up opportunities for them to build network in order to raise their voice, opinion and concerns so that they will be involved in decision-making process by providing inputs and suggestions. In addition, such ‘social inclusion’ activities will also help the ‘excluded people’ to realize their basic rights as well as to obtain access to services. By ensuring that these excluded groups are to be ‘included’ in development planning, together with those who exclude them; the Project believes that social inclusion will be realized when the excluded people are encouraged to actively involve and participate in development project and are not treated as passive beneficiaries of development.

It can be argued that “*Peduli Program*” was a very niche development intervention. It was built around the logic of not many development projects that are actually targeting the excluded individuals and communities who are often overlooked by government-led development programs. Based on such logic, developing team of the “*Peduli Program*” argued that it was extremely necessary to ensure that those who would benefit from the Project are the ‘excluded groups’ – not just the poor – which fit into certain characteristics and criteria determined by the Project. The proposal guidelines then determine six requirements that the local NGO implementing partners should follow, while reaching out their target

population. These requirements were: (1) those that are highly dependent with natural resources but have limited access and control to it; (2) those that face barrier to obtain legal administrative identity due to social discrimination and or geographical isolation; (3) those with limited access to public decision-making process at various level; (4) those with limited access to public facilities and services, for instance education, health, and other types of facilities; (5) those who are negatively stigmatized and discriminated by other communities, which further isolate them from access to public services; and (6) those who have strong attachment with their cultural identity that experience significant challenges in protecting such cultural heritage including serious risk to lose its authenticity. Those characteristics then became the main criteria of project's target population under the pillar of indigenous people and isolated community facilitated by PfGR.

Despite it was seen as development project for the excluded community, there was clear division of labor on 'facilitation and advocacy' between PfGR that focused at the national level and local NGO partners as project implementers that concentrated at the local level, mostly at district-level and city municipality-level. The focus on 'facilitation and advocacy' that played by NGOs at the national and local level has increasingly attract longstanding attention to activate the role of civil society organization which is assumed as the dominant representation of NGOs in Indonesia (Whitelum, 2003). Such strong orientation of 'facilitation and advocacy' in "*Peduli Program*" initially was intended to encourage critical perspective based on grass-root experience brought by local NGOs that credible in working with marginalized and excluded people to claim their rights. However, what often appeared during the project implementation was not as its original expectation. Most participating local NGOs in "*Peduli Program*" – especially those local NGOs that are part of PfGR's hub – were those NGOs that often replace the role of the state in ensuring fulfillment of rights of its citizen, especially in delivering health and education service for many excluded communities. In addition to that, these NGOs also to some extent promote the idea of autonomous individuals and community that finding their own solution to their problem through community organizing technique as reflected by particular project approach, i.e. community empowerment and participation. Therefore, the idea of 'facilitation and advocacy' in "*Peduli Program*" was translated as the way in which NGOs are *brokering development* (Lewis and Mosse, 2006a).

The NGOs, in this case WRDC that operated at the local level and PfGR at the national level, played the role as development broker that operate itself as the active agent in development project. Mosse and Lewis (2006a) wrote that this brokering role is viewed as a result of “*weak state that unable to impose its rationality on local areas, and enlisting, patron client relationship to reduce the unpredictability of the state’s efforts at intervention and control*” (p. 11). Mosse and Lewis add that such brokering functions are situation within the disfranchised politics of the postcolonial state, in which power is exercised through formal bureaucratic institutions and practiced through local informal networks. Activities in activating the idea of *brokering development* are clear in this project. Structured as a cascading model; PfGR, which was responsible to carry out brokering function at the national level did a number of activities that promote the linkages between state apparatus and the local communities. These activities include ‘facilitation and advocacy’ towards key (national) stakeholders to formulate and implement policies and regulations that responsive to the interest of their beneficiaries; capacity building to local NGOs as well as the project’s target population to improve their ‘bargaining power’ in voicing their concern.

This brokering role also materialized into project strategy that was not only focus to intervene the life of the excluded groups by activities on ‘increasing awareness’ about their basic rights which also included improving access to public facilities. On a different level, local NGO partners also follow similar pattern of *brokering*, which are expected to be responsible on ‘facilitation and advocacy’ including building network with local stakeholders such as local government, university, civil society network, and private sector. *Brokering* tasks of ‘facilitation, advocacy and networking’ were to be done through series of activities that ensuring the excluded groups to participate in local development planning at their neighborhood or directly approached the district government sectoral offices. Moreover, facilitation as *brokering* networks also depicted as match-making the needs of respected communities with business interest that are channeled through Corporate Social Responsibility fund. In this way, local NGOs were expected to be development matchmaker in approaching both communities and private sector at the same time. These prescribed roles reflect what Mosse and Lewis (2006a) call as entrepreneurial agent of the ‘developmentalist configuration’ (Bierschenk et al., 2002). Bierschenk et.al. further continue that this kind of brokerage is necessary to

structure rationalities, interest and meaning in order to produce social order, legitimacy, and certain type of 'success' (Lewis and Mosse, 2006a). And for the NGOs, the most important part was to maintain the fund flows where they continued to deploy particular language and to translate such terms for operationalization on the ground. This was the way in which social inclusion is translated into activities through mediating the insertion of the excluded groups into local social activities that would realize the imagination of ideal Indonesian society.

7.3. CREATING THE NEEDS FOR "SOCIAL INCLUSION" THROUGH PROBLEMATIZATION

Foucault's Governmentality framework becomes key foundation to understand how the excluded groups are needed to be problematized in order to be intervened through social inclusion project. Foucault in his works explain intricate weave of governmentality and power, which he describes as 'conduct of conduct' (Foucault, 2010; Gordon, 1991). According to Foucault, 'to conduct' means to lead, to direct, or to guide in which include some aspects of calculation to determine how such act of 'to conduct' is to be done. Beside 'to conduct' others, Foucault also mentions about 'to conduct oneself' in which implies to establish a sense of self-direction that correct in response to a particular situation. Dean (2010) points out that Foucault's 'conduct' can be articulated as noun in which associated with certain behaviors and actions that comprised of some level of calculation. Such calculations thus determine some levels of deliberation features of demeanor according to particular norms and for various goals. Using that understanding, Dean reinterprets government as the 'conduct of conduct' as *"Government is any more or less calculated and rational activity, under-taken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through the desire, aspirations, interests and beliefs of various actors, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes."* (p.18)

Dean continues his analysis of government that is focus with the means of calculation, various forms of governing authorities or agencies, the form of knowledge, techniques including means to utilize them, the populations to be

governed and how they are created, and what ends it seeks to achieve. In his analysis, he suggests that from the perspective of those who intend to govern, human conduct is something that can be “*regulated, controlled, shaped and turned to specific ends.*” (p.18). In order to shape human conduct, ‘rational’ aspects are needed to be in place that justify the reason to such calculation around the act to govern. He specifies that rationality is simply any form of thinking that is systematic, clear and explicit about how things are ought to be. By highlighting the rationality of government, Dean points out that government is a moral activity that intends to make oneself accountable for their-own actions and make themselves as subjects to self-regulation. Therefore, its morality lies within its practices and policies of government that using specific form of knowledge to define what constitute as good, righteous, appropriate, and responsible demeanor for the good of individuals and collective.

Dean (2010) spells out that to obtain social benefits, individuals should perform certain social tasks such as attendance at local meetings, trainings, and other type of activities in which determine how individuals ought to conduct themselves according to certain moral code. That is why Dean argues that government is profoundly moral exercise that aims to engage the ‘governed’ entities and ‘governors’ in such a way to self-regulate so it becomes autonomous and capable of regulating various aspects of his/her own conduct (p.19). This model of government is extremely useful to analyze the way how development project work in crafting the conduct of the intervened population in order to correct their conducts for particular objectives, i.e. the good of society. In his earlier work, Dean (1999) mentions that the global neoliberal project is about operating “*through the freedom of the governed as technical means of securing the ends of government*” (p.15). Such operations can be carried out through what O’Malley (2009) defines as ‘responsibilization strategy’ that mobilize various agencies and institutions of the state to activate individuals and private institution to strive towards certain objectives. Such specific operations are deployed through technologies of “empowerment” to create subjects, as Cruikshank (2011) calls ‘technology of citizenship’ to transform powerless subject to active citizenship.

Neoliberal development projects that employ this kind of ‘empowerment’ technology attempts to shape the conduct of beneficiaries’ conduct as the ‘empowered citizen’ (Everett, 2009) in which they make active contribution to the

society and the economy. Such contribution could happen only if they are empowered (Cruikshank, 1999) through improving the local government (Everett, 2009) that can deliver better service, such as health care and education. Cruikshank (1993) adds that in order to operate the device of 'empowerment' in technology of citizenship, it requires a consciousness of one's powerlessness through a knowledge of its causes where solution to change such condition can be made. She then continues that 'empowered' victims are required so they may actively involve in service provision and overcome their passiveness, fear, and hesitation in building their relationship with the government. Cruikshank argues that the 'will to empower' may have benevolent intention (p. 68-69) in which operated through the role of expert to install personal choice of the target population in which align with the end of government (Miller and Rose, 1990). However, despite may seem benevolent, Corbridge et al. (2005) indicate that plans are often appropriated and manipulated by lower-level government officials, local political leaders, and economically and social dominant group for their interest. Having said that, they also remark that, "*governmental practices build around participation ... often fail to meet the needs of poorer people*" (p.261) despite some potential to give them strength to encounter the state (p. 262).

7.3.1. Problematization – The Process to Problematize the Chinese Benteng Women

Project proposal is maybe one of the most crucial works that NGOs focus to spend their time on. Especially for those NGOs that rely their institutional sustainability by acting as implementing agents of donors' projects, they invest a lot of resources to seriously develop appealing project proposal for the prospective donor to finance their activities. For that reason, proposal writer consultant is one of the highly demanded experts, in addition to other skills like fundraising. For the donor, project proposals commonly treated as foundation prior to signing a legal contract with the fund recipient, which in this case referred to NGOs. In practice, it is often found that many donors deliberately prepare the potential NGO partners to understand the whole process of selection, to induce regulations and restrictions for the NGO partners to follow, or to familiarize NGO partners with the language, particular jargons and specific discourse that the donors commonly use. Usually,

these processes occurred in a form of proposal workshop, where the prospective NGOs are expected to master what the donors are looking for, to be fluent in utilizing donors' language and jargons, as well as to think logically like the donor due to following the same logical framework.

In mid-August 2014, PfGR conducted proposal development workshop which included all prospective local NGO partners – including WRDC – that would implement *Peduli* social inclusion project that targeted “indigenous people and isolated local communities reliant to natural resources”. By looking at the project proposal prepared by WRDC prior to the project implementation, I attempt to unpack how “social inclusion” is activated and operationalized in response to the perceived “problem” of exclusion that experienced by the target population, in this case poor urban women of Chinese *Benteng* community. With proposal template that was prepared by PfGR, local NGO implementers were expected to fill that by answering simple probing question, for instance: “*what are your target group?*” or “*what are the main reasons to target this group?*” For the purpose of project proposal, the most important question is “*what are the problems?*” in which should be addressed by stating “the problem” that the proposed activities will try to solve. Therefore, by focusing on finding “the problem”, it is not rare that NGOs oftentimes focus on problematizing current condition of the target population, rather than finding what cause such condition. Through problematizing community situation, in which is concluded as “social exclusion”, an intervention of “social inclusion” is justified to solve such problem.

The concept of “social inclusion” is interpreted by “*Peduli Program*” as “to insert” and “to integrate” the excluded people into the existing environment and structure. However, this dominant interpretation does not attempt to interrogate that existing and dominating structure as problematic. By using the dominant interpretation of social inclusion as “insertion” and “integration”, WRDC proposed a project that could help poor women of Chinese *Benteng* community “*to be recognized as nationals as well as to interact socially with other social groups without losing their cultural identity*”. From such statement of objective, it can be seen that WRDC has developed main assumptions of “exclusion” in order to activate discourse of “inclusion” simply as “insertion”. First of all, “exclusion” is represented through absence of basic rights fulfillment of the Chinese *Benteng* people as Indonesia's nationals that are not recognized. Secondly, “exclusion” that experienced by

Chinese *Benteng* people is depicted as their failure to interact with other community groups due to structural discrimination during the New Order era and negative stereotypes towards them. And thirdly is related with state regulation – both national and/or local level – which put this excluded people into disadvantage situation. These are “the problem” construction produced by the NGO on the state of “exclusion” that experienced by Chinese *Benteng* people, especially their women.

“Social inclusion” project formulation as appear in the proposal, used particular logical construction in order to problematize these urban poor women. To problematize them, WRDC identified a number of deficits, embodied within their constructed identity as Chinese *Benteng* women, and created a domain where such deficits should be corrected through a “women empowerment” approach bundled together within “social inclusion” project. In this construction, problem of their “exclusion” lies on their *deficits*, which are illustrated as their incapability to voice their concerns, ideas and needs, and their inability to develop meaningful relationship with others. Consequently, their *deficits* have led them to a failure in fulfilling their basic rights as well as in obtaining basic services as Indonesian citizen. Furthermore, WRDC utilized the argument of patriarchal structural domination within the Chinese culture to justify the complication of Chinese *Benteng* women’s position in their respective society. Thus, the rationale to select these women as appropriate target population of “social inclusion” project was reasonable enough. By combining Chinese *Benteng* women’s *deficits* due to Chinese patriarchal structure, WRDC justified the needs to correct such *deficits* with series of intervention in order to create consolidated and organized women-beings to solve their own problems.

Developing a background story about profile of the target population is a common practice in developing project proposal. Despite its regular practice, I found that the background narrative of the target population often treated as meaningless aspects of the project proposal in which developed without comprehensive understanding about the life of the targeted population. Furthermore, the absence of in-depth comprehension about the target population in project proposal oftentimes is replaced by ‘quick and dirty’ writings that reproduce dominant narratives about the respective target. Like the common practice in writing this background narrative to illustrate superficial understanding about their prospective beneficiaries, WRDC employed similar method in

representing Chinese *Benteng* people as racially monolithic with the common stereotype of Indonesians of Chinese descents, in which can be said as culturally and historically blind representation. Such representation is also depicted through normalizing negative stereotypes towards the Chinese *Benteng* community in the absence of critical interrogation how such representation is being produced. Despite the objective of writing such background is limited to the context of project proposal, but implicitly this written narrative reproduces ignorant, ahistorical, and apolitical discourse of Chinese Indonesians.

Studies about Chinese in Indonesia are extensive, in which also cover countless topics (see Chapter 2). Since the fall Suharto's New Order Regime, researches about Chinese Indonesians remain attractive for many historians, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, and social scientists to continue elaborating different ways in which the 32 years dictatorial regime has problematized the *Chineseness* of Indonesians of Chinese descents as threat to the nation's security and unity (Heryanto, 1998, 1999, 2005; Poerwanto, 2003; Purdey, 2003; Sai and Hoon, 2013). Discourse of SARA, an abbreviation of *Suku* (ethnic), *Agama* (religion), *Ras* (race), and *Antar Golongan* (interclass), was introduced in the 1970s as symbolization of maintaining nation's security, stability, and order by prohibiting public discussion about issues related to SARA (Hoon, 2006a). This SARA discourse bracketed all Indonesian citizens as single and homogenous under single *Pancasila* national identity (Hoon, 2006b), which Anderson (1991) theorized as national "imagined community". Unlike the other ethnic groups that compose this "imagined community", Chineseness of the Chinese Indonesian citizens always perceived as cultural problem internally that might risk solidarity as a unified nation.

Align with the deployment of SARA discourse Chineseness was also something that the nation should tackle by declaring *program pembaauran* ("assimilation" program) that specifically targeted Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent, in which Heryanto (1997) argues as culturalist approach to *correct* cultural problem. According to Heryanto such generic common depiction oftentimes is used as justification to craft the representation of Chinese Indonesians that are perceived as 'problematic' in which required cultural "correction". Through this cultural "correction" in which apparently logical solution that spread through strengthened kinship ties, such as marital, those *problematic* citizens were targeted

in *program pembauran* and expected to fully 'assimilated' with the culturally authentic Indonesian, i.e. the natives (Heryanto, 1997: 30). Furthermore, the word *membaur*⁶¹, which means to enter into or to join social groups, communities, and similar social forms so it resembles the authenticities of members of such entities, oftentimes used colloquially to refer how Chinese Indonesians should do in order to be accepted as part of this imagined communities. However, despite how hard they try do so, they remain the "Other".

Despite the New Order has ended for more than 20 years ago, the notion of SARA as security discourse prevails and continues its self-reproduction through formal and informal writings, including what WRDC has written as the background narrative in "*Peduli Program*" proposal. In the proposal document, repeated narratives in deploying SARA discourse are used to frame Chinese Indonesians as an inseparable aspect of racial and interclass problems occurred in Indonesia. Such framing implicitly constructs linkages that racialized conception about Indonesians of Chinese descents, which often provokes economy-based tension that camouflages as ethnic-based conflict. This racialized conception is clearly described as the opening of the narrative background in the project proposal as it said, "*One of the important critical problems are the ones that related with the Chinese, which oftentimes ended in conflict that are based on race, religion, ethnicity, and inter groups.*" Ignorant representation continues when the project proposal briefly describes about numerous restrictions and discriminated policies targeted at all Indonesian citizens of Chinese descendants, ignoring the regime's cherry-picking treatment as it also nourished intimate relationship with Chinese Indonesian conglomerates for the interest of corrupt politicians, bureaucrats, and military personnel.

Other than the racialized representation, exaggerate exposure of their victimhood was also highlighted frequently. Statements like "*A number of restrictions and limitations for the Chinese to play a role in politics and military that expanded as limitation and ban for those that express their existence through cultural activities, customary practice, religion, job limitation, education, livelihood that causes the Chinese systematic and structured discrimination*" were used to show how the representation built by emphasizing only on their suffering as discriminated

⁶¹ See <https://kbbi.kata.web.id/membaur/>

minority aftermath the Dutch colonialism. Such narrative continues to maintain particular representation of their victimhood as the problematic subject of 'voluntary' assimilation policy by stating, "... through the politics of assimilation, the Chinese were obliged totally to merge with the native". Thus, by only focusing on their Chineseness, like citing assorted forms of Chinese-like art, cultural expressions and performances including beliefs and values, implicitly framed on this proposal ignores wide array of diversities among the Chinese Indonesians that are far from monolithic themselves. For that reason, the underlying class and economic problems that imbued with longstanding colonial practice of extraction and oppression, which were inherited by New Order patrimonial politics, have cultivated ethnic sentiments against 'Other' Indonesians who are those of Chinese descendants.

Without any intention to deny that discrimination experienced by majority of Indonesian citizens of Chinese descents did occur during Suharto's 32 years reign, I found serious generalization and misleading assumption portrayed by the project proposal as it continues reproducing dominant narratives about how the Chinese Indonesians should be represented, as victims of the ruling regime. In addition to that, erroneous textual description in the project proposal showed WRDC's ignorance of the diverse characters and types of Indonesians of Chinese background, in which materialized into variegated identities that represent their Chineseness. This superficial description shows how the proposal was blind to differentiated social class, economic capability, cultural practices, and many others aspects that distinguish various populations of Chinese Indonesians the archipelago. Simultaneously, by representing Indonesians of Chinese descendants into single category by abandoning complicated process of migration in which intertwined with longstanding colonial experience in Indonesia, dominant narrative has rendered them into apolitical subject and at the same time exploiting the imagination of common stereotype, as economic animal.

Main representation around the racial tension towards the Chinese Indonesians that eventually led to ethnic-based conflict was strengthened with the fact that New Order regime pulled away its attention from the majority *authentic* Indonesians, i.e. Islam and *pribumi* (native). Tan (2001) refers authentic Indonesian identity as *bumi* identity in which she portrayed as complexion of religion and ethnic-based identity. In her article, she wrote, "*Religion increasingly bears on*

conceptions of identity as most bumis are Muslims and Chinese non-Muslims (Christians especially in Indonesia). With Islam as the cornerstone of bumi identity, religion can be mobilized as a marker of difference and as a means of garnering popular support.” (p.955) These perceptions that are constructed overtime thus materialized into beliefs about how Chinese Indonesians were treated favourably by the regime was because of their business instincts that combined with the negative stereotypes as previously mentioned by Haryanto (1997). All of these then expressed by WRDC in their proposal as it is written, *“Besides, liberal political economy of the New Order has opened up great business opportunities for the Chinese [Indonesian] conglomerates. At the same time, Suharto also pulled himself away from muslim population and local ruler. This circumstance has contributed to the growth of hate sentiment towards the Chinese in which likely to perpetuate racial conflict.”* Certainly, what I call as sloppy and careless representation about Chinese Indonesians that are based on constructed perceptions, cherry-picking stereotypes, and lack of profound understanding about the complexity and intricate constellation about historical evolution and its relation with Indonesia’s political economy during the authoritarian regime has been used to reinforce their victimhood and despair. They were utilized to rationalize that they have been “excluded” and “victimized”, in which justify a reason for “inclusion” as the intervention.

Repeated representations about Indonesian citizen of Chinese descents certainly grew much stronger in comparison with unrepresented corrupt bureaucrats, politicians, military personnel, and native businessmen. Despite the mushrooming of *Ali-Baba* model of business partnership (see Chapter 2 of this thesis) between the native and Chinese Indonesian businessmen during Suharto’s administration, in which evolved in *Cukongism* as a particular model of Indonesian-style political financing, dominant narrative about Chinese Indonesians as negatively stereotyped economic animal simply put the blame on the whole population of Chinese Indonesians. At the same time, this representation also ignores Indonesia’s system of political economy that was build based on patron client relationship between the native politicians, local power holder, ruling elites, military personnel, bureaucrats; and a handful of Chinese Indonesian capitalists. As a result, this patron-client relationship has cultivated normalized perception about how the regime favor *non-pribumi* (Chinese Indonesian) over the *pribumi* as the authentic Indonesians. Nonetheless, for the purpose of obtaining project funds,

proposal prepared by the WRDC-Jakarta ignores the fact that many native elites and businessmen enjoyed the same level of privileged relationship with the regime, in particular with politicians, bureaucrats, and those who were in the military. In fact, such collusions were out of the proposal frame while discussing what constitute as the “main problem”, in which has provided the most suitable vehicle for the corrupt practice in the bureaucratic and political system in Indonesia.

Claim made by WRDC about “*liberal political economy of the New Order has opened up great business opportunities for the Chinese [Indonesian] conglomerates*” shows how the project proposal frames business opportunities for the Chinese Indonesians in such a way that facilitated by liberal political economy. This in turn has, once again, normalized how as Chinese Indonesians instinctively would grab such business opportunities that were facilitated by the regime. Further, the absence of profound international political economy analysis – in which is seen as unnecessary as such development project is intended to solve practical and technical problems – might causes significant omission in explaining the NGO’s claim. While project proposal simply treated as technical “problem solving” document in which often created without proper research work, most of the information used – especially in the background part – is considered as ‘general knowledge’, which in this case was built from continuously reproduced perception and assumptions that are developed based on taken-for-granted stereotypes, especially the negative ones. Due to lack of comprehensive political economy analysis, this proposal incompetently correlated fragmented facts about Indonesia’s political economy and socio-cultural aspects. Explanation about claim on Indonesia’s liberal political economy and its close relationship with United States was abandon.

Political scientist and sociologist have explored mutual relationships between New Order Indonesia and United States (Hadiz, 1997; Robinson and Hadiz, 2004). The ascendancy of neoliberal politics that underlined the birth of Washington Consensus, economic and development policies in Indonesia were directed to facilitate free market with limited state function (Robinson, 1985, 1986; Robinson and Hadiz, 2004). During Suharto’s era, the state’s economic architecture was engineered by a number of US-educated economists. They are Widjojo Nitisastro, Ali Wardhana, Mohammad Sadli, Subroto, and Emil Salim, who were popularly called as the “Berkeley Mafia” (Berger, 1997; Bourchier and Hadiz, 2003;

Chua, 2004; Hadiz, 2004; Ransom, 1970). As the main engineer of Indonesia's economic policies, Widjojo Nitrisastro was appointed by Suharto as the team coordinator for economy and finance of the Office of the President's Staff in 1966. Following to that, he also held important position as head of Indonesian National Development Planning Agency (now called BAPPENAS) from 1967 to 1983, in which he played strategic role in determining Indonesia's development direction at that time. In addition to that, he held several other positions for instance as Minister for Development Planning which he was appointed in 1971, and the Coordinating Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry from in 1973. Moreover, Nitisastro's expertise was extremely crucial for the New Order regime, as he remained one of Suharto's key economic advisors until the authoritarian regime collapsed in 1998. In summary, WRDC's failure in presenting such information in the project proposal indicated ignorance about international political economy dimension, i.e. around the issues of rivalries between US and Soviet Union in Cold War, that significantly influenced political thinking, economic policies and development directions in Indonesia skewed towards close alliance with US.

Lack of accuracy, reliability, and coherency in representing Chinese Indonesians, in which WRDC has never worked with before, indicates how "exclusion" aspects are constructed by relying on existing stereotypes. WRDC's consistency in depicting Chinese Indonesians as the 'Other' was reproduced through *othering* Chinese *Benteng* communities, which does not conform to such normalized representation about the Chinese Indonesian. The project proposal describes, "*Chinese Benteng people is a Chinese community that has particular uniqueness in their culture and history. Psychically and economically, they are different with the majority of Chinese in big cities. Psychically, Chinese Benteng is dark and economically is poor. All kinds of stereotypes, stigma and poor conditions resulted in them being treated discriminatorily. It is difficult for them to access rights as citizen, also health and education service. Decades of such experience have made them apathetic and unwilling to obtain legal identity, which they assume that it would not change anything.*" In a glance, such description shows how Chinese *Benteng* are depicted unlike common 'regular' Chinese Indonesians that are psychically fair-skinned and economically prosperous. This kind of anomaly is understood by WRDC as different from the 'normal' Chinese Indonesians who mostly lives in city/urban areas. Whereas, *some* Chinese *Benteng* people that are psychically darker and are also happened to be

poor is seen as the antithesis of the normalized representation of “regular” Chinese Indonesians. Then, Chinese *Benteng* people are constructed as the “Other” of the Chinese Indonesians, in which at the same time this representation also dichotomizes the normal “regular” Chinese Indonesians versus the excluded “Other” Chinese *Benteng* people.

Through this perspective, WRDC reproduced colonial racist narratives that associate skin color with economic prosperity as they contrast the Chinese *Benteng* community with the “regular” Chinese Indonesians. Moreover, their Otherness – in comparison with the “regular” Chinese Indonesians and the native Indonesians respectively are seen as two important elements in constructing their double discrimination. This double discrimination is then described in the NGO’s proposal as, “‘Endless despair’ which is probably the most suitable expression to illustrate them” which used to justify important aspects of their “exclusion”, namely: stereotype, stigma and being poor. These three aspects were further crafted as key reasons of being discriminated, which led to lack of access to services provided by the state. By focusing on the key attributes that constructed Chinese *Benteng* people as “excluded” community, WRDC neglected structural issues in which they were aware, such as corrupt mentality of petty bureaucrats who oftentimes exploit the Chinese *Benteng* people due to their Chineseness and weak financial position.

7.3.2. Constructing Chinese *Benteng* women as ‘problematic’ group

‘Chineseness’ and ‘Otherness’ of the Chinese *Benteng* people are key attributes to construct their “problematic” identity. Despite its inaccuracy, that is often misleading and rather sloppy description as written in the WRDC’s project proposal; such representation takes fragmented unverifiable information from scattered resources that are used to justify their background and state of exclusion at the present moment. Not only representing Chinese *Benteng* people as ‘the other’ but also repeated the narrative of blaming by depiction of traitor, due to their ‘close’ relationship with the Dutch was also used to rationalize their exclusion from the other ethnic group – as Tan (2001) called *bumi* – that perpetuates racial conflict. Moreover, such representation as portrayed in the project proposal has romanticized Chinese *Benteng* as “indigenous community”, in which pictured as isolated groups that prohibit them of being fully assimilated with the local native.

Such isolation – in which for some cases do occurred – was used to justify their situation as being neglected. Thus, such generalization without adequate and accurate research were framed to illustrate Chinese *Benteng*'s isolation that neglect destructive effect of massive development project during the 1980s and 1990s, which was Soekarno Hatta International Airport as one of the main airports in the country. Besides that, the mushrooming of medium size industry, including shipping, warehouse and other type of manufactures, has led many Chinese *Benteng* people to sell their land with very low price. In addition to that, representation created in the project proposal to some extend has indigenized their cultural practices as exotic hybrid, which they continue to practice and to persevere until now. Their perseverance in maintaining such exotic hybrid Chinese *Benteng* cultures thus used by WRDC as main rationale of how the act of 'preserving' almost-extinct cultures to engage in "social inclusion" activities.

According to Indigenous People Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN), defining a community group with indigenous people title is not a simple process. One staff member that I spoke to a few years back told me that it requires a rigorous process for a community group to be considered an indigenous people. Fatally, by associating Chinese *Benteng* people as in the same category with 'indigenous people' as defined by AMAN, it was a careless decision and at the same time also ignorant. Negligently, WRDC retrofitted certain representation of Chinese *Benteng* into indigenous people category by portraying this community as "*The situation of this Chinese Benteng fits with definition of Indonesia's indigenous people that composed by Indigenous People Alliance of the Archipelago. They are a community that has particular origin of ancestor and settled in a particular geographical area for generations. They also have value system, ideology, economy, politics, and culture and social that are distinctive, and still uphold the traditional values in their system of life*", which distinct from what AMAN defines of indigenous people. It can be said that WRDC's interpretation as mentioned in their project proposal is simply a careless reduction of AMAN's definition on indigenous people that originally described as "*communities that inhabit an ancestral domain from generation to generation, have sovereignty over their land and natural resources, of which social and culture regulated by customary law and*

*institution maintaining the peoples' sustainability*⁶²" (AMAN, 2015). Unfortunately, what WRDC used to define Chinese *Benteng* people is based on what they concluded based on a short visit to the project location, without a comprehensive understanding about the real context of indigenous people, let alone the historical trajectory of Chinese's migration to the archipelago which we now call Indonesia. Furthermore, what the project proposal portrays is a form of simplified material characteristics of an ethnic groups, which are related to the origin of their ancestor's; linear time frame of inhabitation in a certain area; and occasional commemoration or observance on some traditional practices. Then, claims about particular value system ideology, politics, economy and socio-cultural that Chinese *Benteng* people live by that was interpreted by WRDC as the "*Peduli Program*" implementer, is seen as a way to exoticize and romanticize minority culture. These narratives were then crafted into convincing stories of how the Chinese *Benteng* people are being "socially excluded", in which rationalize their eligibility as proposed beneficiaries for the social inclusion project, despite it does not fit the purpose of the theory of change that determined in the beginning.

In a many development projects implemented by NGOs that aim to bring benefit for the local communities, they are operated in a condition where the state fails to deliver its functions. Issues like poor quality of basic services, including lack of access or the absence of such services, oftentimes justify the NGOs to replace state's function in service delivery (Antlöv et al., 2012; Banks and Hulme, 2012; Fasih, 1995). Besides that, government regulations and the discriminatory practices in terms of law enforcement also used to justify injustice treatment faced by certain segments of the population which are the excluded groups, the minorities, the marginalized people, even the poor population in general. On the contrary, it is quite rare that Development implementer NGOs point out on the bad quality of legislation process in which in itself might potentially lead to what theoretically defined as "exclusion". The absence of real understanding and thorough analysis on policies and regulations has eventually led to this type of NGOs – for instance WRDC – to focus on the legislation output, rather than the political process of how legislations are being developed, enacted, and communicated to the public.

⁶² Formal Speech of Secretariat General of AMAN in HKMAN 2015 (retrieved from aman.or.id)

Moreover, such absence is very apparent, in addition to lack of comprehensive understanding about new issues that are not part of the agency's expertise, as articulated in WRDC's project proposal.

As mentioned previously, the narrative of blaming in WRDC's project proposal is apparent, especially in the context of government regulation. For instance, it is mentioned that Tangerang City regulation No.6/2012 about urban planning has led to land conversion in which focus on commercial construction such as factory and private housing complex. Such irresponsible blame focuses on the narrative about Chinese *Benteng* people's despair that are 'losing their land' that have eroded 'their subsistence culture'. This sloppy accusation around people's relation with land has indeed ignored Indonesia's decentralization that made land as subject to local taxation and market mechanism (Rosser, 2004). Furthermore, the blundered interpretation that based on partial information has justified the reality about lack of land supply had caused the Chinese *Benteng* people to stop farming and agriculture practices that they had been done for generations. In contrast, this narrative was somehow contradictory to what I had found.

Her name is Souw Keng Nio⁶³ (*not original name*). I met her on my way to grab my lunch. I had known her through a brief introduction from another Chinese *Benteng* lady that lives close to her house. I promised her that I would come by to her house to chat after I finished. Unexpectedly, she dragged me along to her modest house and invited me to join her for lunch. "I have prepared pork with soya sauce"⁶⁴, a typical dish that can be found in some *peranakan* Chinese household. In a glance, I remembered my late grandmother – a *peranakan* Chinese woman herself – that used to prepare *babi kecap* for lunch. Often my *popo* added tofu and hard-boiled egg together with the chopped marinated pork into the thickened soya sauce, just to satisfy what I fancied. As a kid, I did not eat pork that much. I don't really know why, but once in a while we had pork, especially during important celebration like Chinese New Year. In her house, Mak Keng Nio served the pork with plain white rice. I wonder that it could have been something special that she prepared pork. I remember that majority of my respondents usually prepared cheap vegetable for their lunch and dinner – while sometimes complaining that

⁶³Not original name.

⁶⁴Saya masak babi kecap.

even the price of cheapest vegetables was skyrocketed – in which brought to my assumption that having a kind of meat is probably a kind of luxury.

“Do you eat pork every day?” I asked. She responded by shaking her head, *“Currently it is cheap.”* Despite eating pork is not common in most part of Indonesia due to religious reason, here in *Kampung Wetan* most Chinese Benteng settlers show that eating pork is a common habit and addressed quite eagerly. Mak Keng Nio continued by telling me that long time ago – which she did not remember anymore – Chinese *Benteng* people in *Kampung Wetan* own pig farms. Usually, the pig farms are source of their livelihood, besides also for their own consumption. *“Now it is forbidden. There were a lot of pig farms on the other side of the river. But ‘people’ complained and the farms were evicted by the city government.”* Slightly she sighed, as if she was aware of her position as Chinese *Benteng* people and hopeless to resist demand of the ‘people’. As Mak Keng Nio implied on the ‘people’ implicitly, I quickly aware about increasing Islam conservatism in that district since 1999 – when Indonesia moved to massive swept decentralization project across the country. As a result, in Tangerang area – both the urban municipality and the district – public has witnessed stronger Islam identity, increased conservatism, and institutionalized practice of Islam in many state institutions. Then she said, *“It’s getting more and more conservative. People here are more fanatic than before, or maybe because of many newcomers here? I don’t know.”* As the city government has evicted these pig farms that are declared as *haram* according to Islam; the former space is currently planned for public park.

Over the years, Mak Keng Nio has noticed increasing newcomer population in this area. She assumed that it could have been due to more factories that were built in that area. She believes that since there are more and more factories, she often sees unfamiliar faces *“mostly from native ethnic group... maybe Javanese”* as she speculated. I was triggered to ask how long she has been living there – in her current house. Surprisingly, she responded, *“This is not my house. I don’t own house anymore. I live here with my daughter and her family. We have been living here for about five years, maybe. Before that, we lived in another neighborhood.”* Mak Keng Nio and her family have been in constant move. Once, she had a house with a spacious land where she could pick fruit and sold them. In the 1990s, her family sold the property to the contractor that managed the expansion of Soekarno Hatta International Airport. Mak Keng Nio’s case was not unique and at that time there were much

more cases like that, especially because the property has been sold with very low price. She still remembered that there were no rooms for negotiation. They were basically forced to sell their property on a low price; otherwise, the government would evict them. With the money that they received, Mak Keng Nio and her family rented a house because they just did not have enough money to get a new house. For those Chinese *Benteng* families that still have money to rent, they might do so; but unfortunately for those that do not have the means to rent, one viable option was to build their house in Cisadane riverbank.

Through my lunch chat with Mak Keng Nio, I was able to understand that land issues are far than a simple formulation. It intertwines in a complex manner with development project within modernization paradigm. Besides that, such issues are often treated as technical and individual rather than political and structural by some development-type NGOs – like WRDC through activity formulation in development project. My discussions with other Chinese *Benteng* group community reveal that the *real* Chinese *Benteng* people, in which referred to those that live around old Chinatown area, are not agricultural community. As they live in the urban area – where lands are scarce – most Chinese *Benteng* are traders, with its own wide variety of sizes. This is also the reason why they are called as Chinese *Benteng* that referred to the former location of Dutch fortress (see Chapter 2). Unlike Chinese *Benteng* that live in the urban area of Tangerang, Chinese Udik – the *peranakan* Chinese community that live in southern part of Tangerang (for instance: Curug, Panongan, Legok, and Cikupa) despite physically indistinguishable with Chinese *Benteng* – are farmer community. They live in the lowland area, where lands are abundant and mostly are inherited across generations. Besides this two *peranakan* Chinese community, there are also *peranakan* Chinese communities that live in the coastal area (for instance: Teluk Naga, Mauk, and Kosambi) and are mostly fishermen due to their close proximity with northern coastal of Java. But due to common generalizations in perceiving *Peranakan* Chinese in Tangerang, these three distinct groups are called as Chinese *Benteng* while disregarding their differences.

The varieties of *peranakan* Chinese in Tangerang are not homogenous groups. Despite physically they might look alike; they are distinct communities and have dissimilar ways of subsistence. Unfortunately, such diversities are homogenized through WRDC ignorant representation, by conflating agriculture based lowland

community, fishery based coastal community, and urban trading community. Such representation was built from developing causal relationship between land scarcity and means of subsistence that is crafted as background stories in the project proposal developed by WRDC. It was stated that *“Livelihood opportunities from fishing are becoming limited. They have to find other source of livelihood elsewhere. Due to restricted condition, low skill and knowledge, lack of education and limited financial capability, the only livelihood option is to be informal small-scale seller.”* Such description follows the logic of causal relation that interpreted by WRDC in relation to the District Regulation No.6/2012 that is understood as government policy to forcefully take the land of Chinese *Benteng* people. Thus, description of deprivation and despair faced by the Chinese *Benteng* community are represented in a way to show logical causal relation resulted from land unavailability.

As part of the problem presentation, WRDC project proposal constantly repeats the dominant narrative about Chinese *Benteng* people. It is stated explicitly that *“From the initial assessment, initial information was collected. The (Chinese Benteng) males are mostly traders or petty seller, the rest are part-time laborer and junk dealer or scavenger. Whereas, the women are door-to-door seller, do someone else’s laundry, snack maker and seller, or own small-scale animal farm – beside their role as housewives. Due to their poor condition, they are not considered as educated Chinese and always excluded, which made them vulnerable to practices of discrimination and exclusion.”* Consequently, based on such narrative, through this project proposal, Chinese *Benteng* people is depicted in a derogatory way as a community that due to their illiteracy and poverty is left without option rather than doing assorted kind of informal jobs. This dangerous representation also falsely portrays an image of “always educated Chinese” which implicitly stereotyped Chinese *Benteng* much further. In this case, through their project proposal, WRDC exposed Chinese *Benteng* “otherness” by highlighting assorted informal jobs that they have to do because of their poverty, which implied to generalizing the common stereotype of jobs that Chinese Indonesians never do. As such, the reality of *poor* Chinese *Benteng* that WRDC has met do not match with the dominant imagination about certain image of Chinese Indonesians.

In order to emphasis on the problem definition, matrix of exclusion has been prepared by PfGR in the proposal template to be filled by local NGO partners. In the context of WRDC’s project proposal, this exclusion matrix was used to map out

various aspects of exclusion where the Chinese *Benteng* women are described as “excluded”. As guided by the overall project result frameworks, “social exclusion” aspects are categorically clustered into three main domains, which are: basic service delivery, social acceptance, and regulation. First of all, in the area of basic service delivery, ‘evidence’ of state being excluded is showed through numeric figures like percentage, numbers, and definition which aims to show that Chinese *Benteng* people are excluded and at the same time they are also impoverished by poverty. For instance, ‘data’ that WRDC collected gave them reason to claim that a certain percentage of Chinese *Benteng* children in *Kampung Wetan* area do not go to school due to being poor. Other illustration also showed that large numbers of Chinese *Benteng* girls do not have formal identification card. By centering on figures and situation of being excluded, the problem creation focuses on individual people rather than how the system works. While WRDC did not problematize how service providers operate in which in favor to certain group of population; it instead uses the condition of despair and disadvantage of some Chinese *Benteng* people to create single representation. This representation therefore justifies the reason that Chinese *Benteng* needs project intervention to obtain their formal identity documents – not by ensuring that service provision to be inclusive.

Secondly, as a consequence from the absence of formal identification documents, this often seen as main cause of inability to access basic services – despite not the only cause. For that reason, ID cards provision is generally claimed as the main solution to the problem of service provision. Despite so, the question around the quality of service delivery that was experienced by Chinese *Benteng* people was never interrogated. Majority of my respondent cited that it was not because they do not have ID card that made them unwilling to go to public health facilities. According to them, it was because of poor service in the facilities. Not only them, but other clients also experienced more or less similar treatment. As Mak Mei Siaw (65) told me one day, “*I never go to public health centre, even though it is cheaper than the private facilities. The queue was so long and I had to wait for hours to get examined*”. Similar experience also faced by Meri (30). One day she dragged me along with her to take her baby to the doctor. I asked her whether she would take him to the public health centre close by her house. She responded, “*We are not going*”

to the puskesmas⁶⁵. In the puskesmas, we have to queue since ... um maybe from 7 o'clock in the morning. Queue can be hours. My son continues to cry and coughing all night long, I though his nose was blocked. I can't sleep last night. And if I had to queue for hours in the puskesmas together with tens of other people, I can't do it. Besides that, I still have things to do in the house." She then opted to go to the private clinic instead. Despite she had to pay a bit expensive for the consultation and get the prescribed drugs, she feels more comfortable and spend less time waiting. Thus, by normalizing the standard of public service delivery, WRDC neglected the fact that public health facilities have quality related problems.

Combination of the above points brought to the final point that leads to Chinese *Benteng* women exclusion in accessing service facilities. Explicitly, WRDC's project proposal mentions that, "It is difficult to access public health facilities because they don't have ID-card. The fees in private health facilities are expensive and inaccessible because they are poor" which rationalizes their poor situation with their inability to obtain registration documents and consequently prevent them to access health facilities. However, such description turns blind about the quality of public services. WRDC's problematic logic reproduces recurring blaming narrative of Chinese *Benteng* people condition which in turn rationales their state of being poor and "excluded". Such logic neglects structural failure of the state in providing good quality of public service, such as health, education and civic registration. Moving away from interrogating the government's ability to do such, technical solution proposed by WRDC was quite simple that was to help Chinese *Benteng* people to get formal identity document without questioning the quality of public service provision. Therefore, the absence of formal identity documents and their state of being poor are constructed as aspects of "exclusion", which the project should solve.

In "*Peduli*" "social inclusion" intervention, social acceptance is highlighted as one of key reason why people get excluded. The rational of social acceptance brought into simplistic way how the project, in particular the implementing local organizations, aims to solve social exclusion. Uncontested assumption about some people gets excluded because of being discriminated is used to justify the needs of external intervention to fix the exclusion problem. In this way, based on the way in

⁶⁵ One stop public health facility or clinic.

which Chinese Indonesians is narrated and represented by the dominant *bumi* population, WRDC reiterates the same tale by pointing out on problematic stereotypes – interestingly only the negative ones – to justify the reason why they are being discriminated. As previously mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, reproduction of racist narratives that emphasizes on skin color with economic superiority is used repeatedly by WRDC to *othering* Chinese *Benteng* in contrast with the imagination of *normalized* Chinese Indonesia. Such representation also points out in their backwardness, just because the common imagination has failed to conform the reality of Chinese *Benteng* people, with produced normalized stereotypes about Chinese Indonesians. For WRDC which never had any experience in facilitating Indonesians of Chinese descendants, such representation is obviously accepted without further interrogation in which at the same time has normalized the physical stereotypes is simply concluded as root cause of failing to obtain acceptance from the society. Moreover, without any attempt to verify such imagination and assumption, this NGO instead worsened the repeated accusation of Chinese Indonesians as equal to communist. Thus, rather than simply just benevolent intention – in the name of social inclusion project – what the NGO did instead was reproducing the normalized narrative of Suharto's style *pembauran* as a solution to their problematic aspects through obtaining social acceptance from the dominant population.

In “*Peduli Program*” social acceptance is seen as something final, but uncontested, in order to create ideal form of Indonesian society appears as grand vision. To realize such vision, “*Peduli Program*” called for *imagined* inclusive Indonesia where everybody should be accepted regardless their differences. The ideal social acceptance promoted in this project, unfortunately is uncritically questioned, without further interrogation, and simply accepted as face value goals. At the same time, *pembauran* is seen as a way to achieve social acceptance that idealizes on ‘fun-type’ activities that can bring people together – without actually understanding competing interests as well as power differential within this diverse community. Interestingly, project proposal prepared by WRDC was somehow ignorant with these complexities. Instead WRDC pointed out that Chinese *Benteng* people's exclusion is simply because they are looked physically different thus rationalize the reason of being discriminated and above all are poor, which have made them unable to access *neutral* public services. Furthermore, illustrations as

being socially excluded people in the project proposal do not give any historical explanation about how Indonesians of Chinese descendants were excluded from nation-building project. This reproduced narratives and socially constructed problem through activating the normalized negative stereotype of Chinese Indonesians has justify the need for the social inclusion project to be present to intervene the life of Chinese *Benteng* people as excluded community.

Targeting women as population to intervene by Development is always appealing to many donors, especially through the technique of women empowerment. As an experienced women organization, WRDC has longstanding experience in facilitating and empowering women through many development projects. Chinese *Benteng* women in particular were targeted in this “social inclusion” project. WRDC envisioned that through involving Chinese *Benteng* women in “*Peduli Program*”, it enables them as change agents in terms of social acceptance through building relationship with ‘the mainstream’ community. Despite their claim as women organization, WRDC employs similar approach in homogenizing women’s experience into singular representation as victims of men as biological category by emphasizing on their victimhood. Besides that, culturally blind representation about Chinese *Benteng* women also leads to dangerous implication in which undermines certain culture as worse or better than the other. Such ignorant understanding written in the project proposal as, “*Chinese authentic culture places women in a very low position. This complicates women to be able to take part as change agent to realize social acceptance that could protect Chinese Benteng people from discrimination and social exclusion*”. This patronizing view of understanding Chinese culture certainly shaped by superficial reading about it. WRDC’s inability to grasp comprehensive understanding about Chinese culture further used in the project document and cause severe misrepresentation of the Chinese Indonesian community. Stating such description, especially to mention particular cultural authenticity, WRDC’s ignorance was used to coarsely craft imagined state of “social exclusion” by subjectifying Chinese *Benteng* women as object of inclusion intervention. In addition to that, such description and misrepresentation continue to distinguish Chinese *Benteng* women as exotic cultural object that stagnant and do not adapt with local condition or evolve.

The justification to tap women as project beneficiaries in this “social inclusion” project is seen as perfect fit to highlight the “comparative advantage” of

WRDC as women's organization. Through rough data collection framed under the claim of participatory assessment, its objective to capitalize Chinese *Benteng* women as empowered individuals and included part of the community was built on particular narratives of these women as victims of Chinese patriarchal culture. Furthermore, by portraying these women continuously as helpless victims, it justifies project intervention to save them from the men and to help them to help themselves by inserting them into state-endorsed Development projects. Statement such as *"Because most Chinese Benteng communities still uphold traditional gender role, male stereotype is leader and main decision maker, because the husbands are assertive and decisive than the wives"* or similar depiction that emphasizes on Chinese *Benteng* women's victimhood that illustrated through phrases like *"Chinese Benteng Women's double burden"* and *"Marry and divorce without paper have marginalized Chinese Benteng Women so they will not be heir"* are used to justify how Chinese *Benteng* women are suitable target to be intervene in this project. Interestingly, the tone of depicting excluded groups as victims appear to be consistently represented also in the project publication.

Exposing and exploiting the victimhood of Chinese *Benteng* women is quite apparent in constructing the narrative that they need to be saved. Continuously portraying these women as saveable victims of the Chinese *Benteng* men and Chinese *authentic* culture are easy enough to show these women vulnerability. Oftentimes, to reproduce victimhood of the Chinese *Benteng* women WRDC also replicated general narrative about women, which in turn reproduce homogenizing effect of diverse experience of marginalization and oppression. Moreover, the narrative that WRDC produces through the project proposal about Chinese *Benteng* women looks patronizing and far from the spirit of feminism that they are echoing. The WRDC's proposal depicts Chinese *Benteng* women as "problematic" segments of population category because they are subordinated, *"due to the assumption as low-status human being. Prior to being married, they follow the parents, when married they follow the husband and as divorcee/widow, they follow their children"*. From such statement, it can be seen that the focus is on women as the object of despair, while the active subject – which in many cases are constructed by the society – are deliberately hidden from the representation. Despair status of women continued to be constructed in which creates them as a problem that the project should intervene. Explicitly, WRDC also underlines that *"Every anti-Chinese riot badly affects*

women due to their past experiences of being sexually assaulted and raped”, which justify how ‘women’ as weak segments of the population is considered as the most ‘needy’ target population. However, in this problem formulation, it seems that WRDC’s view is rather inconsistent and bias. Rather than addressing oppressive system of patriarchy, WRDC instead focused on intervening women – especially of particular ethnic minority group like the Chinese Indonesians, in which is silenced – that are seen extremely risky in the light of racial conflict.

As previously mentioned, and guided by the project results framework, which conceptualized by The Asia Foundation and the national-level NGO partners such as PfGR, filling the exclusion matrix was mandatory requirement for project monitoring purposes. To illustrate that exclusion covers different aspects in community life, the Chinese *Benteng* women as proposed project beneficiaries are crafted into ‘the problematic ones’ utilizing the argument of absence of access to basic service and lack of social acceptance in which mark their foreignness. With the same problem analysis that was explained above, WRDC pointed out that Chinese *Benteng* women faced significant difficulties in accessing certain public services, in particular health, education, and civic registration. Results from WRDC’s participatory assessment oftentimes pointed to the direction of ‘no formal identification documents’ in which argued as the main reason that cause why the Chinese *Benteng* people are excluded in accessing public services. However, this assessment overlooked more profound elaboration on how the service provider operates, including the quality of service delivery, in which do not reflect in the problem definition that cause exclusion to certain population. In addition, lack of access to service provision, WRDC also concludes that the absence of women’s organization in their neighborhood is also seen as critical problem in the life of Chinese *Benteng* women. The consequence of facing this problem was Chinese *Benteng* women’s inability to participate in public decision-making forum which periodically occurred at the village level. WRDC’s experience on facilitating urban women sets certain standard that women’s organization such as *arisan*⁶⁶ group,

⁶⁶ Local model of rotating saving scheme. This model usually is very popular among women groups.

PKK⁶⁷, or *posyandu*⁶⁸. The absence of these form of women's organization are considered as lack of capacity to organize themselves. Therefore, the combination of those has constructed the Chinese *Benteng* women as problematic people that are seen as lack of capacity in which creating needs for Development intervention.

The logic of most Development project is to define what is the problem and to develop activities that aim to solve such problem. Oftentimes, what happened is not really solving the *real* problem, but problematizing certain aspects and work backward based on the expertise of the agency (Li, 2013), which is not always perceived as problem by the community. Furthermore, as like many other western-led development projects, which target to correct or to improve those who are targeted based on their 'backwardness' and 'authentic foreignness' – like in this case is Chinese *Benteng* people – focuses solely on their state of deprivation rather than how they are being disadvantage by patriarchal system. Instead, it blames on the women that are lacking of certain attributes or some kind of ownership that cause deficits which made them 'eligible' to be intervened.

Crafting and treating Chinese *Benteng* women as an "excluded group" requires certain narratives that show sense of rejection experienced by these women in order to produce rational consequences as being subject to discrimination that led to their impoverishment. For that reason, it creates the needs of acceptance to avoid non-discriminatory treatment as explained above. Activities such as training, capacity building, and community organizing which were designed by WRDC as the project implementer directed toward women's empowerment that can be seen as technologies of rule intended to incorporate the exclude people into the welfare system. Steps of inclusion promoted by "*Peduli Program*" aims to build capacities can be seen as the will to empower (Cruikshank,

⁶⁷ *Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* – Family's Welfare Empowerment is a government-led institution that comprised of women at the village level. Suryakusuma (2010) argues that in this institution, elite members are those whose husband hold important position in the government. For example, the chairwoman of the PKK at the village level is the wife of the village head. At local level, structure of this institution duplicates the role of executive branch of government in which positions are held by the husband.

⁶⁸ Local health post, which usually monitored by the village midwives and comprised of a number of local cadres. Activities in *posyandu* includes weighting for below 5 years old children and regular checking for pregnant women.

1993, 1999). Such technologies attempt to visibilize these women to be knowledgeable about their authentic self, which also at the same time create active and courageous women with participatory skills and commitment to economic development. However, it also can be seen that there are substantial differences in content between program formulation and implementation.

7.4. INCLUSIVE COOPERATIVE PROJECT: SOCIAL INCLUSION SOLUTION FOR THE “PROBLEMATIC PEOPLE”

Inaugurated as “social inclusion” initiative, “*Peduli Program*” was interpreted, was re-conceptualized, and deployed “social inclusion” in the context of Development intervention. This “social inclusion” was operationalized to the Chinese *Benteng* women as one group of communities that are depicted as “problematic people” that supposed to be benefit from government welfare program. By highlighting their “problem” as in their failure to having beneficial social relationship with other community groups or the government, the project implementers like WRDC described the “problem” of these “problematic people” through “problem analysis” by employing various tools like Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) that would be solved by development project. Furthermore, what ‘they need’ are to be prescribed by the NGO project implementers through adopting need assessment tools. By using the governmentality framework, I would like to argue that in this project context, “social inclusion” is a subject-making process that operationalized as a process to transfer these women as “problematic being” into what Cruikshank (1999) defined as “empowered citizen” in which able to contribute to Indonesia’s development, economic growth and democratization process to realize ideal conception of Indonesian society.

In “*Peduli Program*”, *problematization* process can be analyzed and interpreted through the activity proposal developed by WRDC, which basically treated as blueprint on how intervention activities shall be carried out. With the project title as “*Encourage recognition and access to obtain basic services for the Chinese Benteng people through strengthening women’s capacity*”; activities in this project mainly focus on women trainings that generally termed as “capacity building”, organizing meetings with important power holder especially the local bureaucrats, and initiating art and cultural activities such as “traditional” dancing class. As WRDC’s

expertise is on the area of women empowerment through saving and lending cooperatives, having “entry-point activities” like forming cooperatives was seen as a good start for these women to engage in development activities, which were foreign to them. Such approach is often seen as effective to attract local communities to participate in the project, like what Mosse (2005) wrote when he described development facilitators’ approach towards the Bhil community, “*the delivery of activities mediated the social distance, uncertainty and ignorance experienced by staff. They found the acceptability of their presence in villages was largely based upon the benefits they could, or promised to, deliver. These initiatives also created demand for a constant stream of new activities and commitments.*”

WRDC led assessment needs resulted in a project proposal with the initial amount around 425 million IDR for the duration of 7 months. Such needs assessment at the same time also to problematize towards the Chinese *Benteng* community, especially the women. Activities proposed in the proposal intended to promote inclusion of Chinese *Benteng* community, in which required all actors to support such intervention. “Critical education” and “capacity building” are two key interventions that were done continuously and systematically to tackle the problem of their “exclusion”. Utilizing the understanding of “social inclusion” as a process to insert the “social excluded” people to the dominant population, WRDC focused on deploying narratives of popular development buzzword like *critical learning*, which they themselves do not really understand profoundly. Interestingly, such *critical learning* does not focus on real empowerment that brought high sense of awareness of rights so these Chinese *Benteng* women become critical and questioning discriminatory/exclusionary policies and also to resist. It rather creates these women to be compliant subject that understand and follow the current structure.

The narrative of *critical learning* and *capacity building* are planned in project activities, which emphasized more on the aspect of *capacity building* which simplistically translated into various training. Those activities were capacity improvement for the beneficiaries, which was intended to educate the on how to be certain subject by learning these types of crucial “capacity”. These activities are best implemented in sequences that started by women leadership training where they are taught to work together not as individual but as group, including some technicalities and procedure about the saving and lending cooperatives.

Ibu Tuti told me her endless effort in approaching these Chinese *Benteng* women. She said that those Chinese *Benteng* women were very closed group and it was difficult for her to communicate with them. *"They were very suspicious toward us, especially because we asked a lot of things to them. Asked about their daily activities."* At that time, Ibu Tuti and her other colleague, Ibu Wati went to *Kampung Wetan* every day from Jakarta. Like what I did in the very beginning of my visit, they travelled with the KRL train from where they live which took about 2 hours to arrive there. Ibu Tuti admitted that she was really committed, *"If we want to approach the community, it has to be done that way. We have to approach them every day. After a week that we visited them every day, one woman started to open up to us. She said that they were afraid to meet new people, especially because of the eviction case in 2010. Then I understood why they were so closed off. Another lady even kicked us out from the Kampung. But we keep going.... It was just a challenge."*

Every day for two or three weeks, Ibu Tuti and Ibu Wati went to *Kampung Wetan*. They spend time with the Chinese *Benteng* women, hang out with them in the *warung*, or went with the Chinese *Benteng* women out for gambling – in an open space near to Cisadane riverbank. Meri (30) also took me once there – to the place where many Chinese *Benteng* community oftentimes gambling for many reasons. Usually, they gamble just for killing time or as a way to entertain oneself. Meri's mother, Mak Njoo Mei (50), a gambler herself said that she often gambles together with her fellow friends. Many outsiders, like Ibu Tuti and Ibu Wati, assume that gambling is Chinese *Benteng* tradition as they often witness Chinese *Benteng* people gamble. For Mak Njoo Mei, she always gambles when there are special occasions – like funerals and weddings. When I asked her, she responded, *"Gambling here is like casual entertainment. No big money involved, only small ones. Just for having fun. Better gambling. Like last week, when the mother of Ibu pendeta⁶⁹ passed away, everyone gambled. There were a few tables there. It's a good way to console those who just lost their loved one."*

"No wonder people here were suspicious when we came... We asked a lot of things, like how much were the price for rice, spices and other daily needs. We asked about their activities. We followed people around." Ibu Tuti remembered her hard work, when she approached Chinese *Benteng* women for the first time. After three months of hard work, Ibu Tuti felt that gradually the Chinese *Benteng* women starts to be opened

⁶⁹ Preacher's wife

up, shared to her about daily routine. Like other urban poor women's group that she facilitates, the Chinese *Benteng* women often are busy in the morning with house chores and childcare. As their gradual intimacy grows, Ibu Tuti started to introduce the idea of saving and loan cooperative and encouraged them to also form women's group. Through such approach, Ibu Tuti was able to gather 25 women to have their very first group meeting in Pak Heri's house. Pak Heri himself was a well-known figure in *Kampung Wetan*. He is a ward chief (*Ketua RT*) to whom the community usually seek advice and help. As a *Ketua RT*, he also regularly represents his neighborhood in local meeting to propose what the community need. In 2010, he organized the community of *Kampung Wetan* to resist the government eviction plan. Since then, Pak Heri becomes the main community figure in *Kampung Wetan* and often claims to have loyal follower, which he believes would follow his command. Besides that, Pak Heri also acts as the gatekeeper in this *kampung* which all activities involving the community have to pass his "approval".

"It was not easy either... We agreed to hold the meeting at 4, because the women only available in the afternoon. But the meeting only lasted for 15 minutes. They didn't speak to each other. I feel rather odd." In that 15-minutes meeting, Ibu Tuti shortly explained about how to form women's saving and loan cooperative. Despite short, Ibu Tuti said that she was able to influence those women to have another meeting in the following week at the same time and place. After that meeting, Ibu Tuti did not just wait, she continued to follow up to these women individually and explained to the Chinese *Benteng* people, mostly to the women the importance of having community group in their neighborhood. She used the word *guerilla* to illustrate how she had to navigate her way with persistence to make these women interested to her proposal. With tens of years of experience working with urban poor women, Ibu Tuti that came every day to the *Kampung Wetan* – sometimes accompanied with her colleague – were tireless encouraging these women to form a saving and lending group. She said *"It is important for woman to have activities outside of the house."*

The second meeting can be seen as successful, which last for two hours. Despite these women have not yet decided on what was the name of the group, they were agreed to select three women as chairwoman, treasurer and secretary in a deliberative way. These women proposed 3 names, namely Ibu San Nio, a 45

years old woman and also the wife of Pak Heri. According to Pak Heri, Ibu San Nio needs to be socially active and should not always be in the kitchen. Other candidates were Ibu Pin Lan (43) that lives next to Ibu San Nio's house and Ibu Herlina (38) who also lives nearby. These three women were just regular housewives that seldom engage in social activities in their neighborhood. Not because they were forbidden by their husband, but social activities were practically inexistence. Moreover, these three women were to be selected democratically as daily committee (*pengurus*) of the cooperative. It was the first experience for these women to do this, choose their own representative to manage the cooperative. Ibu Herlina got the most votes (12 votes) which she elected as chairwoman, followed by Ibu San Nio (8 votes) as treasurer, and Ibu Pin Lan got the least (5 votes) as secretary. Together with the other 22 women, these are the initial members of the saving and loan cooperative. Guided and monitored by Ibu Tuti on how the cooperative group works as well as how they self-regulate the cooperative, these women decided to collect IDR 20.000 (about 1,5€) per member, which should be kept as long as they became member of the cooperative. Besides that, these members also required to have mandatory saving installment on a weekly basis at about IDR 3.000 (about 20 cents). In addition to that, they agreed to meet every Tuesday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Pak Heri's house to collect the money and whenever it was sufficient, the cooperative also lend it out to members.

The establishment of saving and lending cooperative done by the Chinese *Benteng* women is considered as a kind of Self-Help Group (SHG) in microfinance literature. The establishment of Self-Help Group (SHG) often seen as a way to empower poor women, which has been practiced by many development projects worldwide. Mostly, these SHG formations also used to operationalized microfinance projects, whether they are donor-funded projects or in a form of community-run saving lending schemes. Scholars that focus on analyzing microfinance activities utilizing SHG model, for instance L. Mayoux (2001) conceptualized theoretical standpoints in which microfinance can be seen as effective way to achieve various objectives, such as financial independency, poverty alleviation, promoting female entrepreneurship, or women empowerment. Besides the use of microfinance activities in the form of community-based saving and lending groups through SHG also attractive for local development projects due to its traditional aspects in which can be found in various local communities.

According to microfinance literatures, such SHG model also called as revolving saving and credit association (ROSCA) where group members gather in an agreed time schedule in order to save and to loan. In many countries, ROSCA has its own local variations, for instance *arisan* in Indonesia, *likelembas* in Congo, *ekub* in Ethiopia, *pandeiros* in Brazil, *cundinas* in Mexico, *paluwangan* in Philippines, *bashi* in India, *dhikuti* in Nepal, and *pia huey* in Thailand, which Bouman (1977) refers as indigenous form of saving and also as credit providers. Later on, the development of these traditional form of financing modality have emerged into a more complex institution with sophisticated way in managing the funds, such as become legal entities and use computerize bookkeeping mechanism.

Globally, the idea of small credit provision to the poor was popularized by Muhammad Yunus in the 70s, based on the fact that the poor do not have sufficient collateral to access financial services, which made them 'un-bankable' society. Initially introduced as financial tool, microloans provisions to the poor have been increasingly claimed as powerful remedy to alleviate poverty through the conception of creating self-employment for the poor, especially for the women. As this approach become widely utilized in many development interventions, a number of local level variations emerged along with different adjustment made by the implementing agencies, mostly NGOs – both local NGOs and international affiliated NGOs. These variations include organizational management (managed by professional financial institution, or by NGOs, or directly by the communities themselves), financial resources (externally funded from donor or internal source from the community saving), and homogenous membership (women only) versus heterogeneous membership (mixed women-men). Despite its wide variations, microfinance often generally understood as providing microloans directly to the poor communities through local legal institutions that perform as formal bank and employ series of financial principles. This commonly known as Grameen Bank model, the well-known microfinance model introduced by M Yunus. In microfinance literature, such model oftentimes referred as SHG that usually consist of approximately 15-20 members.

Despite its increasing prevalence as powerful tool to address poverty, the impact of microfinance has shown mixed results depends on relevant socio-political context, economic environment and enabling/disabling policies. Cheston & Kuhn (2002) argue that "...the ability of a woman to transform her life

through access to financial services depends on many factors – some of them linked to her individual situation and abilities, and other dependent upon her environment and the status of women as a group” (p.14). Some studies in South Asia found that microfinance delivery through the creation of SHG has led to a positive change on creating employment, increase individual and household income (Borbora and Mahanta, 2001; Gangaiah et al., 2006; Pitt and Khandker, 1998) thus improve their social status (Ledgerwood, 1999) and appear to be less dependent on the husband (Kabeer, 2005a).

Echoing from the success in increasing women’s individual income and creating self-employment, microfinance thus promoted as key approach to pursue poverty alleviation effort. Littlefield et. al. (2006) considers that financial access for the poor is crucial for poverty reduction agenda, because it provides opportunity for the poor, especially women, to involve in sustainable growth. Similarly, Mayoux (2005) argues that by providing access to loan, women have the potential to contribute to the household welfare, which give women more bargaining power in the family (Hulme and Mosley, 1996). In response, Maholtra & Schuler (2005) also argue that when woman brings resources into the home, it may strengthen her position in the household, even if she exercises little control over the resources, although this cannot be assumed can be applied in all cultural context (Kabeer, 2005a; Lont, 2000). Microfinance not only used as poverty alleviation tool, but also gained increasing prominence to support women empowerment agenda. Global evidences show that microfinance indeed enhanced women empowerment by increasing women’s economic contribution, raising their self-esteem and confidence (Hashemi et al., 1996; Kabeer, 2005a; Osmani, 2007; Pitt and Khandker, 1998; Rahman, 1986). A study on microfinance projects in Bangladesh shows that women have improved in terms of their physical mobility, economic security, freedom from family domination, legal awareness, and political participation (Schuler and Hashemi, 1994). Furthermore, Puhazhendi and Badatya (2002) argue that social empowerment of members participating in microfinance project have improved, which include self-confidence, involvement in decision making and better communication

Despite its continued praised, microfinance also not free from strong criticism. Opponents of microfinance approach believe that microfinance projects have failed to address poverty (Hulme and Mosley, 1996; Mayoux, 1998, 2000;

Rahman, 1999), and in fact engaging in such project brings severe negative impact on women's income and employment because of increased workload and massive pressure to repay the loan (Kulkarni, 2011; Vengroff and Creevey, 1994). An ethnography study conducted in rural Bangladesh, reveal that rural women's honor and shame are put into jeopardy as they engage in microfinance projects delivered by the implementing NGOs, as neoliberal agent. In this case, locally embedded sanctions of dishonoring families through shaming these rural women in public arena were capitalized as surveillance and control mechanisms to ensure financially discipline customers (Karim, 2008).

Although the idea of simply providing microloan to women is assumed to solve the day-to-day problem that the women are facing, but it does not automatically transform the gender relation between men and women in the household (Kabeer, 1998; Khader, 2014) which women have to engage in everyday negotiation with men's gender identity, not only within the household, but also at community and institutional level (Cornwall and White, 2000). In fact, Yeboah et al., (2015) even argue that microcredit projects often reinforced the inequality thus further exploit women in the society; and women's stigma in this sound-like projects remain unchanged (Shrestha, 1998). Leach and Sitaram (2002) argue that microloan projects are to focus on women activities and exclude men, which then sabotage women's activity. Their study proves that microfinance is indeed an ambitious project, because it attempts to 'forced' women to engage in male dominated arena, without adequate preparation, thus set up confrontation with the male member of their household.

Mayoux (2001) argue that massive spread of microfinance projects that target poor women can be analyzed through three perspectives that stem from distinct theoretical outlooks. In her work, she argues that there are not enough evidences to say that microfinance programs have impacts on changing gender relation; and questions what kind of empowerment does microfinance programs are designed to achieve. She further concludes that women empowerment is not direct mechanical consequences of microfinance activities; and should be incorporated as integral part of policies to promote women empowerment. She further distinguishes microfinance into three sets of paradigms, namely: financial self-sustainability, poverty alleviation, and feminist empowerment. Mayoux conceived that financial self-sustainability is the current dominant paradigm on microfinance

operationalization in the community. As Bateman and Chang (2012) argue that microfinance cannot be detached from neoliberal agenda, this paradigm believes that through market-based theory, microfinance is designed as self-sustainable program to promote women's access to tap micro-financial service to the poor. This paradigm operates with the underlying assumption that women's economic empowerment will be achieved through increasing access to microfinance, without other parallel interventions in macro-economic growth agenda.

According to this paradigm, women are perfectly-match target groups to execute this idea, solely because of efficiency reason namely high repayment rates on loan and significant women's contribution to macroeconomic growth. Study conducted by IFC (2015) claims that global projection on women's income reaches to USD 6 trillion by 2017 and by 2025 women might control almost 75% of worldwide spending. This projection also supported by data from 76% financial institutions surveyed which finds that women entrepreneur as profitable market segments. Furthermore, it also argues that 70% of women-owned enterprises worldwide are underserved, which bring to significant financial gap at about USD 285 billion. In Indonesia alone, about 23% of small-micro entrepreneurs are owned by women (International Finance Corporation, 2016; The World Bank, 2016b), which make women as promising target market for microfinance intervention. For the supporters of this paradigm, program scale up to achieve economic expansion is key, which could be done through reducing cost of microfinance delivery by using group approach (SGH), setting up interest rate to cover costs and separating microfinance projects with other intervention in order to split up the bookkeeping.

Under the paradigm of financial self-sustainability, as Mayoux's conceived, women empowerment is purely economic which concluded based on women's individual capacity to self-reliance. Sharma (2001) found changes on living standard of women that involve in SHG, which include income, assets, savings, borrowing capacity and income generating activity. When the terminology of empowerment directly interlinks with participation, thus participation is understood as means to increase efficiency through self-help group formation to reduce delivery cost, involvement in decision making forum to ensure commitment and promote innovation, and consultation for market relevance. Therefore, the idea of sustainability mainly evolves around the concept of financially self-sustainable and policy focus to promote the idea of financial sustainability is to provide

framework for equal access to women or enable growth for women-owned enterprises.

Mayoux's second paradigm is poverty alleviation paradigm that stem from interventionist perspective and community development approach. Proponents of this paradigm argue that microfinance activity is part of wider poverty alleviation efforts to increase the wellbeing of the poor and vulnerable. Therefore, to achieve greater objective of poverty reduction, this paradigm believes that providing small saving and loan services through establishing self-help group could build the pathways to foster community development. This paradigm works under the assumption that women's empowerment, household level poverty alleviation and community development are intrinsically interdependence. In Mayoux's later work in 2005, she argues that providing micro loan to the women has the potential to bring positive changes, not only for themselves but also the wellbeing of the family. Furthermore, she wrote that microfinance could enable the poor to coup with unfavorable impacts of structural adjustment policies and globalization (Mayoux, 2005).

Proponents of this paradigm believe that microfinance, which is channeled through self-help groups serves the function as method for poverty targeting and branching microfinance operation in remote areas. A comparative evaluation study on Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) approach that pioneered by CARE International found that this method is an effective strategy for community mobilization and reaching women and marginalized household (Massu et al., 2017). Unlike the financial self-sustainability paradigm that perceives women as agent of macroeconomic growth, the poverty alleviation paradigm recognizes the importance of targeting women due to higher level of poverty experience by women and their responsibility to ensure the household welfare. Breman & Winardi (2004) argue that shocks have greater effect on women because they are the one that responsible for consumption and nutrition intake at the household level (Holmes and Jones, 2009). In addition to that, lower level of education, less access and ownership to control productive assets, have further reduced women's economic productivity and income generation, as well as weaker bargaining position in their household (Arif et al., 2010). Furthermore, Moghadam (2005) added that high rate of school attrition and illiteracy, as well as limited access to

employment and low income have also contributed to this condition, thus further marginalized women to access formal employment (Tjandraningsih, 2000).

Many international development agencies utilize this paradigm to channel development aid directly to the community due to the assumption that increasing wellbeing and forming group will automatically enable women to empower themselves. Therefore, under this view, the goal of empowerment is not simply to realize self-sufficiency, but instead more to increase wellbeing and community development. This idea is aligned with findings from an impact study conducted by Littlefield, which argue that most microcredit activities studied have produced important welfare benefit for clients and their household (Littlefield et al., 2003). Strong connection between the self-help group establishment and community development in poverty alleviation paradigm also underlines that participation is an end that will be achieved when women skills in decision-making increase. This showed by Mayoux's (2001) and Kabeer's (2005a) work in Cameroon and South Asia, respectively, that discovered women's involvement in saving and loan group not only improved their access to finance, but also empowered women and enhanced their bargaining power so they are able to influence family decision making, to be respected, and become more confidence (Kabeer, 2005a; Lont, 2000; Lopamudra and Suresh, 2012; Mayoux, 2001). Similarly, Sudha Rani et al (2002) found that women's participation in SHG led to their empowerment in house management, leadership, economic status, health and sanitation; also self-confidence increased due to participation in SHGs, like in meetings and interactions with different officials. And finally, this paradigm concludes that appropriate gender policy should be able to promote women's participation, which leads to sustainable local level participatory institution. This will enable long-term community self-reliant and self-determination.

The third paradigm is feminist empowerment that originated from the structuralist point of view or feminist critique of capitalism. Proponents of this paradigm believe that women's empowerment requires fundamental change in macro-level development agenda as well as explicit support for women to challenge current gender subordination at the micro level. This paradigm conceived that there should be consolidation between macro-level policies and micro level practice, in order to create enabling environment for women to challenge the gender subordination in the existing structure (Mayoux, 2001).

Mayoux argued that global evidence suggest that empowerment is not linear consequences of women's access to microfinance, it really depends on multidimensional aspects such as women's needs and interest, as well as gender equity that are reflected in the microfinance program design itself. She also added that microfinance not only improves women's access to finance facilities, that contribute to poverty alleviation and financial sustainability, but also lead to 'virtuous spiral' of economic empowerment, improve wellbeing, and socio-political empowerment. This thereby fulfills gender equality and empowerment goals (Mayoux, 2008, 2011) .

Unlike the other two paradigms, Mayoux (2001) distinguished that under feminist empowerment view, microfinance activity is conceptualized as entry point to achieve women's economic, social and political empowerment, which can be realized through building gender awareness and establish feminist organizations. Furthermore, based on gender equality and human right, empowerment can be achieved through transformation of power relation throughout the society; and policy framework should be directed towards promoting gender awareness and support feminist organization. Therefore, proponents of this paradigm see participation as an end in itself to enable women to articulate their collective interest for change. This view ultimately sees sustainability when participatory women organizations are self-sustainable and link to wider women movement to greater transformation to challenge current gender relation.

It has been argued that there are limited empirical evidence that show strong linear connection between improved access to finance facilities and empowerment, but there are a number of studies that indicate some impacts on empowerment experienced by women members of self-help group. For instance, Soroushmehr et al (2012) found that women members of self-help group have high level of mobility, have awareness about rights and legal knowledge, have the ability to make decision, as well as have higher access and control to household economy. Other aspects of microcredit-led self-help group that promote women empowerment is strengthened group dynamics through raising awareness among group members to act collectively in order to achieve common objectives (Kulandaivel, 2005). In addition, Mayoux (2008) added that there are a number of saving and loan project that promoted women empowerment. These group based financial services can provide organized large grassroot, not only for economic empowerment, but also

for political mobilization to increase women's political awareness and their leadership. For example, in Bangladesh, Grameen Bank provided large loan for women to purchase land and house that to be registered under women's name. Additionally, Grameen Bank also disseminated political education material for women during the election campaign. In India, Credit and Saving Household Enterprise (CASHE) provide loan for parents that have adolescent girls. This loan enables girls to purchase productivity assets, help them to earn income and might delay marriage. Furthermore, many organizations in India also participate in promoting women's leadership in local council, or projects conducted by CARE in Niger attempt to develop women's leadership to complete in local election (Mayoux, 2008).

In Indonesia, the idea of providing microloan to the community has often used to incentivize community participation in many development projects. Initially this model is generally popular among the NGOs-implemented projects as effective community organizing mechanism to introduce wider issues, such as maternal health, legal justice, and education. Growing popularity of the microloan projects as well as global claim in poverty alleviation effort, this approach gains its prominence for government-led development intervention. For example, the largest national community empowerment program (PNPM) in Indonesia also included microfinance activity as one of its project components. Cited data from project completion report in 2014⁷⁰ (The World Bank, 2015) noted that funding allocated to operate microfinance (or known as Revolving Loan Funds for Women/SPP) activity was around 25% from the total grant to the sub-district level, and this was claimed to benefit more than 47,000 women's group (range from 10-15 members) across Indonesia where the project operated. As per end of 2013, total capital accumulation for this microfinance activity was estimated around 506 billion IDR (approximated at more than USD 36 million) with repayment rate at 94%. Another qualitative study conducted in 2013 on the impact of the same program found that microfinance activity considered as effective in shifting community's preference to obtain credit, which previously provided by local loansharks. Despite that, the study found that the poor faced significant difficulties in accessing those loans due to their lack of collateral or never had a business

⁷⁰ PNPM IV Implementation and Completion Report, released in 2015

before, which become mandatory requirement according to the operational procedure. The poor often felt burden with high interest and were hesitant to ask for loan because the project implementers often scared them. The study also reveals that the poor benefited less from microfinance project and their name often used by the non-poor to request loan (Syukri et al., 2013).

Other example is PEKKA project, which is quite different set up from the PNPM Revolving Loan project. The PEKKA project is financed by the Japan Social Development Fund (JSDF) that specifically targets female head of the household, namely widows and divorcees that often stigmatized and negatively stereotyped in Indonesian society, especially in rural areas. Upon its initiation, PEKKA project aims to address the poverty and vulnerability faced by these marginalized women through training and capacity building as well as injecting small grants to establish sustainable micro-finance activities. At the community level, PEKKA recruited local women as community cadres to approach other women to form groups. Through this, the marginalized women learn to save and they also provide loan to other members when the capital generated from saving has reached adequate amount. There are also cases that some groups obtain external sources, for instance donor grant, depend on a number of indicators agreed by the project implementers. According to PEKKA's report (2016), currently there are more than 28,000 women members of 1,500 groups that manage groups' capital around USD 530,000 and loan more than USD 6 million to its members across the country. For almost 15 years on the ground the saving and lending groups become the main avenue for these women to exchange information, transfer knowledge and seek solution to the common problems. In addition to establish the saving and lending group, these women also conduct numerous training that provide direct benefit to them, such as legal training, sexual and reproductive health training, gender awareness training, advocacy training and sustainable livelihood training. In 2016, PEKKA established informal school for the rural women around the issues of village development and good governance. In this avenue, the participants not only learn about important issues such as village planning and budgeting that pro-women also anti-corruption, but also trained to build their confidence to speak up in the decision-making forum (PEKKA & AKATIGA, 2020).

Providing microloan to the local community, especially to woman has been widely known as powerful magic bullet to address poverty, inequality and

exclusion. This approach has been popularized as attractive tool to deliver development projects implemented by international/national NGOs and funded by international development agencies. This chapter attempts to illustrate various applications of microfinance projects implemented in developing countries and what kind of results these projects have achieved, based on the three theoretical underpinnings, namely neo-liberal, community development, and feminist structuralist. Despite contrasting empirical evidences about the impact of microfinance projects against what they are designed to achieve; microfinance projects and similar approaches are still considered as an effective way to reach those who are poor and marginalized. Having said that, it does not necessarily portray that microfinance would bring substantial benefit to those who are poor, marginalized and excluded.

WRDC's expertise in facilitating urban poor community, especially women, has been able to tease out interest from Chinese *Benteng* women to form saving and lending cooperative group. Despite it was foreign, the formation of cooperative brought excitement from some women to be able to gather for the first time and collectively discuss problems related to the cooperative's operation. After two consecutive meetings initiated by WRDC-Jakarta and attended by Chinese *Benteng* women, these women were agreed to set lending rules. Those who can loan to the cooperative should be registered members, who have been continuously saving in the cooperative for at least three uninterrupted months. Furthermore, depend on the members' consistency and performance in regular weekly saving, the daily committees – Ibu San Nio, Ibu Pin Lan and Ibu Herlina – might consider those compliant members for loan.

On the third week, these women met again. This time they came up with beautiful name for the cooperative – *Koperasi Pelita Benteng Raya*. According to Ibu San Nio, the reason why they chose that name was quite simple. For them, the word *Pelita* means lantern is symbolic to their ethnic Chinese identity, which often associated with important attributes of many cultural events and celebration. They also add the word Benteng or *fortress* that reflects their identity as Chinese *Benteng* community. And lastly, by adding the word "*raya*" which meant prosperous they hope that the cooperative could bring more prosperity for the Chinese *Benteng* community. Interestingly, such simple meaningful narrative expressed by Chinese *Benteng* women was transformed into euphemistically long-winded words

illustrated by WRDC in one of their internal project documents which was written as *“They agreed to name the cooperative as Pelita Benteng Raya which means light that could enlightened Chinese Benteng women to be strong and self-reliant”* that is sugarcoated and imbued with projects’ jargons.

Initially, since the cooperative did not have big size of assets, they only able to loan out IDR 500,000 (about €35). *“We don’t take interest here in the cooperative. Instead, we have uang jasa,”* said Ibu Herlina one time, which referred to administration fees that the cooperative collects from the borrowers. It cost the borrowers 0.5% from their loan in which they have to pay weekly on top of their installment. The weekly *uang jasa* can also be summed up to 2% for monthly-based installments. Ibu Herlina then continued, *“Because running the cooperative is a social work. It takes a lot of effort and commitment. Sometimes, if I don’t think that I do care about the cooperative so much, I wanted to leave all of this. It is so tiring. Often people don’t respect us.”* Despite all her complaints, she admitted that she would keep continue doing the administrative works of the cooperative just because she loves doing it.

Monitored and supervised by Ibu Tuti, these Chinese *Benteng* women agreed to meet every Tuesday from 1-3 pm at Ibu San Nio’s house. On her veranda, Ibu Ssan Nio together with Ibu Pin Lan and Ibu Herlina prepared to open the cashbook with the presence of Ibu Tuti as the supervisor. The cooperative started with only 25 members – all women, who were present in the first introduction meeting. In the beginning, before all of this has started, Ibu Tuti taught them how to do simple bookkeeping, including how to fill simple registration forms, fill the deposit book for members, as well as how to do simple financial report. In addition, they also bought a locked box where they should keep the cash. The box is secured with manual double-lock system which keys are held by Ibu Herlina and Ibu San Nio individually. This system prevents stolen cash, because the cash registration box could not be opened only by one without the presence of another.

Picture 7 – Saving and Lending Cooperative Sessions



Chinese *Benteng* women operated their saving and lending activities in front of one woman's house (Photo courtesy of WRDC taken in 2016)

In the beginning, it was so confusing for these women, especially for Ibu San Nio who never complete her primary education. Despite she knows how to write and to read, but she gets confuse easily. As treasurer, she is tasked to make sure that the physical deposited money match with the ones that written in the books. When there was some dispute during the cash registration and Ibu San Nio often got blamed as she told me one day, *"I know I am the illiterate one, my education level only SD⁷¹. I often make mistake, especially now I have problem with my eyes. I cannot see very well when people's handwriting is so small. Honestly, I want to quit as treasurer. But nobody wants to take my duty. But sometimes I am worried too, if I quit all my neighbors will also quit the cooperative. They join the cooperative because of me ... I was the one that take them along."* Besides Ibu San Nio, Ibu Pin Lan also play important role in the cooperative. As the secretary, she is the first person who receives the deposited money and writes it down in the big book before she hands it over to Ibu San Nio. Often, Ibu Pin Lan makes sure that Ibu San Nio does not make mistake while registering the cash. Sometimes Ibu Pin Lan reminiscences the time when she was

⁷¹ SD – Sekolah Dasar, translated as Primary School

working as teller in a bank, *“Long time ago, I used to work in a Buana Bank as a cashier. I was almost promoted as a supervisor when the Bank closed down. It was a massive laid off and I only received a few millions as compensation.”* As the cooperative’s secretary, she acts as if she still works as cashier in the bank. Every Tuesday, Ibu Pin Lan feels important. At her own spot, with a small portable desk, big cashbook and a calculator; she is ready to ‘work’.

The presence of the saving and lending cooperative was brought new interest to the Chinese *Benteng* community of Kampung Wetan. For the women, regular weekly meetings held by the cooperative were considered as their new experience. Despite it might not be the first, but the cooperative meetings were the first only-women gathering that they ever attended. According to Ibu Tuti, before the cooperative exists in this area, most of Chinese *Benteng* people borrow money from *rentenir*⁷² or *bank keliling*⁷³. She said to me that *“before this (cooperative), never occur to them (Chinese Benteng of Kampung Wetan) about saving and lending group. What they know was, if they need money to finance their home business or emergency, they went to rentenir and bank keliling. The money that they have always runs out for daily needs. If there’s money left, they usually use it for gambling with the hope it multiplies if they win. They also don’t know how to manage money in the family or wisely administer financial capital for their business.”* The narratives of development project to save the marginalized groups were commonly found during my day-to-day interaction with the Chinese *Benteng* women as well as WRDC. On one side, WRDC’s positions itself – through Ibu Tuti as the community organizer and field officer – as the benevolent savior that solve problem of despair of Chinese *Benteng* women by opening the world to them. Reciprocally, Chinese *Benteng* women responded such benevolent savior narratives with devotion, obedience, and compliance – as a way to thank them of what WRDC- has done for them.

As argued above, self-help group model is seen as quite effective in many development projects, especially those that target women as the project beneficiaries. In *“Peduli Program”*, SHG in the form of saving and lending cooperative is used not only as entry point through economic activity that financially appealing for its members, but also as common platform where it can

⁷² Loan shark

⁷³ Other way to refer to loan shark. Directly translated as *“mobile bank”*

branch out to other activities. Through women empowerment as its technology, this saving and lending cooperation operationalizes “social inclusion” discourse constructed by the project as “insertion” and “integration” of the problematic others through steps of subjectification process of Chinese *Benteng* women. Constructed as ‘insertion’ and ‘integration’ into dominant space, activities proposed by WRDC in “*Peduli Program*” aims to correct the deficits of Chinese *Benteng* women as already outlined in their proposal. Such correction is intended to create particular subject to be inserted and integrated into ‘normal’ population.

I call the first step in this subjectification process as *visibilization* that intends to show that Chinese *Benteng* exist as a community. In this *visibilization*, WRDC created the *authentic* Chinese *Benteng* community through educating them about their ‘own’ culture that are *authentic* and different in comparison with other Indonesians of Chinese descendants. As explained above, WRDC problematizes Chinese *Benteng* people through the imagined representation constructed from narrative about the Chinese Indonesian that has been dominated and created by the 32 years authoritarian regime. Besides educating Chinese *Benteng* people about their own culture, and also their history, WRDC also exposed such *authentic* Chinese *Benteng* culture to others, in which also involves re-creating such culture according to general public perception about them. In the project, activities of *visibilization* includes preserving the Culture of Chinese *Benteng* by focusing on restoring material aspects of their culture through romanticized image of Chinese *Benteng* as something exotic that should be ‘preserved’ and known by general public. In “*Peduli*” social inclusion project, *visibilization* is apparent in WRDC’s most celebrated activities, i.e. revitalization of *Cokek* dance which aim to correct the negative image and erotic perception that have been socially shaped due to its association with prostitution and alcoholism.

7.4.1. From *Ngibing Cokek* to *Tari Cokek Sipatmo* – An attempt to sanitize the negative image of *Cokek*

There are not many literatures that elaborate *Cokek* dance. The birth of *Cokek* dance cannot be separated from traditional orchestra group called *Gambang Kromong*, hybrid music group that comprised of a number of traditional instruments of Betawi and Chinese. *Gambang Kromong* and *Cokek* dance are types

of folk entertainment, which performed during local-scale celebration, mostly at wedding parties (Kwa, 2005). In general, *Cokek* dance itself influenced by style and tradition of coastal Sundanese, such as those of Indramayu, which has been known and practices since the 19th century. *Cokek* dance often negatively portrayed with sexually and erotic connotation attach to the dancer. Long standing representation about *Cokek* dance has been depicted by several big names, including Benyamin Sueb – well-known Betawian actors and singers who has been the most respected great actors of Indonesian cinema and entertainment industry – and Rhoma Irama – The King of *Dangdut*⁷⁴, which is very popular among many Indonesians. Both singers wrote and recorded two different songs with the same title “*Nonton Cokek*” (Watching *Cokek*) that portrayed the same representation of *Cokek*, which refers to watch the *Cokek* dancer and dance together with them.

In Irama’s *Nonton Cokek*, he sang the song together with a women singer, depicting a conversation between a father and his daughter where she seeks permission to watch *Cokek* in the neighboring hamlet. Despite the lyric does not show any vulgarity and explicit interpretation of *Cokek*, it shows some phrases that illustrate general perception about *Cokek*. Some parts of the lyrics associate *Cokek* with an inappropriate show to watch for a woman, alone by herself, and instead it is the entertainment for men. This depiction is illustrated in the lyrics through phrases like, “*Watch such kind of performance, heh? Alone you go ... You think you are a man*”⁷⁵ With such illustration, perception was built that it is normal for men to go and watch the *Cokek*, in which implied as a form of for-men-only entertainment. On the contrary, women that go to watch *Cokek* are usually perceived as “naughty woman” or “not a good woman” that bears sexually negative connotation. Furthermore, the father warned that maybe the daughter might go missing in the crowd while watching *Cokek* because there must have been many men there, which illustrated as, “*See, if later you’re gone missing*”⁷⁶. Such warning implicitly depicts inappropriateness for young women to see that kind of dance, especially alone, in which presumed to be ‘dangerous’ due to too many men that may be there. In the final part of the song, the father questioned what has happened to his daughter

⁷⁴ Genre of Folk music

⁷⁵ Original text - “*Eh nonton yang kaye gituan. Lu pegi sendirian. Eh emangnye luh lelaki ah...*”

⁷⁶ Original text – “*Entar ilang luh baru tau ...*”

because her outfit were dirty, which illustrate by “*What (people) have done (to) you?*”⁷⁷ This phrase implicitly implies general perception that after watching *Cokek*, men spectators usually go to separate places with the *Cokek* dancers or perhaps also other woman non-*Cokek* dancer, oftentimes in hidden secluded places like bushes or under the trees.

In comparison with Irama’s, Sueb’s *Nonton Cokek* is actually more popular one. Despite portraying similar *pejorative* depiction about *Cokek*, Sueb’s representation is more explicit textually and sounded harsher and cruder. Unlike Irama’s conversational style in the song, Sueb’s text narrates and describes the situation during a *Cokek* performance. Referring to my interpretation on Irama’s song lyric, in which *Cokek* is more for-men entertainment, Sueb describes “*Goosey old men get mawkish, Cokek smile flirtatiously*”⁷⁸ Among the Chinese *Benteng* people, where this type of folk-entertainment still mainly alive, most men that watch and dance with *Cokek* dancers are usually old enough, at least above 40. Sueb continues by describing common preliminary scene during the beginning of the dance, “*Drape scarf, the old man is dancing ... (Cokek) Dance, the spectators applaud*”⁷⁹. Prior to the *Cokek* dancer starts, their coordinator whom called by *Mak Cukin* – literally translate as “mother of the scarf” – distribute colorful scarfs to every *Cokek* dancers to be draped over the neck of the men that asked them to dance with. Despite the style of *Cokek* dance is not erotic at all, but the perception built from series of events around the dancing itself has constructed the meaning in association with negative meaning and image about it. Oftentimes, when the night gets late in combination with alcohol, *Cokek* dancer and their partners dance with sort of intimate movement, which illustrated as “*Ngok sengk sengk bengkok* (imitating sound of the *Gambang Kromong* orchestra), *the Cokek was kissed, the old man is drunk already*”⁸⁰ and “*The old men nudge (the Cokek dancer) ... He must lose himself.*”⁸¹ Despite *Cokek* dance itself is only a form of folkdances, like any other grass-root folkdance that popular among the Sundanese/Betawian people especially the coastal culture,

⁷⁷ Original text – “*Diapain luh?*”

⁷⁸ Original text - “*Kakek kakek geregetan, cokek cokek cecengiran.*”

⁷⁹ Original text – “*Sampirin slendang, kakek tandakin. Diigelin yang nonton pada nyorakin*”

⁸⁰ Original text – “*Ngok sengk sengk bengkok cokeknye dicipok, kakek ude mabok*”

⁸¹ Original text – “*Kakek cowal cowel... Die udah lupe diri*”

common perception that was built around *Cokek* dance has influenced how the public perceived *Cokek* dance as negatively and sexually connoted. These then projected the worst image, with further derogatively constructed the identity of the *Cokek* dancer as immoral women, easy, materialistic, prostitute, and someone else's mistress.

Sugihartati (2009) writes that despite both *Gambang Kromong* and *Cokek* are rooted from Betawian culture, *Cokek* remain struggling to set its place as art expression. As illustrated from convergence representation from *Nonton Cokek* song, *Cokek* oftenly represented as somehow synonymous with gambling, alcoholism, and women (connoted sexually). Unlike *Gambang Kromong*, *Cokek* almost hardly ever gets recognition in Betawi community related events or government-host occasions. In her research, Sugiharti finds that during Ali Sadikin gubernatorial leadership in Jakarta (from 1966 to 1977), there were a number of efforts to preserve Betawi-root art expression which led to some innovation that invent Betawi-style *Cokek* and *Gambang Kromong*. She added that in Betawi-style *Gambang Kromong* Orchestra, without the presence of *Cokek* due to its clash with Islamic value in which Betawi people mostly follow (Sugihartati, 2009). Further Sugiharti argue that the authentic *Cokek* dance that stem from Chinese *Benteng* culture are quite different from Betawi-style *Cokek*, which indeed still highly associated with gamble and alcohol that always present in most of Chinese *Benteng's* family celebration.

Sugiharti (2014) cited Phoa Kian Sioe (1949) argues that *Gambang* Orchestra has been assimilated with Sundanese music, especially after the support from local Chinese ruler during the colonial times. She further mentioned, for that reason, *Gambang* Orchestra also complemented by Sundanese instruments in which oftentimes played a number of Sundanese songs that were considerably upbeat. In that era, for the purpose of parties, colonial gatherings or celebration, landlord and colonial elite also hired this *Gambang Kromong* group. To complement a group of musicians, in the later development, *Cokek* was needed to attract more guests. These *Cokek* dancers had to be pretty, can sing, but also dance gracefully (Brakel-Papenhuyzen, 1995). According to Kwa (2009), the word of *Cokek* comes from Hokkien dialect *chioun-khek*, which means to sing a song (Parani, 1987). Therefore, initially *Cokek* is understood as singer and not as dancer. As *Cokek's* main task was to sing, they are required to master various classic Malay-Chinese songs that

intended to entertain the spectators. One of classic songs called *Sipatmo*, which Lee Khoon Choy (2013) describe as originated from China. He writes, "*The sipatmo was a hot favourite among young people. A musical critic Quek Kek Beng says that the word sipatmo is a Chinese name meaning 18 mo (meaning touch) ... There is little research as to why the Chinese music became Indonesian sipatmo*" (p. 207). On a similar note, Parani (2006) also confirms that *18 caresses* (or touch) can be traced to Meme Krawang dance vocabulary (Parani, 2006: 52; Toer, 1998: 201). For the performance, usually *Cokek* dressed with long tunic, paired with trousers, made from colorful satin. Their hair was braided and shaped into a bun. According to Phoa Kian Sioe's note (1949) that *cokek* were usually pretty and they lived together as inseparable part of the *Gambang Kromong* orchestra group. Go (2008) in his book illustrate how these *cokek* girls were dressed during their performance, "*In the past, Cokek girls wore silk pants with blocked color, silk tunic also with bright color. Their hairs were braided, tied up with red ribbon. Nowadays the outfit and the hair of the Cokek girls were changed, no longer wore trousers, but wrapped in cloth. The hairs were no longer braided and bun, instead they went to beauty salon to curl their hair like European women. The tunic also metamorphosed, as a replacement of the loose tunic, they used fully covered kebaya, made of fabric with colorful floral motives*" (p.182)

As the task of *Cokek* evolved, from singing to dancing, it is not rare that *Cokek* girls often objectified as sexual object, especially by men with whom they are dancing with or rich landlord. In one writing, Go (2008) describes about *Tangga Ronggeng* or *Ronggeng* (other word similar with *Cokek*) Staircase, situated in the riverbank of Cisadane. *Ronggeng* or *Cokek* often described as prostitute, where they were often bath-naked in that river. Such depiction about *Cokek* girls also described in detail how local celebration held by landlords took place, in which hired *Gambang Kromong* Group and *Cokek*. He writes, "*If the orchestra's leader finds that male guest has enough drunk ... the party has then reached its peak, which is 'solder'. Cutest cokek girl step forward with her hand reached out with shawl. With the shawl spread, she danced, accompanied by music that sound very erotic. She chose a man, kneel down with worship position, a movement to respect, afterwards put the shawl on his lap or just give it to him. If the man accepts her invitation, he has the right to choose a song which he fond of. Often the cokek girl improvises the lyrics implicitly that indicate physical intimacy. In response, the man also improvising, answering by teasing her, the drink rose up to his brain, likewise with the cokek girl, which also drink as much; the dance movements get more and*

more erotic, the audience applauded, laugh, scream, yell – crazy party just had begun. One girl replaces another and all men guess get their turns. Alcoholic beverages flow, also money, because as one dance finish, the cokek girl get quite abundant ‘gift’ (means: money). Such party usually started early in the evening, and will be finished by midnight or until the sun rise.” (p. 183). In Go’s description, it was obvious that *Gambang Kromong* performance, together with its *Cokek* girls, in various occasion, for example wedding celebration, always implied as hidden prostitution and alcoholism – which many Chinese *Benteng* women often ashamed to talked about.

Kampung Wetan, where WRDC implemented “*Peduli Program*” with the Chinese *Benteng* community, is known as hub of *Cokek* girls by the local populations. One of the main reasons that *Kampung Wetan* has such reputation is because of there is *Gambang Kromong* orchestra group – which is native to this neighborhood – that host a group of *Cokek* dancers with whom they usually perform at local celebrations. Even among the Chinese *Benteng* community themselves, which live spread across Tangerang area, *Wetan* area is negatively perceived as an area to avoid, especially because of its bad reputation as *nest of Cokek*. As I spoke to Cik Lisa, who moved to *Kampung Wetan* about a year ago from West Jakarta, she told me that women native of *Wetan* are labeled negatively in which often leads to negative sexual connotation. “*Here in Wetan, there’s a lot of jablay*⁸². Often people here also think that I am a *jablay*, just because I am a *janda*⁸³, have no husband. I moved here because the rent is cheaper than in Jakarta.” Cik Lisa is a neighbor of my respondent, Meri who just also moved to that place a few months prior – especially when Meri and her family were expecting a new baby. Cik Lisa and Meri live side by side, they rented a small room, which they called *kontrakan*⁸⁴ that separated by a thin wall. Unlike Cik Lisa that identifies herself as from Jakarta, Meri is a Chinese *Benteng*, native to *Wetan*, and spends most of her life living in *Wetan*, except for a few years she moved out with her husband and their two kids. Echoing what Cik Lisa just said, Meri also confirms that, “*It is true, most women in Wetan are not good woman. Not only the women, but also the men. Thank God that my husband is*

⁸² *Jablay* – is abbreviation of ‘*jarang dibelai*’ which literally translated as rarely caressed. This derogatory slang and sexist comment used to refer to women which looks sexually aggressive due to lack of sexual affection from their male partner or just male in general.

⁸³ Divorcee. The same word also used to refer widow.

⁸⁴ Translated as a rental space in which they live in

not from here." These two ladies were giggling and continued telling me how the stereotype of women of Wetan that is *jablai* and also well known for their aggressiveness often associated as 'husband thief'. These stereotypes then perpetuated through neighborhood and family gossips including rivalry and jealousy, which negatively labeled women of Wetan as such. This label is also worsened by the existence of many *Cokek* that live in Wetan area.

Bad reputation of *Cokek* dancer, which often perceived as *simpanan* (mistress) and husband stealer, also affects the reputation of Wetan area. Meri once told me that one of the days when the "*Peduli Program*" just started, Ibu Tuti from WRDC asked them about what kind of traditional art expression that people in *Kampung Wetan* usually do. At the beginning, Meri and her friends only said jokingly, that they don't have one, maybe *Cokek* was the one that quite popular performance there. Despite its popularity, Meri and the other Chinese *Benteng* women were also a bit hesitant when WRDC proposed to these Chinese *Benteng* women that under "*Peduli Program*" they would learn *Cokek* dance. Meri even said that in the beginning she was somehow ashamed and did not understand why they shall learn such dance. She still remembers when she started to learn the *Cokek* dance, "*Apparently, it was different from the Cokek that we know. It called Cokek Sipatmo. More graceful and beautiful. WRDC brought a teacher that taught us how to dance the Cokek Sipatmo. At that time, we practiced in the Kelurahan office's hall and everyone that wanted to learn could come as well. We practiced several times. I don't really remember how many times. Not only that, WRDC also gave us the costume – complete with the headpiece too. Ibu Tuti from WRDC warned us to keep practicing diligently, because all of these (training and costume) are expensive.*" Since the dancing class, Meri and 7 other women formally named their dancing group "*Sanggar Cahaya*" which oftentimes invited by government to perform in various events.

As part of "*Peduli Program*", *Cokek Sipatmo* dance revitalization is considered as one of the most successful activities that WRDC implement in this project. In one of the project reports, WRDC reported that *Sanggar Cahaya* – the dance group established by the project beneficiaries – has successfully re-introduced and develop *Cokek Sipatmo* in which reinvented its noble value which has been distorted by its negative connotation. With the intention to 'correct' and 'fix' the image of *Cokek* dance that has bad reputation over decades, WRDC's project goal was to revitalize this particular dance performance in order to restore its authentic image.

Originally, *Cokek* revitalization project was never planned, but due to some information that emerged from the field, like the one that Meri was telling me about, *Cokek* dance came out as one of the identified art forms to be revitalized. Luckily, a few months before that – precisely on December 2014, Jakarta Cultural Body conducted a dance seminar and workshop with the theme of *Cokek* and Mask dance. Inviting a wide range of reputable speaker, dancers, choreographers, as well as academics that focus on the issue of *Cokek* and Mask dance, this seminar got significant coverage from many major print and online media. Furthermore, with WRDC's wide network, they were able to invite one of the *Cokek* dance's choreographers to teach the constructed and 'revitalized' version of *Cokek* dance to the Chinese *Benteng* women.

Beside teaching the 'revitalized' version of *Cokek* dance to the Chinese *Benteng* women, WRDC also produces a hand booklet that claimed as a guide to understand Chinese *Benteng* culture. Aside from the poor and reckless development process of such booklet, that print material remains distributed 'internally' for the project purpose. Having said that, despite for the purpose of the project, the booklet is also given to some local government agencies, which often claimed as 'input' to government. As one of important part in the book, re-narrating the history of *Cokek* dance is key to create particular construction based on certain interpretation, which is WRDC's interpretation about Chinese *Benteng* culture. One senior historian that I often met in Tangerang, *Engkong*⁸⁵ Oey Tjin Eng, was worried because the 'revitalized' *Cokek Sipatmo* is simply an imaginary re-creation which tried to give a good impression about *Cokek* dance which is grass-root form of community performance and entertainment. He also suspects that the Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* were taught this 'revitalized' version of *Cokek* because it is funded by a government project. He said to me once during our regular chat a small noodle stall close to the Chinese temple where he works as advisor, "*Revitalizing Cokek Sipatmo to appear as more polite is odd to me. Sipatmo itself is a song title, which tells about 18 touches and the meaning implies sensuality. This new version of Cokek is a recreation product of a professional dancer ... I know that she has been hired to teach the women from Wetan, right?*"

⁸⁵ Chinese-influenced Betawian pronoun to call much older male, which means grandfather.

Engkong Tjin Eng's words actually trigger my further curiosity about how WRDC attempted to teach Chinese *Benteng* women about their own *authentic* culture. Collated in a booklet title "*Chinese Benteng – History, Culture and Culinary*" WRDC claimed that it was a form of "local knowledge" that they have gathered throughout the months they spend time with the Chinese *Benteng* people. However, some Chinese *Benteng* young activists showed their slight resentment about the booklet. They expressed their disagreement about what was written in the booklet, especially how and what it tries to represent. Koh⁸⁶ Achonk, a 40 years old Chinese *Benteng* youth leader, told me his complaints when someone he knows show the booklet to him, "*It is so fatal... Only a little part that is correct, the rest just a random pick from here and there. This book even took random source like people's personal blog and unverified online news about Chinese Benteng people. There's also a lot of mixed up with others Chinese Indonesians community, especially the ones from Jakarta.*" Thus, because of the resentments and contradictory perspective that I encountered about Chinese *Benteng*, it is important to unravel the way how representation about Chinese *Benteng* community is reconstructed through the creation of their cultural *authenticity* as opposed to what has been perceived widely. Seemingly, the creation of cultural *authenticity* through 'revitalized' version of *Cokek Sipatmo* dance that is depicted as honorable and exalted kind of dance which can be traced and linked with vision of Tangerang city that describe itself as morally honorable community (*masyarakat yang berakhlak mulia* or *akhaqul kharimah* in Arabic).

The creation of communication material like "*Chinese Benteng: History, Culture and Culinary*" booklet in development project is quite common. Despite it cannot be categorized as research type of publications, but this model of communication material generally favored by many local NGOs especially because such material is argued as project tangible output that can be used as advocacy material. For WRDC, after series of "participatory" needs assessment carried out in Chinese *Benteng* community, they came out with new initiative to "revitalize *Cokek* dance" as part of the project activities. The activities include to teach and to train Chinese *Benteng* Women about the *authentic Cokek* dance, which called as *Cokek Sipatmo* dance, to write the history of *Cokek* dance through the ages, and to establish a dance group that regularly perform in government-led celebration and

⁸⁶ Pronoun used commonly to refer young/adult male of Chinese descent

ceremonial events. Thereafter, increasing interest from Chinese *Benteng* women themselves made the *revitalization* activities varies which include opening class for schoolgirls to learn about this *authentic Cokek Sipatmo*, facilitate multistakeholder about the *authentic Cokek Sipatmo* dance which invited reputable 'expert' about art and performance to educate how *authentic Cokek* looks like.

First of all, to frame how *authentic Cokek*, it is described in the "Chinese *Benteng*: History, Culture and Culinary" booklet as "*Cokek dance is a typical dance from Tangerang, which influenced by culture of ethnic Chinese. This dance accompanied by Gambang Kromong orchestra with the dancers that wear kebaya blouse, which called as Cokek. Cokek dance is similar with sintren dance from Cirebon or a kind of rongeng dance from Central Java. This dance often associated with the dancer eroticism, in which considered taboo by some parts of the community because in its practice, men and women dance together in an intimate position. Cokek itself derived from Betawian local culture and Chinese Benteng.*" Despite its difficulty to trace the origin of *Cokek* as a type of grass-root performance, but a number of observations and anthropological studies had mentioned about this several times, especially the work of Go Gien Tjwan (2008) about *Peranakan* Chinese of Dadap Village which he wrote in 1960s. Interestingly, such works are absent from the background of WRDC's depiction about *Cokek*. It rather focuses on the local tales and legends about the history of *Cokek* dance. There are two versions of such tales that described in the book. The first version stated that *Cokek* performance was born in an area of Jakarta called *Kota* (or *Beos*), where there were many rich Chinese landlords that lived there. Every weekend, they held parties, which also hired *Gambang Kromong* group. Girl-maids of these landlords also tasked to accompany male guests to dance. In the later development, these maids were also called *Cokek* dancers. The second version according to WRDC is based on a group of local musicians, owned by rich landlord – named Tan Sio Kek – in small village in Teluk Naga. While this group played music, his girl-maids, which were native, also sang and dance. In its development, the native girls that dance called *Cokek*, which was taken from the landlord's name "Sio Kek". Furthermore, while male-only *Gambang Kromong* group receives payment upon their performance, the *Cokek* dancers did not get any. In return these girls had to find their own payment independently, in which mostly obtained from small money given by male guests that dance with them.

Picture 8 – Singers and Dancers at *Peranakan* Chinese wedding

Local singer in a wedding entertained guests, accompanied by *Gambang Kromong* group. The women dancers sit, wait for their turn to dance

Started from the above tale, WRDC repeated the common narrative in describing how promiscuous the *Cokek* dance is. By illustrating how *Cokek* was performed in generally, 'revitalized' version of *Cokek Sipatmo* used to sanitize the negative image of *Cokek*. The illustration details, "The instruments hit high notes and drum beat played in a fast tempo. Such distortion speeding rhythm of the four *Cokek* dancers, shake their hips, along with the melody. As if they are not tired and continue to dance, together with the *Gambang Kromong* music that sounds joyful. The body posture of the dancers sometimes stands still or bending, showing their erotic image ..." As the intention is to revitalize the *Cokek* dance, what important then was a correction of *Cokek* which are portrayed as 'erotic' which means exceeding the standard of modesty of social etiquette that mostly associated with Islam value as religion of the majority. The 'erotic' depiction also associated with 'gambling' and 'alcoholism' also gave *Cokek* a shady reputation as 'prostitution'. The *negative* and *bad* images of *Cokek* were emphasized as the reason why it needs correction in the form of 'sanitation' through revitalize the dance. Such correction then come as a way to purify *Cokek* dance into its *authentic* form that is 'honorable' and 'majestic' dance as oppose to the way how it is perceived today, i.e. morally deficit or immoral type of entertainment. This type of community grass-root entertainment then is perceived as dirty image through constant repetition of 'erotic dance' that illustrate the representation of *Cokek*. According to the booklet produced by WRDC, *authentic* *Cokek* dance is portrayed as dance with noble and educational value for the society,

in which represented some Sundanese dance moves, like *keupat*, *ngincid*, *obah taktak*, *baplang*, *kedet* and hip movement. Furthermore, the process to construct aspects of noble values represented by *Cokek* dance shown by the dancer's movement in the *authentic* formation. It described that each movement has noble meanings that represents 6 parts of the human body that show the nobleness and meaningful.

The 'revitalized' version of *authentic Cokek Sipatmo* consists of six movements that represent 'honorable' meaning created by the choreographer. Firstly, movement of pointing at the chest represents feelings that each and every human being requires to develop meaningful relationship with others that grow into mutual respect. Secondly, pointing at the mouth that represents its dual meanings of salvation and/or danger towards other human being. Thirdly, pointing at the forehead, which is understood as constant reminder to think prior to act. Fourthly is movement pointing to the ears, which represent ability to listen to get valuable information for ones' lives. The next is pointing to the shoulders that represents heavy loaded burden that should be carried together. The last is movement of pointing at the stomach, which implied as core of 'strength' to be feed. In addition to constructing the technical dance movements, which did not exist previously in grass-root community type of performance, another construction also created in regards to purify the negative perception. As Go (2008) describes that *Cokek* shawl-draping moment is seen as an invitation to the guest to dance along with the dancer. However, the meaning of 'invitation' is re-interpreted and re-articulated as 'honoring' important figures – in which is mostly male – that attended the celebration. Re-inventing *Cokek Sipatmo*'s characters as 'honorable', 'pure', and 'majestic' has sanitized the negative and contaminated perceptions that represented by the way how shawl-draping is interpreted and gave it a new meaning as 'honoring' male elite as reputable guests.

In this new meaning of 'honoring' the reputable male guests, new narrative is also created as part of giving *Cokek* a new purified image – especially the image of the women dancer. Through giving new meaning in shawl-draping movement, the invited male guests are culturally expected to return the honor given to him by responding to the dancers' invitation. In the new meaning, it is perceived as culturally insensitive if the male invitees rejected the *Cokek* dancer's shawl. This new construction is documented by WRDC as a way to show noble and pure meaning that underline the *authentic Cokek Sipatmo* dance, unlike the obscene

version of *Cokek* that is affiliate with gambling, alcoholism, and prostitution. The new narrative is written in the booklet produced by WRDC as, “*People of Tangerang assume when a shawl of a Cokek dancer is draped over a guest, this should not be refused – as it considered a taboo. There is a belief that such rejection could ruin their-own good reputation ... When [Cokek dance] is performed to welcome distinguished guests like local ruler and bureaucrats, they are the one that usually invited in the first place to dance with the Cokek dancer.*” (p.78) Therefore through thus way of representing the pure, noble and exalted *authentic* version of *Cokek Sipatmo*, cultural revitalization activity initiated by WRDC for the Chinese Benteng women to know their own *authentic* tradition, is intended to recreate new meaning that are pure, noble, distinguish, and full of respect rather than the old interpretation as erotic, indecent, and sexually negative connotation that people commonly known in which interpreted as impure and contaminated. Thus, this impure image of *Cokek* should undergo purification to restore its *authenticity*.

The revitalized version of *Cokek Sipatmo* introduced by WRDC to the Chinese Benteng women were taken very enthusiastic. According to some Chinese Benteng women that participate in the dancing class, this *authentic Cokek Sipatmo* is different than the one that they see in the wedding house. Due to its constructed image with the narrative of ‘noble’ and ‘mighty’, the *Cokek Sipatmo* dance is described as graceful and beautiful dance. Because of the new image, the Chinese *Benteng* women were so proud to be able to perform this *Cokek Sipatmo*. Ibu Herlina, the chairlady of the cooperative also actively participated in this dance class. She told me that, members of cooperative that interested to learn how to dance *Cokek Sipatmo* could come to the practice every week. With funding from the “*Peduli Program*”, WRDC hired the choreographer who re-creates *Cokek Sipatmo* as the revitalized version of ‘noble’ *Cokek* dance to teach these Chinese *Benteng* women. In the same package deal, “*Peduli Program*” also financed the dancing outfit together with the headpiece and other accessories. The dance outfit was a satin long yellow tunic together with purple pants. Unlike the colorful shawls that used in common version of *Cokek*, they instead use red long shawl that tied up in the waist. Furthermore, to accentuate more professional look as dancer, they wear full makeup and complete hairdo. With the complete equipment, including regular practice, 8 Chinese *Benteng* women formed a *Cokek Sipatmo* dance group called “*Sanggar Cahaya*”. According to WRDC, because “*Sanggar Cahaya*” was a direct

result from the cooperative, it is considered as its economic unit in which the revenue of “Sanggar Cahaya” is to be deposited to as capital financing for the cooperative.

Picture 9 – *Cokek Sipatmo* dance practice



A session of dance practice, joined by schoolgirls, government officials and Chinese *Benteng* women of the cooperative (Photo courtesy by WRDC, taken in 2016)

24 April 2016 was their first performance in front of the public. It was a small performance as an opening dance in government event to celebrate Earth Day 2016. After two months of practice under the supervision of the choreographer, the Chinese *Benteng* women finally was able to perform in front of the public, especially in front of the government bureaucrats. Besides Ibu Herlina, there are also Ibu Pin Lan, Ibu San Nio, Mariah, Meri, Indah and three other women who also involve in the dancing group. They were so excited to be part of the important celebration in the Government office in which they considered themselves equally important with the other bureaucrats in that event. *“I was very nervous and so afraid if my movements would be uncoordinated with the other... It was new experience for me, because I never dance before. My movements were not graceful like Ibu Herlina. I am like a block of wood, very stiff.”* Ibu San Nio told me while giggling and threw meaningful look to Ibu Herlina. *“My husband was very proud because I often perform in public like that. I wanted him to be proud of me. He always comes to see us dancing and he is very supportive for what I do.”* said Ibu Herlina.

After their performance breakthrough, the *Lurah* often invited them to dance more frequently, especially as a form of entertainment or ceremonial opening for government events. A few months after that, they were also invited by the government to dance *Cokek Sipatmo* in the celebration of Indonesia's Independence Day in August. Ibu Herlina cannot hide her pride when she talked about that event. She said that it was the first time that they ever invited by the *Kelurahan* government in such important event. She always contacted by the *Kelurahan* government people if they will host some important events or when the *Kelurahan* government might receive honorable guests, she would organize her fellow women friends in the dance group to practice and to perform. She added that the *Lurah* at that time was very supportive and gave permission to all activities that cooperative host in the *Kelurahan* office. With the support from the *Kelurahan*, WRDC told me that it was indeed their deliberate strategy to ensure the social inclusion is happening at the local level. Like when Ibu Tuti mentioned that the way *Kelurahan* government is supporting and endorsing every activity of the cooperative has brought sense of pride and confident for these women to represent their *Kelurahan*. "These women also often invited to dance in municipality's event. Like when they were the opening dance for Film Festival in Tangerang City as requested by the Local Office of Culture and Art performance. In addition, because of this dance group, their village becomes well known and popular in the municipality level. That is why the village head really supported them, because this Chinese Benteng cooperative can leverage his performance." Ibu Tuti convinces me how the success of "social inclusion" project by inserting these women through dance activities can lead them to be acknowledged by the local government, which were theorized as excluder in this context.

The above description shows how *visibilization* is an important first step of recognition for those who are excluded. This *visibilization* process operates through creating the *authentic* Chinese *Benteng* culture through documenting the *local knowledge* that the NGO collected through interacting with them. *Visibilization* also allows the Chinese *Benteng* women to be widely known, most importantly by the local population and government bureaucrats, which were assumed by the NGO as the excluding agent. Furthermore, following *visibilization* process, other activities under the cooperative project are intended to increase the capacity of the Chinese *Benteng* women in solving their own problems. I interpret such series of activities as *capacitation* process where WRDC starts to correct the deficits or 'problems' as

they construct in the beginning of the “*Peduli Project*”. According to problem formulation understood by WRDC, the absence of formal identification document is the main ‘problem’ that caused their exclusion to obtain the benefit of government social welfare program. Furthermore, to help solving such “problem” is through facilitating Chinese *Benteng* women to obtain such formal documentation.

Beside the cooperative as saving and lending source of the Chinese *Benteng* community, it is also function as helping this community in obtaining formal identification document. I remembered my first visit talks with Ibu Tuti about the community. At that time, she told me, “*Most of them don’t think that having ID card, birth certificate, or marriage certificate is important. They had a trauma dealing with government bureaucracy, because they had to pay more than what it used to. For example, their children don’t have birth certificate, because in the application form, marriage certificate of the parents is also necessary. The problem is they also don’t have marriage certificate, because the parents don’t have formal ID card, family card or birth certificate. Look, the administration problem is huge here. They don’t know how the process to have the document. Due to the complex process in dealing with bureaucracy and administration, many Chinese Benteng people do not register their marriage to the civil office. They just simply held the traditional ceremony in the Chinese temple. For them, it was quite common do traditional wedding rituals without civic registration. Despite it costs a lot of money to do traditional wedding, for the Chinese Benteng people, it is more important that the civil wedding.*” I remembered that in the previous project, the approach was also similar. WRDC identified that lack of formal administration document become the primary cause why most poor and marginalized people cannot obtain government social welfare support. As WRDC has extensive experience in helping poor women to get their formal documentation, they also applied similar approach to Chinese *Benteng* women. They WRDC called this activity as *adminduk* – administration and civic registration activities – in which required more active approach towards the community by collecting the necessary documentation to process the formal registration paper. To do such, WRDC trained some women in which they called *adminduk* cadres, who are seen as voluntarily interested and capable enough to go door-to-door approaching those who are in need to have the formal identification document.

The argument of lack of legal identity documents, such as ID card, family cards, and birth certificate have been a recurring issue in Indonesia. A study report about legal identity in Indonesia found that among the poorest 30% of Indonesian households 71% of children below 1 year old do not have birth certificate, 58% of children between 1 to 17 years old do not have birth certificate, and 88% of adults – 18 years old and over – do not have birth certificate. Such lack of having birth certificate is intrinsically linked to child marriages in which leads to another problematic situation since the formal primary and secondary educational institutions are currently discourage those married girls and boys to continue their education. Overwhelmingly, the study finds that the absence of having birth certificate brought disadvantage more severely to women than men in general that often materialize into educational attainment and access to healthcare (Sumner and Kusumaningrum, 2014). For that reason, one of the intervention activities implemented in “*Peduli Program*” was legal identity provision that focuses on the demand side, which unfortunately neglects some key aspects from the supply side that often normalized by ‘under the table’ payment and lack of clarity on procedures.

Ibu Devi is one of the *adminduk* cadres in *Kampung Wetan*. She always looks busy and goes to people’s house to get documents for formal registration documents. Since she joins the cooperative, she learns the procedures how to get ID card, birth certificate, family card, and married certificate for people in the *Kampung*. Since the cooperative was established in 2015, Ibu Devi and some other women were taught by Ibu Tuti about the importance of having formal identity document through a mini workshop for cadres about basic rights, health and education services, and legal identity. At first, in doing her tasks as *adminduk* cadre, Ibu Devi was accompanied by Ibu Tuti, knocking her neighbors’ door and socialize the information that having legal registration documents is important. “*In the beginning, we don’t know the importance of having ID card or birth certificate. Now I am happy that I can help the people here and members of the cooperative to have the formal documents. Now I know the importance of having ID, family card and birth certificate. I often go to people’s houses and give them information to the community members that don’t have ID yet... I encourage them to obtain the ID, it is not difficult like what I thought before... take a long time and difficult.*” At the same time, Ibu Tuti also organized meetings with some bureaucrats in the Tangerang’s civic registration office with

the purpose of "... so the ladies will know that having formal registration document is important. Also, they can be familiar with the bureaucrats here and understand the procedure to obtain such documents. If they know well the procedure, they can help and facilitate other cooperative members to get their registration documents" as Ibu Tuti explained to me. Not only with the civic registration office, Ibu Tuti also arranged meeting with other local government offices, such as department of health, education, women empowerment and child protection, culture and art, as well as agriculture and food security. Such meetings were intended to leverage the cooperative's network.

For almost three years Ibu Devi and her fellow *adminduk* cadres have facilitated other Chinese *Benteng* families that live in Kampung Wetan to obtain their formal documentation. By mid 2018, they happily reported to the "Peduli Program" that they have helped fellow Chinese *Benteng* people to obtain 51 family cards, 28 new ID cards, 208 birth certificate and a few marriage certificates. All the process of obtaining the formal documents would not be realized if Ibu Devi and her fellow cadres do not know someone from the bureaucracy, as she said, "Because I am an active cadre in the cooperative, I always go to the Kelurahan office and they [Kelurahan officers] know me because I always bring documents for processing birth certificate or ID card. After we met the district civic registration office with WRDC, we now have a fast track line in sub-district office and we don't have to queue like the other." However, this success was not last for long and sustainable. "Peduli Program" activity to assist Chinese *Benteng* community in obtaining formal registration document nowadays is not as intense as before. Mariah, which is the sister-in-law of Ibu Devi mentioned that compare to a few years back, obtaining birth certificate is not difficult anymore. As Mariah just had a baby, she was a little bit worried that getting birth certificate for her son will be as difficult as was in the past. That was her first time to deal with paperwork of registration, because her other two children were born in Belitung – where her husband came from. She said that in Belitung, getting birth certificate for children is not simple and easy either; but at least she does not have to bribe a lot. She compares with the process in Tangerang, where bribe is a common practice to speed up the process, "If you don't know people in that office, your application will be processed later. But if you pay, it will be prioritized. Last

time I did that. I paid to orang dalam⁸⁷ to prioritize my paper; otherwise I cannot process birth certificate for my son."

Experience from Ibu Nuriah was no different from what Meri had experienced. Ibu Nuriah is also a cooperative member that just dealing with painful birth certificate problem. Her daughter-in-law just delivered a baby a few weeks ago and she asked if Ibu Nuriah can help her to process the birth certificate in her residency, knowing that Ibu Nuriah is an active member of the cooperative. However, Ibu Nuriah was quite disappointed once she started the birth certificate process herself. She complained and told me, despite a bit hesitation in the beginning, but at the end she threw all her disappointments, *"I don't understand that processing birth certificate takes a long time. It has been months, since my grandson born and his birth certificate still not yet ready. I have submitted all the necessary documents and also have paid, but until now I haven't gotten the paper. I am worried if we don't get the birth certificate up to the 6-month time limit, the government will penalize us. More money to pay the penalty."* When she told me all these problems, I was wondering if she asked Ibu Devi to help her since she is the *adminduk* cadre, which tasked to assist fellow cooperative members in processing the formal administration paperwork. Ibu Nuriah sighed and looked hopeless, *"I don't know... She [Ibu Devi] seems very busy doing 'her business'. She is also 'helping' other people to take care of their administrative paperwork. Rather than rely to others, better I do it myself. It is also not free and I have to pay. It should be free, right? But it takes so long and I am tired of waiting, follow up and waiting again...."* Ibu Nuriah's desperation signaled that despite high hopes in solving bureaucratic hassle in administrative paperwork, she still has to work it out on her own. Expectation that Ibu Devi will help her was vanished as she realized that her colleague is busier with the 'side job' in 'helping' people to take care of their papers.

Beside focus on legal registration documents, WRDC also delivered various trainings and workshops to improve the skills of the Chinese *Benteng* women. Trainings and workshops were varied, for instance training on women's leadership; training on advocacy, lobby and negotiation; gender awareness training; and a number of other trainings on livelihood skills such as baking class, craft, or sewing class. Usually those who are included in the training are limited

⁸⁷ Insider

number of people – mostly those members who are the core committee that are active in the regular cooperative activity. Generally, the Chinese *Benteng* women were so excited when WRDC organized a group trip to a cooking and baking center “Bogasari” owned by a big flour company that has longstanding relationship with WRDC. In that cooking and baking center, they attended 2 days of cooking class where they learned how to make cookies, bread, and any other type of sweet dessert. For Ibu Herlina, Ibu San Nio, and Ibu Pin Lan, these cooking classes were so pleasing and at the same time these ladies testified that they learn something new in the class. But, for Ibu Netty, the cooking class was not new experience and she does not really feel something new. Ibu Netty herself was a baker and she already has bakery business that she run in her house – an inheritance from her mother who also was a baker. Every day she takes order from her existing customers for seasonal cakes and cookies; like at that time when I helped her in making some of the cookies that were ordered by her customers. She was not very impressed regarding the trip to the baking centre, as she said *“Yeah... it was quite fun go to the baking centre together with the other ladies from the cooperative. It was ok, but for me it was not very useful, as I have learnt all the technique already ... Um, some new type of cakes I just learned there, but overall, I almost know it all. I am a baker and I know everything already.”*

Organized women into group and give them training under the broader concept of capacity building are common way to operationalize women’s empowerment. Through this, women empowerment is used as effective device to shape subjects that are capable to find their own strength and mutually help one another in solving common problems. By establishing women’s group in the form of cooperative, WRDC trained the Chinese *Benteng* woman – especially the elite committee group – learned to build mutual trust among themselves. WRDC’s work to engineer women’s group is explained by Li (2007) as a form of community that is rendered technical. Such approach as Li argues is employed through identify or create groups – which in case is solely women – that could conduct meetings and prepare plans, which are constructed as an arena of development intervention. Furthermore, as the groups finally established, the social forces then would be applied as calculative means in which intervention can be operated (p.234-235). In the case of Chinese *Benteng* woman, intervention towards them is activated

immediately when they 'organize' themselves into a cooperative group that is used as a platform to 'solve' their problem.

Such operation is also called in many feminist literatures as Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), in which stem from the same thinking to brought women together – in particular those who are in the South – to organize themselves and to bring changes (Buckley, 2000). In understanding the way how community groups are constructed, Li (2006) further theorized that "*groups were made visible, formalized, and improved where they already existed, crafted where they were absent, or resuscitated when they were disappearing. They could then be funded, counted, evaluated, licensed, legitimated and replicated on industrial scale*" (p.7). Through categorizing these group based on 'degree of maturity' in which further determine further strategies towards them, project designers define which internal capacity to be increased with some external inputs. As Li explains above, the formation of saving and lending cooperative can be analyzed through this construction. In the case of Chinese *Benteng* women, which never had any experience in operating themselves in a group formation, the process of *visibilization* is seen as critical step in which development intervention in terms of "social inclusion" can be function as a correction to their deficit – as excluded community. Furthermore, by supplying this group with various capacity building activities, this reflects an important state where these women's internal capacity – as collective – should be improved through a mixture of capacity improvement as well as external support from government or other private institution such as NGOs or companies.

Creating community groups, as Li (2007) has argued above, has helped the development project to construct an enabling environment in which the women subject can operate. This operation uses the idea of women empowerment and community participation as its main devices of intervention. In this new environment, the women subject whose deficits have been corrected by the development intervention are located as an inseparable part of local configuration in their particular location. In the context of this project, as the saving and lending cooperative platform has expanded its activities into a wide-array of community organizing and facilitation activities, WRDC's continuous facilitation and support to the Chinese *Benteng* women' group have encouraged these women – particularly the main cooperative committee and a few other women – to be active in many

'social' activities or events, which most of them were held by or on behalf of the village apparatus. By involving in activities such as hosting joint art and cultural event; initiating multistakeholder forums and workshops; or simply participating as performer in government occasions, WRDC proudly reported that these Chinese *Benteng* women have been accepted, acknowledged and included in many social activities in their areas.

The state of being accepted, acknowledge and included in the environment where ones live is perceived and understood as a sign of social inclusion that this project strives to achieve. After *visibilization* and *capacitation*, the creation of enabling environment that characterized inclusive and accepting society is required to activate social inclusion for the excluded community, which in this case is Chinese *Benteng* community. Such processes can be understood as *preparation*, which is necessitated prior to what Li (2007) called as 'maturity'. In this *preparation* stage, the ultimate capability that the Chinese *Benteng* women need to obtain is to develop and to maintain their close proximity with the formal power holder, in this case is the local government within the 'inclusive' and accepting environment and society. Continuing from the previous processes of *capacitation*, which train the Chinese *Benteng* women not only to be capable independently as economic being but also to be competent as 'broker', in this *preparation* phase these women are *included* in almost all government-led events and take assumed role as the representative of the excluded community and women. By activating their capability as 'broker', these women not only play role as representing their community in so-called participatory development planning process, but at the same time these women are also seen by the formal power holder to informally represent the government and to act on their behalf. In this *preparation* stage, mutually benefiting relationship started to emerge when these Chinese *Benteng* women are able to represent the good face of the *Kelurahan* government.

Through "Sanggar Cahaya" dancing group, the Chinese *Benteng* women from *Kampung Wetan* gets increasing attention. Their frequent performances in many government events made them popular among bureaucrats. Ibu Herlina who is the engine of the cooperative as well as the dancing group is extremely popular now, as she proudly said "I am a member of many *WhatsApp* groups now, mainly from local government offices. From cooperative office, health cadres, our own cooperative, culture and performance art local office, and many more." She often participates in many

events held by the district government as a representative from her cooperative as the arm-length of the *Kelurahan* where she lives. With such an expansion of social network, Ibu Herlina is often invited to attend various trainings, workshops, socialization events, as well as bazaars and fairs in which personally beneficial for her. When I asked if she passed on the invitations to other member of the cooperatives, she denied it by saying, *"I tried to give other opportunity to other women to attend those events and to represent the cooperative, but they just don't want to go. They said they are incapable of doing that, shy, and don't know what to do. At the end it is always me who go. Often the invitation also clashed with other activities and other cooperative committees do not want to go if I don't go. Every day I have to juggle with my morning duty in the house, and the cooperative things. I am tired, but I am happy..."*

Due to good reputation of the cooperative, the Chinese *Benteng* women are able to build good relationship with the bureaucrats. Not rare that the local government offices expect these women to disseminate information to their fellow cooperative members. In the early 2018, some Chinese *Benteng* women members of the cooperative were appointed by the *Kelurahan* head as *posyandu* cadres. As *posyandu* cadres, their role is to collect basic information in relation to pregnant mothers and children below 5 years old. The *posyandu* activities are held every first week of the month in the house of Ibu San Nio, where the cooperative had their regular weekly saving and lending activities before it was moved to the *Kelurahan* office. Besides that, Ibu San Nio's house is among the spacious one around the neighborhood and oftentimes used as a point of gathering in many other activities. At 8 o'clock in the morning, Ibu San Nio helped by Ibu Pin Lan to prepare the necessary equipment to carry out their duty as *posyandu* cadres. They set up the children weighing scale, some brochures, logbook to record the weight of the children, as well as some cookies that they will give to the children. That day, the *posyandu* activity was unlike the usual ones. Ibu Susan's face signaled worry. She said, *"At 7.30, the midwife came here; she complained. She saw that the Posyandu was not ready. The table and the weighting scale were not set up. The cadres even were not here yet. I said that they might be busy in their house and might come late. She said that she has a lot of posyandu to visit and to check. Waiting here was just a waste of time for her. I think she was a little bit angry. She threatened that she would report us to the Pak Lurah⁸⁸. I*

⁸⁸ Head of Kelurahan

already said sorry to her and promised that it won't happen again. But maybe she still angry and she left."

Despite the morning chaos, the *posyandu* activity was still happening anyway. Some neighbors started to arrive with their babies and toddlers. Ibu Pin Lan is responsible to put the children into the scale and read the measurement bar out loud to Ibu Irah, who is responsible to write it down. After that, the *cadres* gave some cookies for the children to take home. They explained to me that there were some boxes of cookie that given to them by the local health office to be distributed to the children. Actually, they admitted that they just follow what the midwife told them to do and have no idea what are the benefits of those cookies. When they were running of cookies, sometimes they just replace with any other cookies that they purchased for the nearest *warung*. Ibu Herlina, who is the chief of the *posyandu* cadre in that neighborhood ward, often prepares additional supplementary food for the children. She was the only one that received training at the sub district level and was expected to inform to her fellow *posyandu* cadres about what have been taught. Sometimes, Ibu Herlina prepared mung bean porridge for the children that come to *posyandu* to be weighted. Some other times, she modifies the menu to sweet coconut rice pudding.

As *posyandu* cadres, these Chinese Benteng women are officially part of the community-based health system that initiated by the government. Through this system, these women receive small amount of monetary compensation paid by the government every 3 months. Ibu Pin Lan said that the *Posyandu* cadres received IDR 150,000 (about €10) for three months. Despite the compensation is not big, but she doesn't really matter about it because what she is doing is a social work. She told me that Ibu Herlina is a good leader because she always knows how to solve problem and she is very reliable. She noted that Ibu Herlina is *hebat*⁸⁹ and able to navigate her channels up with the government bureaucrats and a lot of elite people. Like what happened that morning when the midwife came and complained to these women, Ibu Herlina took the initiative to step in and to solve the problem. Ibu Herlina directly met with the midwife and pleaded guilty of her team's lack of responsibility and ignorance about the *posyandu* activities. She knows that if she pampered the midwife with obedience and discipline attitude, she will be trusted

⁸⁹ An adjective to illustrate: great, superb, wonderful, terrific, fabulous.

which would bring positive effect not only for the cooperative but also to her image. After solving the problem, Ibu Herlina warned her fellow *posyandu* cadres, “Next month, we have to be ready by 7.30 in the morning. All equipment should already set up, so when the midwife come, she wouldn’t be disappointed anymore. Are we committed to this?” The other women responded, “Yes, we do.”

Ensuring good image of the Chinese *Benteng* women as trustable, committed, and obedient are important to keep the state of always being included in any social or community events in *Kampung Wetan*. These women have started to establish mutually benefiting relationship with the formal power holder, through their participation in government-engineered social events like *posyandu*. Furthermore, these women started to cultivate the benefit from the government, as trusted representative of ‘women’ in *Kampung Wetan*. In the bottom-up development process, these Chinese *Benteng* women are the one that invited to the meeting representing women group. Unfortunately, such processes do not mean that the Chinese *Benteng* women voice the critical concerns of women in *Kampung Wetan*, such as domestic violence, life security and stability, children education and healthcare, and many more. Oftentimes, activities around ‘meeting’ with the Government simply appear as formality, rather than real and critical discussion about women’s concerns. Moreover, what WRDC claims about ‘critical process’ never really materialized into reality. This is because that these women were never really equipped to understand dominating system patriarchy that disadvantage women.

The illustration above shows how Chinese *Benteng* women are capitalized by the dominant formal power as the informal extension of government function and role. As Cornwall and Coelho (2007) argue that the ability of participants to voice their own needs is accommodated by the participatory institutions that are ‘famed by those who create them and infused with power relations and culture of interaction carried into them from other spaces’ (p.11), these Chinese *Benteng* women are inserted into current system of so-called participatory planning process that will determine the local development agenda. Quaghebeur, Masschelein and Nguyen (2004) argue even more radical by stating that ‘real’ participation include: contestation, discussion, struggle and negotiation about what dominant framework of participatory project (p.163). They continue that resistance is the only form of meaningful participation, in which only subversive citizens are those that engage

with it. Such subversive citizens should also assertive, reformist and resourceful citizens as Cornwall and Coelho (2007) define. On the contrary, this “*Peduli Program*” has indeed created client – not citizens – under the contested definition of “social inclusion” within participatory project. Through activities facilitated by WRDC, the Chinese *Benteng* women are inserted in the dominant system in order to be governed by participatory project, in which they are expected to be compliant and obedient women.

The last phase to realize social inclusion is through *graduation* in which fully expose the successful subject into neoliberal governing model. Through capacity building activity under the broader discourse of women empowerment, the Chinese *Benteng* women are no longer defined as deficit because they have been improved and corrected through *capacitation* phase as mentioned above. In addition, expansion of network as a result of accumulation of new connections that resulted from the *capacitation* phase is used to fulfill personal or group interest rather than strive for women concerns in general. In this *graduation* process, these women would not face meaningful barrier anymore and basically free to enjoy the benefit of development in which they previously excluded from. In this “social inclusion” project, successful creation of this type of subject emerged in the self of Ibu Herlina as the most active “agent of change” defined by the project, and some key members of the cooperative cadres. Rather than become agent of change for women – as the original intention of women empowerment approach – these women instead become economically rational economically that seek individual solution for their own economic problem.

In the *graduation* process, excluded groups are seen as capable of building their own network in order to support them obtaining the service as they need from the government. In return, such services are seen as a way for them to reach their potential by contributing to Indonesian development and economic growth. In “*Peduli Program*”, Chinese *Benteng* women are encouraged to participate in local development process in the area where they live in a way that their participation is understood as contribution in achieving growth or progress. By engaging in this process, the Chinese *Benteng* women have become active agent of what Scheba and Sarobidy-Rakotonarivo (2016) coined as ‘inclusive neoliberalism’ in which Weyland (1996) described as neoliberalism ‘with a human face’. In Cleaver (1999), these authors point out that this new wave of neoliberal policies not solely focus on

market-oriented model to promote welfare and development, instead it also encompasses larger aspects with the objective to achieve integration of wider elements of the society (Ramirez Cover, 2017).

7.5. REFLECTION

Dean (2010) in his book "Governmentality, Power and Rule in Modern Society" notes that programs of empowerment within the blanket of community development are particular clear examples of contemporary application of liberal rationalities Foucault's conception of *Governmentality* in which attempts to operationalize the self-governing capacities of the subject of the governed population. In the case of "Peduli Program", I observe how service provision type of non-government organizations that oftentimes rely their operation of development projects from donor-funded initiatives, have been instrumental in activating the contemporary rationalities. Utilizing their role and knowledge expertise, NGOs actively engage in practice of social inclusion through problematizing the excluded population whose deficits are to be corrected through the project interventions.

As mentioned repeatedly in some project documents of the "Peduli Program", one of important aspects to determine the project target population are their condition of economic deprivation. As Cada and Ptackova (2014) argue that NGOs socially construct their target population based on how they can bring appropriate intervention based on their expertise, especially in solving the problem that specified in the project design. Through the NGO's specific expertise in organizing women through establishing saving and lending cooperative that brought financial benefit to the targeted population, WRDC utilized the understanding of 'culture of poverty' (Lewis, 1966) of the Chinese *Benteng* communities that underlined and justified their state of exclusion. WRDC's analysis of social exclusion as they understand is a form of normalization of poverty among Chinese *Benteng* community in which arise as a result of their longstanding history of marginality, despair and helplessness. Furthermore, the argument of Chinese *Benteng* culture is also utilized to justify how the women are treated badly and injustice in such a way that contributed to worsening their poverty. This in turn construct the Chinese

Benteng community as helpless victims of cruel authoritarian regime that made them as innocent victims and target of anger from jealous *pribumi* Indonesians.

In an attempt to construct Chinese *Benteng* people as the problematic others – as also other community groups that are targeted by many development projects – they were taught by external experts about how their authentic culture looks like. This shows what Lewis (1966) argues that people with a culture of poverty, as the project defined Chinese *Benteng*, have very little sense of their own history. He describes that they are marginal people who know only their troubles, their own local conditions, their neighborhood, and their own way of life. These are the people, whose behaviors are about to be corrected by the project through what it defines as social inclusion which will be inserted into the wider society once their deficits have been adjusted. This kind of quick fix oftentimes found merely as technical tool that ignores the power relations among individuals as well as between individuals and social structure (Giddens, 1984). This negligence instead does not address the exclusion, but instead re-produce exclusion through inclusion.

When WRDC came to the Chinese *Benteng* community in *Kampung Wetan* and started to approach these ladies, they capitalized what they can do as an organization, which is like what Ansell and Gash (2008) have argued that the local NGO has sufficient organizational structure and skills and knowledge to participate in collaborative community. WRDC longstanding history of successful collaboration with other community groups lead to strengthened social capital as well as increase trust in long-term collaborative structure. This shows how WRDC facilitated the establishment of Chinese *Benteng* women cooperative. Furthermore, the way in which Chinese *Benteng* women trusts WRDC have driven them to be more knowledgeable, known by many people and also felt important are some of the results of constant WRDC's presence in their daily life.

**VIII – INCLUSION OR
INSERTION? A WAY TO
GOVERN THE
PROBLEMATIC OTHERS
THROUGH DEVELOPMENT
INTERVENTION**

VIII – INCLUSION OR INSERTION? A WAY TO GOVERN THE PROBLEMATIC OTHERS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION

8.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will elaborate how the process of creating a particular type of neoliberal subject through various assemblages that produced by government-endorsed social inclusion project in Indonesia. Here, I will also point out gendered implication that occurred as counter-effect of this social inclusion project. Furthermore, this chapter will also unravel how the social inclusion project presented as women-focused saving and lending organization is understood as a neoliberal way to govern Chinese *Benteng* women that seen as ‘problematic population’. As the explanation evolves, it will illustrate how such way in governing the ‘problematic population’ diverges from the original intention of ‘inclusion’ at the community level. My objective is to provide a more detail description on how more popular concept of women’s empowerment is instrumentalized to implement externally-induced notion of “social inclusion” in which the project claims as new approach to alleviate poverty. Throughout my observation, I had found that what it is intended as ‘inclusive’ in the project implementation does not necessarily lead to what “social inclusion” has promised as a policy concept. Following such description, I will take a critical turn and reflect on the dominant conceptualization of womanhood in contemporary Indonesia that is maintained through various institution, both public and private. More specifically, I examine how development project that is deployed through a popular tool namely women empowerment has been equated and dangerously destined as “social inclusion” of the marginalized population in development projects.

This chapter is structured into six parts. First of all, I situate the common representation of how the image of ‘poor and excluded Chinese *Benteng* women’ has been continuously objectified as the only representation to generalize women of Chinese *Benteng* people. This universalized representation is illustrated through

the narrative of Mak Hwa Ing whose life is the perfect example to create particular need of inclusion that development intervention can provide. It is followed by a reading on how women form an inseparable notion of Indonesian development discourse through the way in which the state view womanhood and idealized particular type of women. Through that reading, I aim to form a theoretical foundation how Indonesia's formal gender ideology has strongly influenced the constructed ideal about women's role in Javanese-value dominated Indonesia society that somehow counterfeit progressive and reformist aspects of women empowerment idea. I then continue to illustrate how the typical day looks like in the cooperative's saving and lending day. On that day, members of the cooperative come and go to where such activity is held to save their money or to borrow money. Moving from there, the next sections will provide detail description on how the Chinese *Benteng* women that participate in this "social inclusion" project are continuously shaped according to ideal womanhood model in Indonesia, namely as responsible mother, dutiful wife, and socially active members of their community. Finally, the last section will elaborate the way how this social inclusion project has manifested its interventionist infrastructure into a subject making process.

8.2. SITUATING THE CONTEXT: ABUSING COMMON STEREOTYPE OF CHINESE *BENTENG* AS SAVABLE VICTIMS

It has been a few weeks that I stayed in *Kelurahan* Kembangan and the life of Chinese *Benteng* population was unlike the dominant representation about them. Common stereotype that negatively portrayed them as '*Cina miskin*' (translated as 'poor Chinese') generates public perception about their 'laziness' as deviant behaviors in comparison to what the public perceive about homogenized image of 'wealthy' Chinese Indonesians. In contrast with the dominant representation of Chinese Indonesia that seen as diligent and hard-worker, Chinese *Benteng* people is constantly portrayed as lazy which then theorized as the cause of their poverty. In the capitalist system, being diligent and hard-work are those features that serve the system best. For the vast majority of Chinese Indonesian population in Jakarta and its surrounding, the existence of Chinese *Benteng* community remains an unknown subject. For decades, the main source of information about them has been

the mainstream media, especially television, which have their own particular imagination on how to represent this population. News about Chinese *Benteng* people always appears only once a year, especially during the Chinese New Year celebration, as a seasonal reportage that portrays how these 'poor Chinese' humbly celebrate their 'unique' culture far from the glamorous festivities that commonly displayed by the Chinese Indonesians. Until now, their poverty is always fetishized as commodification to generate pity from corporations and associations, dominated by wealthy Chinese Indonesians, as voluntary activities to 'give back to the society' that known as *baksos* or *bakti sosial*. Commonly this idea is translated into *sembako*⁹⁰ package distribution or free health check-up for them. Being constantly portrayed as 'poor Chinese', the generalization about Chinese *Benteng* community results in simplified homogenization that overlooks the power relation that exist among the community itself.

Poor people or families from Chinese *Benteng* community indeed exist. However excessive public framing that generalize the whole population as poor is extremely problematic which lead to negative stereotype towards them as a community that always rely on private donation from the aforementioned entities. Among the poor families that I encountered, *Mak*⁹¹ Hwa Ing is one of the examples of typical Chinese *Benteng* people that constantly attract media attention. Every time I went to the *Kelurahan* office, I always passed by *Mak* Hwa Ing's house. She lives just in front of the *Kelurahan* office, approximately about less than 100 m from the symbol of government power in that neighborhood. Despite lives very close to the *Kelurahan* office, she and her family do not feel that they get any social benefit or information about important issues. This has made her suspicious about the government people and how they have been ignoring her family, until one point that she concluded all of those treatments just because she is a Chinese-descendant.

Almost every morning, *Mak* Hwa Ing sits on her veranda watching her little granddaughter playing. *Mak* Hwa Ing is in her late 50s and is a widow. Her husband had passed away for more than 10 years now. She identifies herself as

⁹⁰ *Sembako* is an abbreviation of *Sembilan bahan pokok* which means 9 essential food related commodities which includes rice, granulated sugar, frying oil and margarine, meat and chicken, egg, milk, corn, karosene, and salt

⁹¹ *Mak* is shortened form of *Emak* that derived from Malay language, a pronoun that is used to address or to call older woman. *Emak* also used to call one's mother.

native of *Kampung Wetan*, as she calls herself 'Orang Wetan' that literally means people of Wetan and not as Chinese *Benteng*. According to her, Chinese *Benteng* are those Chinese who live in the city center, close to the market area (*Pasar Lama*); but she also does not mind if people call her Chinese *Benteng* because most people call those Chinese descents that live in Tangerang as Chinese *Benteng*. Mak Hwa Ing has been living there throughout her life and never left that area. While we chatted, she pointed at one government building, a cemented grey building stands at about 200 m away from her house. She said that it used to be part of her parent's territory. It is now the premise of government office of Landscape and Environment Department. She remembered the old days when that area was a *kampung*, where there were no asphalt road and concrete buildings; instead, only bamboo sheds, muddy streets, trees, and wild bushes.

Mak Hwa Ing still strikingly remembers her childhood, when she occasionally helped her father to pick fruits like mango, *jambu air* (water rose apple), banana, starfruit, jackfruit, or *rambutans*, which they sold in the market. At that time, most people of *Kampung Wetan* made their living by selling agricultural cultivation, mostly were fruits or vegetables that wildly grew in their surroundings. Some of them also owned paddy field. Because they earned a living by relying on agricultural product, they identified themselves as farmers (*petani*). However, their identity as farmer has been long gone, along with the beginning of the industrialization in *Kampung Wetan* area where the establishment of small/medium size factories started to emerge in the late 1980s – early 1990s. Gradually, people of *Kampung Wetan* started to sell their land to outsider, especially buyers from Jakarta, to be converted as factories or warehouses. Mak Hwa Ing described that her *kampung* was unlike nowadays. According to her, back then there was no 'development' as she repeated over and over again, referring back to the absence of asphalt road in the *kampung* where always flooded severely due to muddy roads. For her, the idea of 'development' equates to infrastructure construction which she associates with modern buildings, paved roads that connect urban *kampungs*, street lights, asphalt main roads, as well as people's house that made from bricks and not bamboed-wall.

She did not say much about her youth, which she finds mediocre and nothing really special about it. As a common practice in that area, where girls were married in a very young age, she had eloped with her husband when she was relatively

young. She was not even 20 years old back then. Sometimes she was a bit sentimental while talking about her late husband and her downcast eyes showed empty gaze. Unlike her, that was very young, the husband was a way much older than her. Her special day was celebrated in a very modest way; no parties nor any religious celebration. “*Enggak ada apa-apa. Cuma makan-makan doang!*”⁹² as she described that day, when she became the wife of her husband. According to her, there was no such things as dating before the marriage. The husband just came to her house and ask for her hand to the parents. After they got married, *Mak Hwa Ing* and her husband lived in the house that she currently lives in. Unfortunately, *Mak Hwa Ing* could not have the husband only for herself; she had to share her husband with the first wife. *Mak Hwa Ing* was the second wife. That was also the reason that she was not the heir of her husband’s wealth. Despite the husband was not poor, she never claimed anything from her husband.

Mak Hwa Ing thinks that being a second wife was her destiny which she fully accepted without complaints. She never expected that her husband to divorce his first wife and she did not intend to leave her husband either. Despite just being a second wife, she was quite happy because her husband spent more time with her rather than the ‘old’ wife. There is a common expression in Indonesia that the first wife is called *istri tua* (means ‘old wife’) and the mistresses are called *istri muda* (means ‘young wife’). The distinction between the ‘old wife’ and ‘young wife’ creates binary logic that constructs women in a competitive manner. The ‘old wife’ usually described as ugly and unattractive, controlling, have boring type of personality, unable to take care of her personal appearance to please the husband, and all sort of characters that pull the husband away from her. Commonly the ‘old wife’ is the one to blame when she fails to keep her husband that made him to look for another woman, the ‘young wife’. On the contrary, the ‘young wife’ usually depicted as the opposite of the ‘old wife’ and has all the attractive attributes that attracts men. However, this was not the case of *Mak Hwa Ing* and her husband’s ‘old wife’ since they have met only once, at their husband’s funeral. According to *Mak Hwa Ing*, her husband was a member of military whose life was tightly regulated and controlled by the state. This was also another reason that *Mak Hwa Ing*’s existence as the second wife was never be a legitimate one, which means that

⁹² There’s nothing. Only eat together.

she did not obtain any administrative legality as well as pension allowance and inheritance share.

Despite *Mak Hwa Ing* lives next to the *Kelurahan* office, where ‘important’ people come and go, as she referred to the bureaucrats with uniforms; her house appeared as abandoned and ignored – as if it is excluded from its surrounding. A government officer of the *Kelurahan*, Pak Yahya told me that *Mak Hwa Ing*’s house’s status is *illegal*, because it stands on government-owned terrain. Pak Yahya said that *Mak Hwa Ing* and her family should have moved from that land; but because of Pak *Lurah*’s kindness, they are allowed to stay in that land although they do not have legal right to live there. Pak Yahya continued that Pak *Lurah* can kick them out anytime, but because of his [Pak *Lurah*] generosity *Mak Hwa Ing*’s family is allowed to stay there, as long as they do not have the intention to sell the land. Pak Yahya then implicitly said that the *Kelurahan* would not do anything on their respected areas because it is still on dispute.

Mak Hwa Ing lives in that house with her son and her granddaughter. Almost four years ago, her son moved back in with her, after he got divorce with his ‘ungrateful’ wife – that how she addressed her former daughter-in-law. Since then, *Mak Hwa Ing* is the only one that takes care of Weni – her granddaughter. When I came by, Weni was riding her almost broken tricycle, while *Mak Hwa Ing* sat in her veranda and held a plastic plate filled with plain white rice that swamped over some kind of soup broth. Once a while, she called her granddaughter while feeding her, “Come Weni! Eat!” as she lengthened her trembling hand to reach Weni’s mouth. According to *Mak Hwa Ing*, it has been more than five years that her left hand doesn’t function properly due to worsening diabetes. Since then, she just uses her right hand to do her daily chores. Despite such malfunction, she still does the house chore by herself, as no one helps her. Her son just got a new job, as workers’ coordinator in a contractor company. He often comes home early in the morning – while most people just about start to go to work or even doesn’t come at all. When he comes home in the morning, he sleeps the whole day and leaves *Mak Hwa Ing* takes care of the house all by herself, including taking care of Weni.

Once in a while, *Mak Hwa Ing*’s daughter comes and gives her food or money for the household. Her daughter is married and now lives with her husband in Karawaci – about 5 km away from *kampung* Wetan. Her daughter helps her husband as small grocery trader. They rented a small stall in the big market to sell

daily necessities. *Mak Hwa Ing* said that unlike her son, her daughter is very generous and devoted to her. Despite her daughter is not rich, but she always mindful about *Mak Hwa Ing's* health. According to *Mak Hwa Ing*, her daughter is the one that took her to hospital to check her health status; not like her son that always caused her problems, especially the son's divorce. That day, *Mak Hwa Ing* complained about how it is difficult to wash the clothes only with her right hand. She cannot afford washing machine because the electricity expensed will be very expensive. In the veranda, *Weni* seemed enjoyed herself, playing alone and sometimes she talked to her toys. *Mak Hwa Ing* said that *Weni* should have started schooling because she was already five. I was rather surprise to know that she is five already, since her petite figure did not indicate a proportional structure of a five years old child. *Weni's* physical figure is significantly smaller and thinner than regular five years old children, which brought to my assumption that she may be three years old. "*Weni should have gone to playgroup already. I feel pity for her, because she doesn't have friend and always alone. Actually, there's one pre-school nearby, but I don't want to send her there. All the students are Muslims and the girls wear headscarf. I am afraid that Weni should have to wear that too. I don't want my granddaughter to be Muslim.*" *Mak Hwa Ing* appeared worry just by imagining what would have happened if she sent her granddaughter there.

Mak Hwa Ing added that unlike the other neighborhood – the one next to the riverbanks of *Cisadane* river where *Ibu San Nio* and *Ibu Pin Lan* live – her neighborhood which is on the other side of the main road is predominantly inhabited by Muslim population. In this neighborhood, *Mak Hwa Ing* felt that as a minority she often senses of being discriminated by government officials from the *Kelurahan* office. She felt that the *Kelurahan's* staff fooled her while she requested to renew her family card (*kartu keluarga*). Since her son got divorced and moves back to live with *Mak Hwa Ing*, together with his daughter, *Mak Hwa Ing* wanted to add *Weni's* name in the family card. But, because *Mak Hwa Ing* does not know anything about administrative procedures and how to deal with such process, she accepted a 'nice' offer from one of the *Kelurahan* people that would help her to take care of everything. Certainly, it was not a free service for them. She said that her son had to pay one or two million rupiah (about €150) to sort all of administrative documents. Unfortunately, until the time of my interview, *Mak Hwa Ing* has not yet received her new family card, "*I am tired of asking. Every time I asked there's always*

excuses. I don't know, if they even process my document or not." It was just one of her abundant experiences when Mak Hwa Ing had to deal with administrative process.

Whenever she had to do administrative paperwork, she was hopeless. For a long time, she does not trust the government, especially as recently her family has a dispute with the *Kelurahan* about the terrain that she lives in. She believes that the government has grabbed her family's terrain, as she told me, *"My parents' land was large... I don't know how big, maybe 3 hectares or so. But now, the government built a lot of things there; the sport auditorium, the Kelurahan office and the environment local office. It was started during the Mayor Djakaria. I don't remember which year. It was long time ago."* Mak Hwa Ing knows someone that works for the *Kelurahan* office and she expects to get some help and support from the government. Especially because she is a widow and lives in an almost crumbling house, she thought that perhaps she might get cash support or *sembako* package from the *Kelurahan* to sustain her daily living. Once, she asked Pak Yahya whether the *Kelurahan* would consider her to be the beneficiaries of house renovation project, and immediately was disappointed to hear the response. As her house stands on the disputed land, she is excluded from such programs. She was also very sure that because she is a Chinese and not a Muslim, she does not get the support as she explains her theory to me, *"I often see people come out from the Kelurahan office, bringing white envelope. It must be money. If not money, what else? As long as I live here, I don't see regular people come to the Kelurahan office. Only when they process documents. There were a lot of women, with jilbab too. I never get any information or invitation to go there"*.

Then I was curious whether she knew about the saving and lending cooperative in the *Kelurahan* that increasingly popular. Surprisingly, she asked back to me, *"What is that? What I know is Bangkel⁹³ that lends people money."* She admitted that despite she knew the cooperative's chairwoman, but Ibu Herlina never invites her to join or at least inform her about the cooperative. She then assumes that maybe because she is physically unable and old, not 'healthy' enough to reach the 2nd floor where the cooperative usually hosts their activities. She thinks that the cooperative is not for people like her, although she knows some of the members that always pass by in front of her house whenever there are cooperative's activities in the *Kelurahan* office. Mak Hwa Ing then adds, *"I saw many people go to Kelurahan*

⁹³ 'Mobile Bank' – euphemism for loanshark

office [...] Yes, maybe for that," as she just realized that such cooperative exists, "but most of them are from the other side [of the main road]. Not from this area. They pass by and just say hi or wave to me. They seldom drop by and chat with me." Despite she expressed her interest, if she was asked to join the cooperative; Mak Hwa Ing is not convinced if Ibu Herlina would ask her to join, especially if she is a widow and doesn't have any income.

Narrative of Mak Hwa Ing is the example of evocative story that always appears in mainstream channel. Chinese *Benteng* women, especially the old ones are homogeneously represented as victim of discrimination and negatively stereotyped by the government and broader community where they live. Based on such profile, common imagination of Chinese *Benteng* women is created as suitable target group for the social inclusion project to work on. In this chapter, I aim to illustrate how *social inclusion* is used as a technical tool to maintain existing structure in the community where development project operates its intervention towards certain 'problematic population'. Such tool is operated through deploying captivating narrative of inclusive development by "empowering women" of the excluded population. Through relatively short period of time, social inclusion project operated by WRDC as an NGO that consistent in 'empowering women' through forming saving/lending cooperative as its main platform has indicated a sign of what Foucault called *subjectivation*. This means that Chinese *Benteng* women as the target population of this *social inclusion* project are corrected and crafted in such a way as autonomous entities to desire personal freedom and self-realization (Foucault, 2010) through active participation in making autonomous decision, in short to govern themselves. The process of *subjectivation* that produced through unfamiliar discourse of social inclusion, as opposed to women empowerment that has been widely practiced in state-engineered development intervention, has guided these excluded women to follow certain conduct, which they have been educated to believe. Through the saving and lending cooperative, the Chinese *Benteng* women are created as subject where practices of social inclusion through techniques of 'women empowerment' is directed to correct their 'problem(s)'. Such 'problem' is imagined and reproduced based on the dominant homogenized blind narratives about large population of Indonesians of Chinese in general that often portrayed as 'exclusive' community in which created Chinese *Benteng* community as 'excluded' group.

By following the social construction of how women are positioned in Indonesian society, I use the term “State Ibuism” the official gender ideology coined by Julia Suryakusuma (2011) to guide the analysis. It could be then interpreted that the imagination of inclusive society would be created through which this *social inclusion* project is designed to intervene. Such intervention is executed through a process of creating the Chinese *Benteng* women not only as responsible mother and dutiful wife, but also as active Indonesian citizen through their participation in nurturing public life in a state-sponsored project. To achieve such goal, it is apparent that social inclusion project designed by WRDC, through the creation of saving/lending cooperative, does not intended to interrogate the domestic sphere where many Chinese *Benteng* women still struggle in, but instead focus on their lack of visible presence among the community in which could be improved by increasing their public participation. For that reason, it is important to highlight that the process of *subjectivation* through the social inclusion project emphasis on these women’s personal control of themselves termed as ‘self-responsibilization’ (Foucault, 2000, 2004a; Lemke, 2001) to overcome the ‘problem’ that has been previously elaborated. Furthermore, their ‘problem’ as excluded community, seen through a lense of development project, has justified reason for *social inclusion* intervention to improve their life in a neoliberal way.

8.3. READING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDONESIA FROM POSTCOLONIAL FEMINIST LENS

The discussion about women’s involvement in development has been a fundamental aspect of the policy making arena. In addition to the increasing use of “women’s empowerment” as a bottom-up discourse, which initially emerged as an alternative approach to the top-down model, this term is often seen as a vehicle to increase women’s participation. For decades, “women’s empowerment” has been exhaustively exploited by different agencies (Batliwala, 2010; Sardenberg, 2008) at various levels to win development contracts, especially for projects that aim to emancipate women (Buckley, 2000) – and in Indonesia this is no different. The incorporation of “women” into Indonesia’s development language is frequently associated with the “gender mainstreaming policies” that intend to increase women’s participation through “empowerment” to subsequently contribute to

national growth. As a result, such a view has framed women's issues in Indonesia's development landscape as an urgent need to insert "women" into the strategic national agenda by institutionalizing "women's empowerment" as a gender mainstreaming strategy (Blackburn, 2004; Ford and Parker, 2008; Sabaniah, A.D.; Setyawati, M.; Eddyono, 2010; Schech and Mustafa, 2010), conceiving "women" as a weak economic unit to be enhanced through "empowerment".

The importance of including women in the dominant development framework was popularized through Women in Development (WID) paradigm, coined by Ester Boserup in 1970 through her work "Women's Role in Economic Development" (Biewener and Bacqué, 2015; Connelly et al., 2000; Kabeer, 1994; Sen and Grown, 1997). As an economist, Boserup criticizes the development processes that fails to bring improvement and positive changes to women's lives. Furthermore, she argues that such failures are caused by women's marginalization from the economic system, since they are confined to their reproductive role and non-wage labour. Since women have been left out of the development process, they should be included in development efforts by being integrated into existing mechanism. For decades, the WID paradigm has been a dominant framework for many development agencies and organization to work with. This approach underlines that women's contributions to development were undervalued due to their lack of participation. Therefore, women's participation is prescribed as a corrective strategy to bring women into development through the creation of "opportunities" that engage them, which in theory will promote greater equality in terms of receiving development benefits. Consequently, the language of women's participation in development that is interpreted by economic language understands women's empowerment not only as an instrument of productive work, but also as an untapped source of productive labor. For that, issues that prevent women's engagement as productive labor could be overcome with interventions like better family planning, improved nutrition, and leveling education and health formulated based on liberal feminist thinking that continue to influence development policies in many developing countries. Calkin (2014) writes that WID's proponents believe that women's visibility in development is crucial not only as instrument of reproduction and welfare but also as instrument of production from the 'untapped' labour market. Thus, from the WID's perspective, women's problem is lack of productive capacity in modern economic

mechanism, but at the same time it ignores the analysis of gendered division of labour and inequalities that significantly contributed to women's impoverishment.

As dominant perspective on how to position women in development, the backbone of WID approach contains western feminist construction of Third World women and how they should play role in contemporary development. These women are portrayed as 'other' in which has been widely criticized, especially by minority feminists and also those from postcolonial society. In countering such western feminist discourse, scholarly works from Third World Feminist like Narayan (1997b), Spivak (1988; 1990), Mohanty (1997; 1988, 2005), Chatterjee (1989), and Candraningrum (2013) differentiate their approaches from dominant theories and methods that are disseminated through Anglo-European way of seeing the world. These scholars explain how local socioeconomic and cultural production cannot be separated from the larger discourse of globalization and modernization that resulted from longstanding history of colonialism. Such practices perpetuate and continue in maintaining unequal power relation through not only capital and labor mobilization but also through knowledge production and dissemination.

The birth of postcolonial feminist thinking stems from strong criticism towards the hegemonic view of western feminists that impose its 'narrow' perspective in understanding complex dimension of power relation that intertwine with race, culture, socio-economic class, and religion under particular postcolonial experiences. Postcolonial feminists radically challenge the First World feminist's assumption on monolithic representation of Third World women as singular entity, thus undermine the distinct experiences of their oppression, injustice, and inequality that reproduce through colonialism and neocolonialism. Mohanty (1988) problematizes this singular representation of the Third World women as 'average Third World women' that epitomized the character of the Third World nation. Such characters resulted in Third World women as ignorant, poor, uneducated, traditionally oppressed, domesticated and family oriented, victimized, and so on. The creation of Third World women as powerless victims of male subordination has established the need for Western Feminist development expert to intervene the lives of women in the South. She wrote, '*the assumption of women as an already constituted, coherent group with identical interest and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location or contradiction, implies a notion of gender or sexual differences that can be applied universally and cross culturally ...*' (Mohanty, 1984: 337). This homogenized

conceptualization of Third World women, as produced through the First World philosophical epistemology, has proposed globally agreed notion of “gender” and “sisterhood”, which many postcolonial feminists reject. Oyewumi (1997) adds that these two concepts are grounded in Anglo-European centric interpretation, which recognizes only Western feminist history that stem from western model of nuclear family structure. Through such hegemonic western feminist discourse, concepts and ideas are universalized through occidental parameter, where traditional cultural or religious practices are seen as backward, uncivilized, and oppressive. For that reason, Parpart (1995) criticizes that dominant WID approach has contributed in legitimizing the development establishment by “*constructing Third World women’s problem as technical problems requiring a technical (usually Northern) answer*” (p. 229).

Indonesia has experienced a state of paralysis in critical feminist movement during the New Order era. Despite Indonesia has acknowledged Kartini as its native feminist figure; the spirit of feminism has vanished along with the suspension of Gerwani (*Gerakan Wanita Indonesia* – Indonesia’s Women Movement) aftermath the 1965’s incident. Since then, Indonesian women have been promoted as responsible mother and dutiful wives, which reflect patriarchal conception about women that sponsored by the state ideology. In that translation, women’s nature evolves around what has been conceptualized as *kodrat wanita* or God’s will about women nature that claim women’s gender role was determined by their reproductive capacity (Robinson, 2009) and its extension to care. Wieringa (1985) writes that homogenization of women’s identity and conception then reflected as official paradigm of women, namely *Panca Darma Wanita* (five basic obligation of women). According to these principles, women’s roles are determined by the following order: as a wife for her husband’s, as nation’s procreator, as a mother and an educator for her children, a housekeeper, and as Indonesian citizen. Based on such predetermined roles, Suryakusuma (1996) termed this construction as ‘*State-Ibuism*’ – based on the word *Ibu*, which means mother – to illustrate how Indonesia’s formal gender ideology, especially during the New Order regime, has constructed the state of being women. In the ‘*State-Ibuism*’ ideology, the ideal motherhood makes clear limits of women’s identity and depoliticized them only as wife and mother, in which confined them into domestic sphere that contrasted with men’s role as head of household and breadwinner.

'*State-Ibuism*' paradigm is responsible for constructing a unified hegemonic and dominant identity of women that centered in domestic sphere of '*ibu*'. The women who perform biological, social, and cultural duties within their biological family also carry out their task for the national family in controlled and depoliticized environment. *Ibu* as both mother and wife becomes a static and homogenous female identity unified across ethnic, religion, and socio-economic categories. Suryakusuma (2011) also explains that such rigid ideology for Indonesian women in domestic sphere is extremely problematic, subordinating and marginalizing women, including depoliticizing women's movement (Marcoes, 2002; Robinson and Bessel, 2002). Blackburn (1999) argues that under the New Order, women were defined in particular ways as citizens with gendered responsibilities in which determined by national developmentalist projects. Such gendered roles only described as 'normal' as long as they met the hybrid criteria determined based on Javanese *priyayi* (upper class) and western model of bourgeois nuclear family (Blackburn, 2004). The normality on women's roles then imposed to ordinary women that were expected to fulfill their duties as good citizen by participating in state-sponsored organization, namely *Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga*⁹⁴ (PKK) (Suryakusuma, 2011). In this framework, the notion of 'responsible mother' also includes reducing and controlling their offspring through what it called as *Kelurga Berencana* (KB) that is a family planning campaign promoted by the state. Through PKK as its main vehicle, the messages of KB were disseminated from the national level down to the smallest unit of community or neighborhood. Blackburn (1999) also writes that during this time, women were directed towards various organizations intended to help them mastering their domestic tasks, such as: good companion for their husband, educators of children, supplementary income earners, and housekeeper including elderly care.

Suryakusuma's conception of '*state-ibuism*' stems from a careful synthesis of two earlier notions, namely housewifization (Mies, 1986) and *ibuism* (Djajadiningrat, 1997). The concept of housewifization was introduced in "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale" which described as "*A process by*

⁹⁴ PKK has undergone various name change within its historical trajectory. In 1962, it stood for *Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* (Family Welfare Education). In 1972, it became *Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* (Family Welfare Guidance). From 2000 until now, it stands for *Pemberdayaan dan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* (Empowerment and Family Welfare)

which women are socially defined as housewives dependent for their sustenance on the income of their husband, irrespective of whether they are de facto housewife or not. The social definition of housewives is the social definition of men as breadwinners, irrespective of their actual contribution to their families.” (p.180). This explains how women are socially constructed as dependent to their husband’s income for sustenance in which they are not considered as wage earner for the household thus made them as non-productive in the society. On the same token, as a housewife, women provide free domestic labor, which viewed as isolated and lacking of adequate political and economic power. Mies continues that, *“housework is essential to the accumulation process and that housewifization means the ‘externalization’ of cost which would be otherwise covered by capitalist”* (p. 110) and for that, women as housewife is defined as person who spends most of her life and social activities around the house, thus defined as domestic.

In the context of Indonesia, Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis (1997) coined the term *‘ibuism’* in relation to thinking of femininity and how women are constructed in Indonesian society. She describes *ibuism* as *“an ideology which sanction any action provided it is take by the mother of the family, a group, a class, company, or the state without demanding any power or prestige in return.”* (p. 44) which derives from Javanese value and cultural historical mode of womanhood in Indonesia. In this model, the ideal notion of Indonesian women is determined based on their fulfillment as mother of her children that also responsible in non-wage domestic work. Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis notes that as Indonesia is a class society in which status symbol are important, therefore women as *ibu* are not only demanded to subsidize household income, but also are expected to maintain the *priyayi* (Javanese elite bourgeois) class status and symbol. Sullivan (1991) adds that in Javanese society, in which relation between men and women also children are traditionally regulated by degree of respect and politeness, women play extremely crucial role in dealing with household management also nurturing and socializing the children. They bear the responsibility of physical and emotional needs of family members, while men bear the responsibility as protector, providers, heads and representatives of the household (p. 86). She further writes, *“the segregation of roles and spheres of work and influence by sex is not seen as a means by which men gain access to, and monopolize power in, formal structure and processes. Rather it is acknowledged as a rational way to organize*

society according to the 'natural' order of things in the process of human reproduction" (p.74).

Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis (1997) pairs *ibuism* with the process of *priyayization* elite class within the Javanese society. In her work, such processes is fundamental in explaining the process of social transformation and the application of traditional values to support, national development, modernization, and control of power in New Order regime (1996, 2011). Because of *ibu's* compounded roles, Indonesian women become more than just mother for their children, but also procreator of Indonesian society who are tasked to build new nation state. As Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis says that, "*The honor they could gain was that of being a good Ibu. Power and prestige remain in the privilege of men*" (1997: 43).

Based on the above mentioned two key concepts, wifization and *ibuism*, Suryakusuma (2011) connects domestication of women and the political construction of *authentic* Indonesian women as defined by the New Order government. She writes, "*State-ibuism defines women as appendages and companion to their husband, as procreator of the nation, as mothers and educators of children, as housekeepers, and as a member of Indonesian society.*" (p.48) She argues that Indonesian government perceives and values women not as subject of social activity, but instead as the object of national development vehicle to fulfill domestic role, including their reproductive role, in the name of *kodrat* as their natural destiny, as mother and wife. In operationalizing the ideology of 'state-*ibuism*', Suryakusuma (2011) mentions, "*there is the propagation of the nuclear family norm, the segregation of women into gender specific programs, as well as increasingly middle-class image of women in media. There is the state creation of compulsory wives organization which mirror the hierarchy of the husbands, reflecting the notion that women are defined in their capacity for serving their husband, their family and the state*" (p. 50). She also suspects that the degree of attendance of the wives in such organization was made as indicator to secure the husband's position. This fosters state's patriarchal power structure in combination with class inequality, making these women organization as the appendix of the bureaucratic structures. Through such organizations, ideology of women's domestication was disseminated in top-down mode in which makes women's role is designed to increase the welfare of the family and eventually the nation state.

Despite the Indonesia's New Order regime was ended more than two decades ago, but *state-ibuisism* as Indonesia's formal gender ideology was too difficult to remove and remained deeply penetrated into the way in which the state formalizes its policy. By subjectifying women into particular kind of mother and wife based on biological elements, this 'essential nature' responsabilizes women to have capacity to bring their family to better life by preparing their children to be good citizen in the future, which have been promoted as part of important foundation of Indonesia's development. This is also one of the reasons why housewife is called 'motor of development', not only by the New Order government, but also maintained by current government as stipulated in the Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000 about gender mainstreaming in development. Since Indonesia's political reform in 1998 which marked the fall of the New Order authoritarian regime, the language of "*pemberdayaan perempuan*" as the official translation of "women's empowerment" became an increasingly appealing terminology, in addition to the term "gender" as a less intimidating concept, which was marked by the establishment of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment, replacing its predecessor, The State Ministry of Women's Affairs. Despite such efforts, Indonesia's bureaucratically designed five-year national development plan (*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional/ RPJMN*) deploys a homogenic construction of "women" in state-sponsored empowerment programs, framed within the broader "gender mainstreaming" agenda. This process is stipulated in Law No. 17/2007 that mandates all national and local government bodies to consider "gender" in development planning, budgeting and implementation, to achieve results aiming for "gender equality". Therefore, what was previously conceptualized as "*pemberdayaan perempuan*" ("women's empowerment") was replaced by gender equity and equality which makes "*pengarusutamaan jender*" — the official translation of "gender mainstreaming" — the overarching policy framework, explicitly stated in every national development plan as the key vehicle to "reduce gaps between Indonesian male and female population in accessing and obtaining benefits from development, as well as improving participation and controlling development process" (RPJMN 2014, p. 10). Subsequently, this "gender mainstreaming" remains as important in RPJMN 2015–2019 as a crucial mechanism to ensure the "improvement of life quality and women's role in development [...]" (p. 10) in order to be a "competitive nation" (p. 11). As a result, "gender

mainstreaming” strategy is stuffed with countless activities to promote women’s engagement in development that would empower them economically.

8.4. KOPERASI SIMPAN PINJAM “PELITA BENTENG RAYA”: INSTRUMENTALIZING CHINESE BENTENG WOMEN FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

One morning, in the beginning of June, the *Kelurahan* Kembangan office was empty. Despite not always crowded and full of people at regular working days; but in that year, it was the holy month of *Ramadan*. This made regular public service run a way slower. As predominantly populated by Islam believers, month of *Ramadan* is commonly understood and practiced as a slowing-down month, where almost all government and public offices close down their services earlier than regular months. Not only that, some private offices also let their workers leave earlier, giving them time to break the fasting with families. It is also seen that in many offices, both public and private, the workers are more relax and less busy than usual. Many of them enjoyed the slowing down period by chatting, maybe because the works are less than usual. Known as the holy month for the majority of Indonesia’s population, where people appear to be more “religious” than in the regular month, government institutions also private entities commonly take such opportunities to host internal or external activities with “religious attributes”, such as breakfasting events attached with religious sermon or *Qur’an* citing competition.

Despite many enjoy shorter working hours, which usually end by 3 or 4 p.m. at the latest; this also sometimes irritates others who has to rush and chase public services just before their early closing time. *Ramadan* in the area of Tangerang municipality is rather different from what I often experience in Jakarta. I sensed this as direct translation of mandating personal practices and individual religious obligation into the domain of state/public institution and the practice of bureaucracy. Since the mass swept decentralization in Indonesia in 1999, the Province of Banten – where Tangerang municipality is located administratively – has separated from its ‘parent’ province, West Java in which has contributed to intensified regional identity that laid on Islamism combined with Banten ethnic identity. Setyawati (2010) writes that stronger Islam identity which emerged since the political reform is very apparent in building local identity of Tangerang people

that described as *akhlaqul karimah*. The Islamic philosophy of *akhlaqul karimah* is formally articulated in Tangerang's slogan that represent the vision⁹⁵ of the municipality in which emphasis on the importance of practicing the true religious values, which implicitly refer to Islamic values. In addition to the adoption of Arabic words and the use of particular symbols that associated with Islamic identity, it is widely known that Tangerang Municipality is one of some conservative districts in Indonesia.

Strong Islamic identity that embedded in state institution and public administration are also very apparent in Tangerang City. Since its formal establishment in 2001, the city government constantly uses Arabic calligraphy scriptures that accompany government's formal message in many public spaces, like schools, hospitals, government buildings and main streets. Besides that, this city also known for its religious conservatism that materialized into a number of local regulations that accommodate its conservative identity which in turn discriminate certain population, especially the women and non-Islam population. Islamic-imbued local regulation such as prohibition of selling alcoholic beverages or other regulation that subjecting women to disciplinary act through regulation on prostitution have triggered many criticisms from human rights and women activists. Furthermore, the city's Islamic identity grew stronger, especially during the special month of *Ramadan* where majority Muslims practices fasting. During this month, the city mayor mandated all public servants in Tangerang City to do morning prayers including *Al-Qur'an* citing and religious sermon to replace the formal morning briefings. Such practice commenced from 8 a.m. until about 11 a.m. In addition, despite the non-Muslims are freed from such religious mandatory activities, oftentimes many Muslims civil servants are also disturbed by such 'involuntary' practice. Not only that, for the female civil servants who are Muslims, they are obligated to wear headscarf as part of the daily uniforms.

It was Tuesday morning, when the Chinese *Benteng* women usually gather to carry out '*buka kas*' which literally means disclosing the cooperative cashbook for the members. Ibu Herlina told me that the activity usually started at about 10 a.m. until around 16 p.m. or sometimes 17 p.m., depends on their cash transaction load.

⁹⁵ www.kotatangerang.go.id

The '*buka kas*' activity is a weekly event, every Tuesday except '*tanggal merah*'⁹⁶ or seasonal holiday, where the cooperative members can come to save their money or to request loan. Not only to facilitate saving and lending to members, this weekly event also used as an opportunity to share new updates and information about the cooperative's plan or just to gossip around. Other than that, some members also see this occasion as promising market for them to offer petty goods that they sell. It was almost 10 a.m. when I arrived at the *Kelurahan* office, with the expectation that I would meet someone from the cooperative that I can talk to. One temporary staff in the office said that almost all *Kelurahan* staffs were out, as they were obligated to attend the religious briefing and sermon at the *Kecamatan*⁹⁷ office, about 300 m from the *Kelurahan*. I assumed that these women might still busy in their house before they arrive at the *Kelurahan*. Sometimes, fifteen to twenty minutes late is tolerable, especially for activities that involving housewives, as they still to finish their house chores before doing 'outside' activities.

I decided to wait, hoping to see Ibu San Nio or Ibu Pin Lan soon. They live not far from the *Kelurahan* office, maybe about 10 minutes walking. Together with Ibu Herlina, Ibu San Nio and Ibu Pin Lan are the *pengurus inti koperasi* – core committee of the cooperative – who are responsible to organize and to carry out this weekly event. Besides them, Mariah also part of this committee but since she just had baby, she took a break from the cooperative and promised to be back once the baby will be older. The *pengurus inti* are supported by other members who are more active than the other in participating in any of the activities. Unlike the *pengurus inti* that has power to decide in terms of financial matters of the cooperative, the supporting members do not have such power; the supporters are called *kader* (cadre) that have other type of responsibility in various thematic issues. Every Tuesday, Ibu Devi and Ibu Nuriah are the most active *kader* that help the *pengurus* to set up the logistic. Prior to welcoming the members, they should set up the walk-in registration table where arriving members should report their attendance and give their saving book with the money to be checked. Once they fill the registration book, members wait for the turn to save or to borrow money from the cooperative.

⁹⁶ Translated as red calendar day which means public holiday

⁹⁷ Sub-district level. *Kelurahan* administratively report state administration to *Kecamatan*

Establishing small cooperative, especially the saving and lending one like this, is a common approach among development projects who work with women, especially those from low economy class. Despite many complex variations on different modalities of saving and lending activities, the idea of including financial component into development projects have been very attractive and claimed to be successful in getting women to participate. In Indonesia, the term *arisan* is more popular in Java, as a form of social glue to maintain regular meetings for a particular time interval agreed by the participating members. Unlike *arisan* that has more social aspect, *kelompok simpan-pinjam* (saving and loan groups) as described by Williams and Johnston (1983) has more explicit economic aspects, which also considered as a more rational credit institution. This type of groups in general provides petty loan to the participating members at the agreed interest rates, which range from 3 to 5 percent. Thorbecke and Van Der Pluijm (1993) write about *usaha bersama* (literally means collaborative effort) that combines the model of *arisan* and *kelompok simpan pinjam* in a more institutional way, as it is written “Rooted in the *arisan* tradition, but influenced by the modern cooperative philosophy, is the *usaha Bersama*, a savings-and-loan cooperative or informal cooperative, a group formed to save money and/or to take a loan from a credit fund (often an NGO). Interest rates are usually 5 percent per month.” (p. 260). The *koperasi simpan pinjam* is then the most widely known and popular weapon to tap the so-called ‘unbankable’ society that majority reside in rural or semi-rural areas across Indonesia. Since this model has both economic and social components, the creation of *koperasi simpan pinjam* for women has been mushrooming and eventually become the most effective community organizing tool among the vast majority of development projects operated by NGOs. Since this model is seen as simple and relatively easy to follow without administrative complication, and most importantly there is no enforced pressure, the interest to join *koperasi simpan pinjam* is considerably high among women especially the housewives that do not earn their own income. This is the model that WRDC introduce to the Chinese *Benteng* women to establish. Despite in the beginning these women were not really understand what this *koperasi simpan pinjam* would do for their lives, they were quite ‘eager’ to find out because of the invitation from Pak Heri.

For the *pengurus koperasi* and the *kader*, every Tuesday is a weekly commitment. They are committed to dedicate at least six hours on that day for the

cooperative regular activity. As *pengurus koperasi* and *kader*, these women cannot come and go as they like; unlike the *anggota* (members) that are not obliged to come on time or even not to come as per their time availability. They are obligated to ensure the logistic preparation is well set-up and the attendance sheets are filled as WRDC taught them to do – just like in the preparatory cooperative training. In addition to that, they also have to count and to write down the money that the members deposit in the big cashbook. Then, they also should make sure that all transactions, both saving and lending, are balance. In the *Kelurahan* office, the cooperative is allowed to use one of the vacant rooms for their office. Thanks to the *Lurah* that gives the permission to put the cooperative's belongings there. Ibu San Nio told me that they were allowed to hold the weekly activity in the *Kelurahan* office since 2016. Previously, this activity was done in her house – obviously with the permission from Pak Heri, her husband whom WRDC approached for the first time when they did the needs assessment. According to Ibu San Nio, in the beginning the members gathered in her living room; but gradually they moved to her terrace to accommodate more people that came to deposit or to borrow money. She remembered when Ibu Tuti from WRDC told her and other *pengurus* to pack the cooperative's belongings and moved them to the *Kelurahan* office. Without asking why, the *pengurus* moved everything to the *Kelurahan*.

The *Kelurahan* office of Kembangan is a relatively new building. It is a three-floors building that is fully renovated. The building is located behind the *Kecamatan* office, which has made regular visit between government apparatus somehow more convenient. Next to that building is a government-own sport facility that can be utilized by the local communities. The *Kelurahan* office itself just underwent a 'beautification' a few months ago, which they painted the cemented front yard with an image of fishpond, complete with turtles and lotus flower. One of the staff told me that it was a great trick to have an illusion of beautiful ambiance. In addition to that, they also hang a few red Chinese-style lanterns on the foyer. Not only as decoration, the red lanterns apparently have what they symbolically claimed as form of 'tolerance' and 'recognizing diversity' due to many Chinese Benteng people live in that area. The first floor of the *Kelurahan* office is used to provide public service for the community, such as handling administrative matters like family card, ID card and birth certificate. Everyday there is always *Kelurahan* staffs that stand-by in the counter to take people's queries, despite there is also often the

case that they seemed relax and have nothing to do. The second floor is mainly used for office of the *lurah*, the staffs' desk, filing cabinets, and two vacant rooms. The top floor is a hall, where mostly they held activities that involve a lot of people such as meetings, workshops, or trainings.

Since the cooperative moved out from Ibu San Nio's house, regular Tuesday's activity is conducted in their new secretariat on the second floor of the *Kelurahan* office. It is a very small room and not everyone could fit inside, so they set up two sequential stations where the members should pass every time they come. Ibu Devi sits outside the room, in the hallway, guarding a table that she set up as the registration counter. With an A4-size book, she made an attendance list. Everyone that come have to hand in their saving books. In that book, all history of saving and lending of each member are recorded by the *pengurus*. Ibu Devi checked every saving book that came to her, while at the same time counting the money – match the written number with the physical money bills. Sometimes she shouted, a loud one, warned some women that come all together at the same time while they are talking endlessly. She was afraid that their noises would disturb the *Kelurahan's* staffs that work down the hallway. This worried her because the staffs might get disturbed and the cooperative would not allow to be there anymore.

At 11 am in the morning, the 2nd floor hallway of *kelurahan* office started to get cramped. There were a number of women came at about the same time. Some women brought their children along, either babies or toddler. They carried their baby with a piece of long cloth – called *cukin* – that wrapped across their bodies to make a small hammock where the baby can sit or curl and it is pretty common to carry a baby that way. The carrier basically only relies on the strength of their shoulders to carry child, while their hands are free to do other tasks. Sometimes I hear those babies screamed or cried, maybe because it was too hot and uncomfortable. Beside babies, some other women also brought their toddler as well. I reckoned that they were not in school yet, so their mothers brought them along. Some other women brought other stuffs, mostly items to sell to other fellow cooperative members. These women saw opportunities in this regular activity, with the hope that someone might buy what they sell. Ibu Pin Lan sold jewelries of gold imitation that she packaged in small plastic pocket. She offered those jewelries to whoever that approached her, even if only to greet her, including myself. One woman brought a big plastic bag full of home-dress to sell to other women and

another woman approached everyone with a make-up catalogue – a multilevel marketing membership-based business that she was part of. I also noticed that some other women brought snacks and children's toys to sell. All of them saw the same opportunity to sell their products and hoped to make small profit from that day.

Ibu Devi was the main gatekeeper during the regular saving-lending day. Every Tuesday she is the one that sits in the registration table. Because she is responsible to register the attendance book and check the money, she knows which members came that day and how much money do they bring. For those members that cannot come on Tuesday, they usually give their book together with the money to other members, which would go to the *Kelurahan* office for weekly cooperative activity. Not only that, one of the *kader* – Ibu Nuriah – also tasked by Ibu Herlina to collect the money from the members that unable to come to the *Kelurahan* office. Ibu Nuriah drives a motorcycle, from house to house, prioritizing members' that have debt to the cooperative. The way she functioned perhaps similar with debt collector, but in a nicer way. I went several times with her for that. She asked politely and nicely to the borrower, with the intention that the borrower would pay that week's installment. Ibu Nuriah is not always successful. When she does not make it, she just passes the information to Ibu Herlina. She knows that she is not the one to negotiate with the borrower. As she said, *"Let Ibu Herlina deals with this. Not me. I don't have the capacity to do it"*. After moving around for a few hours, visited members' houses, Ibu Nuriah returned to the *Kelurahan* office, sighed exhaustedly. She said there was not many people paid their loan today, only a few members.

Once the members pass Ibu Devi's table, they bring their saving book and the money to Ibu Pin Lan and Ibu San Nio that already wait inside the room. Because there is no furniture in the room, these women just sat on the floor that covered by cheap flexi carpet, which they bought in the market. Ibu Pin Lan is the one that take the piling saving/lending book. She then counted the amount of money as it written in the book. *"It is mandatory for members to save minimum of three thousand⁹⁸ rupiahs. If they want, they also can save as much as they want, voluntarily"* as Ibu Pin Lan explained to me. It seems that mandatory saving is not very much a problem for

⁹⁸ Approximately €0.20

the members, but the lending could be problematic. After Ibu Pin Lan did her task, it was now Ibu San Nio's turn to fill the big cashbook, in which would be reconciled by Ibu Herlina at the end of the day. What Ibu San Nio did actually exactly the same as Ibu Pin Lan – checked whether the physical money bill is the same as stated in the member's book, furthermore she transferred the information in the big book, provided by WRDC to register the cash, as part of the basic flows in running a small cooperative. Unlike Ibu Pin Lan that has experience working in a bank, Ibu San Nio is rather slow because she always afraid to make mistakes, which does not make her focus on small details anyway. Oftentimes she kept asks to Ibu Pin Lan or even Ibu Herlina, in which slowing down the chain of work. Once Ibu Herlina complained that Ibu San Nio mistakenly registered wrong number in the cashbook, which confused everybody. Ibu Herlina was even worried that money could be missing because of unbalance registration. She expressed, *“Ibu San Nio is rather clumsy, she often makes mistakes. Today she makes mistake again. She supposed to write 150,000 but instead she wrote 1,500,000. I was worried that we lost more than a million. But after crosscheck over and over again, I found where's the discrepancy. This kind of things drive me crazy”* For that reason, Ibu Herlina often felt that without her presence in Tuesday's regular activity, it would be chaotic and brings more problems for her. At the end of the day, she is the only one that can solve the problem.

Becoming the chairwoman of the cooperative, Ibu Herlina is the one to count on, which sometimes also dissatisfies her. Because she always feels responsible, Ibu Herlina always make sure that the cashbook calculation is balance and no discrepancy. She said that whenever she is not around during the final recapitulation, there is always something happens as she described as 'chaos'. For instance, when she had to skip Tuesday's activity to attend one local government event outside the city, she had no option than to delegate her tasks to Ibu Pin Lan and Ibu San Nio, which at the end she regretted. She illustrated how she had to redo the recapitulation for several times because of discrepancy on the calculation. For the past few months, Ibu Herlina was assisted by Shinta, Ibu Nuriah's the daughter-in-law, to administer the cooperative data with a laptop. Previously it was Mariah's position, because she was the one that able to use computer. Since Mariah stopped the cooperative, Ibu Tuti proposed to recruit Shinta to help Ibu Herlina. According to Shinta, she was not part of the *pengurus koperasi* nor *kader*,

but she was hired by the WRDC to assist the cooperative. *“The salary is not a lot, only IDR 300,000⁹⁹. Before, I was not interested to participate in the cooperative, but my mother-in-law always asked me to join. Maybe because she saw I do not have activity, just stay in the house and do nothing. But after I joined, I quite like it actually,”* as Shinta mentioned to me one time.

As the cooperative has been operating for more than three years, Ibu Herlina had hoped that it does not solely rely on her anymore. Actually, she had lost hope for the current *pengurus koperasi* as she illustrated that in every activity requires her presence. She seems a bit frustrated that she just could not split the tasks. Sometimes, jokingly, she said that if she could be cloned so she can attend all activities that happened at the same time. On separate occasion, other *pengurus koperasi* also said that they are very hesitant and feel not brave enough, unlike Ibu Herlina. They just refused to attend government-hosted meeting if they have to go without Ibu Herlina or Ibu Tuti from WRDC. Like Ibu San Nio once says, *“I am afraid to speak. Not like Ibu Ketua¹⁰⁰. She is very good and knows how to talk to people. I can’t.”* For that reason, Ibu Herlina often delegated other invitations from local government offices to Shinta, whom she recently trusts compare to the other *pengurus*. Shinta’s new involvement in the cooperative to some extent has reduce Ibu Herlina’s burden of her overwhelming tasks that have been expanding. Recently she has been appointed by the *Lurah* as the leader for community-based health post (*posyandu*) in her neighborhood, and she is responsible for implementation of monthly routine check-ups for pregnant mothers and below five-years old children. And for that reason, she really hopes if other *pengurus* and *kader* could be more proactive and capable in running the cooperative without her regular presence.

On that day, one couple came to their regular meeting. Ibu Devi was the one that recommended them to come to the cooperative. This couple wanted to borrow money in order to expand their barbershop business. The man looked really desperate, it seemed that he really needed the loan badly. I remembered what Ibu Herlina told me the other day about loaning mechanism in the cooperative. Despite

⁹⁹ Approximately €20

¹⁰⁰ *Ketua* means chairman/chairwoman. Most *pengurus koperasi* called Ibu Herlina by *Ibu Ketua* to show hierarchical respect

she told me at that time, the total asset of the cooperative has reached to more than IDR 650 million (equal to approximately USD 43,000), she said that it was all circulated among the cooperative members. She once mentioned that someone would be able to borrow money after three months of being members of the cooperative. She also emphasized that there is a maximum amount that they can borrow, which is ten times of the volume of their saving. Further she admitted that this formula was calculated and determined by the WRDC that helped them during the initial establishment of the cooperative. Ibu Herlina was hesitated to loan them money, despite Ibu Devi recommended that she knew that couple. I saw the women that wanted to borrow the money pleaded to Ibu Herlina, while her husband was waiting outside that small room. Ibu Herlina insisted that she could not guarantee that she can approve the loan. Not only because the wife just applied for new membership in order to request loan, in which Ibu Herlina might breach the rule and regulation of the cooperative; but Ibu Herlina was also not sure whether she had enough cash in hand to give the loan. She then told the lady that she already made discretionary exception so they could propose for loan at that time, because according to the cooperative rules new member should wait at least for three months. Ibu Herlina also mentioned that there were also other members that want to loan and she asked them to wait until afternoon; probably there would be some cash available for them to borrow. Despite Ibu San Nio and Ibu Pin Lan have right to say something, they preferred not to say a word. According to their cooperative regulation, the other key *pengurus* also have the right to give opinion and judgment whether the cooperative should or should not give loan to members. They kept themselves busy with their task and Ibu Herlina also did not attempt to ask the opinion of the other fellow committee. *“At the end of the day, despite we give opinion, its Ibu Herlina’s decision because she is the chairwoman of this cooperative”*, said Ibu Pin Lan on different occasion when I followed up with her. Ibu Pin Lan thinks that Ibu Herlina knows the best for the cooperative because she is the *ketua*, so Ibu Pin Lan did not really question nor criticize Ibu Herlina’s decisions.

Outside the room, the husband seemed nervous and I can see his anxiety through his shaking legs while he constantly changed his seating positions. That man said that it was almost *Lebaran* holiday, which many people will basically inactive due to holiday mood, and he needed to pay advance rent for the new barbershop that would be ready after *Lebaran* holiday. They really needed the

money that day otherwise they would lose the place. Suddenly the *Lurah* called Ibu Herlina to his office, leaving the lady and her husband waited longer. Maybe around ten minutes she was in the office of Pak *Lurah*, Ibu Herlina returned to her colleagues. She asked Shinta to prepare administrative form for loan and a stamp of six thousand rupiah for her. With curiosity, Ibu San Nio asked Ibu Herlina whether finally she decided to give five million loans to the couple that has been waiting for her decision. Unexpectedly, Ibu Herlina responded that Pak *Lurah* requested her to lend one million to a facilitator of government program in order to pay for *Lebaran* allowance. Unlike previously, now Ibu San Nio tried to confront Ibu Herlina's decision about the loan requested by Pak *Lurah*. Ibu San Nio did not agree if Ibu Herlina decided to give the loan to the facilitator of government program. She warned Ibu Herlina that whoever wants to borrow from the cooperative should be member first. Despite the *Lurah* said that he would be responsible of the loan, but Ibu San Nio insisted that such things were not accordance with the cooperative rules. Unfortunately, despite Ibu San Nio's attempt to warn Ibu Herlina, it did not seem to work; Ibu Herlina still insist using her prerogative right as *ketua* to give the loan to Pak *Lurah*. Conversely, Ibu Herlina instead preached the other *pengurus* about the cooperative's relationship with *Kelurahan*. She kept saying to both Ibu San Nio and Ibu Pin Lan that it was important to be good to *Lurah*, just because of him the cooperative can also use the room to host activities. At the same time, the couple that was previously waiting for Ibu Herlina finally decided to leave the office, as they preferred to look for loan somewhere else.

It would have been different a few years ago, before the *koperasi simpan pinjam* was established during the social inclusion project. According to Ibu Tuti, it was indeed not easy to encourage the Chinese *Benteng* women of Kampung Wetan to participate in "Peduli Program" that she and her organization implemented, "They were still trauma because of the eviction in 2010. They became so close-off to outsiders." Despite of such barrier, Ibu Tuti has been so proud because these women have become so far like this. Like a proud big sister that has been successful in sending off the little sister to a pathway to success, Ibu Tuti said that these Chinese *Benteng* women of *Kampung Wetan* are now extremely popular, not only within their own neighborhood, but also by the external parties like municipal government agencies, people from other *kelurahan* in Tangerang municipality, other NGOs and

community members that are part of the same “*Peduli Program*”, and national government agency. Ibu Tuti illustrated that these women are extremely busy attending meetings with government talking about various issues, such as education, health, civic registration, food security, and many more. Consequently, these constant meetings with the government have also increase people’s perception about the changes that these women experience since they join the cooperative.

WRDC is not the only NGO that employs microfinance approach as community organizing tools. Learning from their longstanding experience in organizing women of the urban poor, they find that such approach is efficient to incentivize the facilitated communities to engage in non-economic activities through financial literacy. In every community that they work with, creating *koperasi simpan pinjam* is always the way to connect people together in a socio-economic platform. For NGOs like WRDC that rely on microfinance approach as community organizing tool, it rarely occurs to them to question whether such approach does bring meaningful impacts on changing gender relation. To understand how microfinance is understood as effective instrument in targeting underprivileged women, it is useful to adopt what Mayoux (2001) had argued about this approach. In the setting of *koperasi simpan pinjam* of the Chinese *Benteng* women, we can see that this organization model stands in between two paradigms what Mayoux calls as financial self-sustainability and poverty alleviation. Despite WRDC claimed as organization that roots its vision from women empowerment struggle, but its project activities are far detached from the feminist language that described by Mayoux as feminist empowerment paradigm.

It is best to explain that the existence of *koperasi simpan pinjam* of the Chinese *Benteng* women is designed to solve a problem of lack women’s access to financing in which contributed in worsening their poverty. Bateman and Chang (2012) once mention that how microfinance works is inseparable from neoliberal agenda that promotes market-based logic to promote women’s access to micro-financial service. As a straightforward logic, women’s (economic) empowerment will be achieved by increasing women’s access to microfinance, without other parallel interventions in macro-economic growth agenda. Mayoux then added that tapping women as intervention target is a perfect fit to operationalize microfinance approach from the efficiency perspective. Here, women’s domestic characters as

compliant and discipline – branded with the image of family’s financial manager – are crucial in maintaining neoliberal ideal of efficiency. Hence in that respect, women are seen as more discipline in repaying back the loan than men and their significant contribution to macroeconomic growth. In this view, Mayoux (2001) mentions that women empowerment is purely economical in which determined based on women’s individual capacity to self-reliance that measured by their improved income, assets, savings, borrowing capacity and income generating activities as found by Sharma’s (2001) research.

The narrative about *Mak Hwa Ing* as illustrated in the beginning of this chapter shows how dominant representation about Chinese *Benteng* women that are economically disadvantaged based on their ethnic background have contributed in worsening their poverty. Thus, the strategy to establish *koperasi simpan pinjam* as women’s platform came into the picture when WRDC found that the Chinese *Benteng* women were dormant and did not take part in any government-sponsored organization like PKK, *Karang Taruna* (local youth group), or *grup posyandu* (community health post service). The strategy of community development through empowering the Chinese *Benteng* women is found to be executable through the establishment of *koperasi simpan pinjam* that is seen as capable to address their economically disadvantage situation. This strategy is what Mayoux (2001) describes in her poverty alleviation paradigm of microfinance that stem from interventionist perspective and community development approach. WRDC, like many other NGOs that employ similar strategy, presumes that microfinance activity is part of wider poverty alleviation intervention to increase the wellbeing of the poor and vulnerable, like the Chinese *Benteng* people. Through creating *koperasi simpan pinjam*, as WRDC envisioned their intervention, it could build pathways to foster community development to achieve greater objective of poverty alleviation. Therefore, by working only with the women of the Chinese *Benteng* community, the *koperasi simpan pinjam* has bigger potential to bring positive changes not only for themselves as individuals but also for their family and ultimately community towards direction from “*Peduli Program*” to create social inclusion.

The importance of *koperasi simpan pinjam* in *Kampung Wetan*, Kelurahan Kembangan significantly increased, along with a number of women’s activities that they initiated. Beside the *Cokek* dance revitalization project, the *koperasi* also

initiated two business units, funded by the cooperative's income generated from their members that have been running well so far. First is the Cokek dance group that generates small profit from petty remuneration from their performance. Despite do not have regular performance, this dance group is frequently invited by the city government to perform in government-sponsored events. As mentioned earlier in chapter 5, in the beginning this dance group only consisted of eight women members of the cooperatives were trained to perform the *Cokek Sipatmo* dance. Despite continuous changes on team composition due to pregnancy of some members, followed by lack of committed time to actively participate in the dance group, the remaining members still committed as dancers. Mbak Indah, one of the dancers told me that unlike the beginning of the dance activity, they regularly practiced at least once a week to master the choreography. These days they rarely practice, despite they have easier access to the *Kelurahan* auditorium. Only when they were invited to dance at events – mostly the government-sponsored events, then they would practice a week beforehand. Recently, the dance group offers dance class to the school girls as extra school activities in cooperation with a few private schools nearby *Kampung Wetan*. In some occasion, the trained new dancers started to participate in some performance.

The other business unit is cake and bakery, where it runs by Ibu Netty – a close relative of Ibu Herlina. The cooperative decided to have cake and bakery right after these women received training from *Bogasari*, a well-known flour company, to make various cakes, cookies, and bread. In the beginning, Ibu Herlina and Ibu Netty accompanied by Ibu Tuti went to the market to shop all the equipment necessary to set up the cake and bakery business. They bought mixer, bread maker machine, baking sheet, also necessary ingredients to make cake and cookies to sell. Since Ibu Netty already has her own cake and bakery business, she is the one that responsible to ensure all production process, with the assumption that she has more experience than the other in running the business. The cake and bakery business took their first order in 2016 for Chinese New Year hampers. For that celebration, Ibu Herlina took the order from her relatives also from Pak Heri's organization, which often organized activities for Chinese Benteng people. That

month, the bakery business was extremely busy to prepare the *Lebaran*¹⁰¹ hampers. Most of their clients are the government bureaucrats whom Ibu Herlina has acquainted with in many meetings and workshops that she attended.

Picture 10 – Baking cookies



Ibu Herlina and Ibu Netty packed *nastar* cookie to fulfill the *Lebaran* orders from their customers

Despite her earlier complaints about unable to delegate the task to attend numerous invitations from the government, Ibu Herlina felt blessed of the opportunity to meet government bureaucrats whom later become her clients for the bakery business. In *Ramadhan* month, many home businesses that produce cakes, snacks, and cookies are mushrooming as many people send hampers of snacks, beverages and some assorted items to colleagues as gifts. Following the *Ramadhan* month, most Indonesians have two to three weeks holiday to celebrate *Lebaran* with family and relatives in their hometown. During the *Lebaran* season, most Muslim Indonesians usually visit the houses of their relatives, where cookies and snacks are commonly served during the visitation. Together with Ibu Netty,

¹⁰¹ Ied festival – Most Indonesians refer *Lebaran* as the first one or two weeks of *Syawal* month, the following month after a whole month of fasting in *Ramadhan*. *Lebaran* is commonly celebrate not only religiously, but also traditionally where Indonesians are having break from their daily activities and return to their hometown to visit families and relatives.

Ibu Herlina organized cookie-baking activities for the cooperative members to complete the order. She usually sets the date and informs the other members via Whatsapp group. Ibu Herlina considers any cooperative related activities are kind of social work, where she does not earn any money from such activities. According to the cooperative regulation set by WRDC, those members who come and help in baking will receive one thousand rupiah (approximately € 6c) per hour. Those that help selling the cookies get bigger share, depends on how many do they sell. Ibu Herlina stresses, *“Here, members have to be diligent. The more diligent, the more money they will get. We don’t force them to participate. It’s up to them. Like Ibu San Nio and Ibu Pin Lan, they don’t want to participate. That’s fine too,”* as she explains how the bakery business works. For the past week, Ibu Herlina was busy taking order from the district health office and also went go back and forth to the printing shops to make stickers for the packaging of those cookies. Almost every noon until evening, some women gathered at Ibu Netty’s house to complete the order.

Because the saving/lending cooperative was created as a common platform for Chinese *Benteng* women to engage in activities beside their daily house chores, these two activities, i.e. baking and dancing are the cooperative’s main business unit. With a simple business model, these women were guided to generate small profit to be shared to the members. According to Ibu Tuti and Ibu Herlina, members are free to decide if they want to participate in the business activities. Despite such activities are voluntary in nature, but Ibu Netty often complaint about the idea of ‘social activity’ for the cooperative’s business unit. In a separate talk, she told me that she was often irritated when other cooperative members did not do the work well. As she said that many of these women came and excited to participate in making cookies, but it was only in the beginning of the activities. For her, they were helpful, using their manual labor, in preparing the dough, molding the cookies, baking and packing. But later on, she admitted that there were less and less people coming to help. Some members came just for dropping by and checking out what was happening. Some even brought their children along, which also led to some chaotic incidents in the kitchen. Lastly Ibu Netty said, *“Even though this is social work for the cooperative, but for me this is also work because we have business to run. We are selling food, so it has to be clean. I don’t like dirty things in the kitchen. Some women came here just for chat and did not help with the work. At the end, they wanted to get paid. Of course not!”* which showed her dissatisfaction towards the way in which the

cooperative members work. She then described them as '*susah diatur*' which means 'impossible to control'.

As previously argued by the WRDC that women empowerment activities were found to be a foreign discourse in the *kampung* where Chinese *Benteng* people lives. By building up their own understanding about what the Chinese *Benteng* people undergo on daily basis, WRDC focuses their activities specifically to the women that are seen as the pillar of the family. The activities of *Cokek* dance and cake baking activities have been found as an attractive entry point for the Chinese *Benteng* women to engage in the recently formed saving/lending cooperative. Despite joining cooperative was initially seen a strange idea for these women, as they found it impossible to save money while they remained struggling with their economic misery, but such activities gradually drive their interest to participate in the cooperative. Through "*Peduli Program*" that was facilitated by WRDC as the implementing agent, these Chinese *Benteng* women showed great excitement and sense of proud of being part of this project. The establishment of saving/lending cooperative as community organizing strategy has underlined a way in which the Chinese *Benteng* women has been perceived to fully understand and embrace the notion of social inclusion that the project tries to fulfil.

The above narrative shows how *koperasi simpan pinjam* of the Chinese *Benteng* women is skillfully utilized by WRDC to educate them how to organize themselves, in which also instrumentalized to claim the success in realizing social inclusion in *Kelurahan Kembangan*, in *kampung Wetan* where these women live. At the end of the project, WRDC as the implementer obviously expects that these women would be responsible in administering the cooperative as a real organization that could 'help' its members to solve their own problems. In less than three years since the project inception, WRDC has started to share the narrative of empowered women in a socially inclusive environment in such a way that lead to various satisfying changes. Such changes are directed to show how the benevolent intervention have affected particular changes in the behavior of Chinese *Benteng* women which led to new perception towards them. These changes are extremely necessary to ensure that the social inclusion project is seen as successful in transforming the *problematic* others, namely the Chinese *Benteng* people as represented by the women, into active member of the community and good citizen as the project envisioned. In addition, to create particular subject that favorable towards the development

agenda, intervention project like “*Peduli*” was designed to maintain the concept of *ibuisism* as the formal gender ideology that emphasis on women’s ideal role as primarily as mother and wife within their domestic locus and secondarily as active and empowered citizen of the state in their public sphere. Furthermore, the creation of women’s multiple roles in both domestic and public sphere is elaborated in the following section.

8.5. SUBJECTIFICATION OF CHINESE *BENTENG* WOMEN: RESPONSIBLE MOTHER AND DUTIFUL WIFE

The story of Ibu San Nio depicts the ideal representation of a woman who has the qualities of being ‘good woman’ according to the blueprint of what the society idealizes. Such qualities entail two important aspects, namely as responsible mother for her children and dutiful wife for the husband. My interaction with Ibu San Nio has started from the very beginning, a year before I conducted the fieldwork in 2018. I was introduced to her by Ibu Tuti that took me to her house. Initially Ibu Tuti intended to bring me to Pak Heri, Ibu San Nio’s husband, to talk about the Chinese *Benteng* people’s protest against the government’s eviction plan. As I came often to Ibu San Nio’s house during my fieldwork, she started to open up about her story and how she involved in the saving/lending cooperative project. Despite I considered myself as non-local – not originated from Tangerang area – but Ibu San Nio considers me as ‘*sama sama orang Cina*’ (fellow Chinese Indonesian) in which made her more comfortable to talk about issues that only Chinese Indonesian can understand or experience.

Ibu San Nio is in her early fifties and has been married to Pak Heri for more than twenty years. They have three children – two sons and a daughter. Her two sons are in the university and her daughter just starts her first year of high school. For the past twenty something years, she continues focus to be a good mother for her three children and a compliant wife for her husband. She describes herself as just a regular housewife, emphasizing her main domestic responsibility to take care of the orderly of her house as well as the upbringing of her three children. As housewife, she thinks that it is better not to be nosy about issues that are not her ‘cup of tea’, especially the income that her husband brings home. In a joking way, she identifies herself as a ‘kitchen bug’, as she likes to stay in the kitchen doing her

main duties – cooking, washing up the dishes, washing the clothes, and ironing – of which she does them all in the kitchen area. She likes it that way, doing her things in the kitchen and making sure the house is clean. She oftentimes compares herself with her husband that she describes as ‘sociable person’ and constantly receive guests in their house. For her, she likes to be in the kitchen where she can do many things, as her late mother taught her to do.

Ibu San Nio is a native to the area of *Kampung Wetan*, where she lives now with her family. She told me that she is *authentic* and *original* Chinese *Benteng* people, as all her ancestors were also from that area. Although she is unable to identify her ancestral family tree – just like many Chinese Indonesians – but she believes that blending between Chinese and indigenous native blood has made her authentic Chinese *Benteng* people. On the contrary, her husband, is not from there. Pak Heri with his parents moved to *Kampung Wetan* more than two decades ago to set up a factory since the land price was very cheap. Both of Ibu San Nio’s parents were also born in that *kampung*. Ibu San Nio grew up only with her mother, since her father passed away when she was small. For that reason, she did not finish her primary school and her family was too poor to pay for school fees. Since she was a little girl, her mother always taught her to be a good woman, which means being obedient to her future husband and to be responsible for the upbringing of her children. She said, despite the mother did not specifically teach her to cook, but Ibu San Nio always helped her mother doing the house chores as well as cooking. From a simple dish like stir-fried vegetables to a complicated dish that most Chinese *Benteng* people have to prepare for offerings during the traditional ceremonies. She always remembers her mother’s advice about being a good woman that specifically translated as a good wife for her husband and good mother for her children. Other words of her mother that she remembers are ‘*nenangga*’¹⁰², which her mother forbade her to do. Ibu San Nio said, rather than gossiping and chatting without purpose, she better stays at home and do her housework, avoiding bad influence.

¹⁰² ‘*Nenangga*’ comes from the word ‘*tetangga*’ means neighbour. For those that speak Sundanese or Betawian, ‘*nenangga*’ is understood as an activity to visit neighbour and chat. Traditionally, the activity of ‘*nenangga*’ usually found among women in the community, where they are exchanging information and updates about what happened in the community. In the contemporary context, the idea of ‘*nenangga*’ often understood negatively and associated with gossiping among women.

Ibu San Nio never lives outside this *kampung*; she even has no idea how does it feels to live elsewhere. Even when there was an eviction plan in 2010, when the city government tried to kick out those who lived in that area without any compensation or alternative housing arrangement. It was her husband that led the community protest to reject the government plan, until it successfully made a headline in national newspapers and TV stations. As a good wife, Ibu San Nio basically just being a 'supporter' to her husband and chose to run her household as usual. She admitted that once it was upsetting because her husband was too busy with the protest plan which means no income at all. She said, "*At that time, we didn't have much money because my husband did not work. He was busy organizing protest and went to national legislative council. No time to sell food anymore, as he always did. We almost got divorce because of that.*" She knows that her husband is very active in their community and also has high social empathy to the surrounding neighbors. Despite so, she remained not interested to involve too much in social activities. Sometimes, her husband asked if she wanted to go together with him in a social charity work; but at that time, she refused, as she was still uninterested. For her, house is a place where she can relax and watch TV soap operas.

Ibu San Nio's house is not difficult to reach. Almost every local resident knows where she lives just by citing her husband's name, Pak Heri "*Ketua RT*" who remains well known until now. At that time, their house was considered as the main basecamp, where community members gather for the protest preparation. Her house is quite accessible and can be reached from the two main streets in that area. It is located in a low-density area, where majority filled with well-established house and yards. Ibu San Nio's house is not lavish, but I can see that her house is well maintained and it is definitely newer in comparison with her aunt's house, next to it. Her house is unlike the traditional Chinese *Benteng* house (see Chapter 2), instead it looks modern with glassed window, concrete painted wall, shiny earthen roof tile, and polished ceramic floor. On the wall, next to the house number, there is a signage written '*Ketua RT*', indicating a certain social position in the neighborhood. Common practice in the neighborhood level, the *Ketua RT* is usually the one that community trusts to be the mediator between the people and the state. It is often the case that *Ketua RT* is the one that represent the people in his/her neighborhood whenever there is meeting. Ibu San Nio's house had a spacious terrace where many people in the neighborhood usually hang out. Ibu San Nio said

that the house is quite new, her family moved there less than 10 years ago. Previously, she lived just next door, less than 10 m from her current one – two houses away. She said her uncle shared a proportion of family land to her husband, where they have their house now. According to Ibu San Nio, her stepbrother now lives there.

Ibu San Nio's house shares a front yard with her aunt's house. Aftermath the 2010 eviction threat, her husband decided to put iron gate that also function for barricades just in case of similar incident might happen. The yard is quite spacious – covered with pavement stones – which she claimed that her husband paid for the construction. Not far from her house, there are a number of small and narrow alleys that connect the neighborhood's roads into more sparse older settlements where inhabitants from weaker economy live. According to some people that live around that neighborhood, that area is 'illegal' settlement as the government called it. This is because the land is registered as the state property under the local office for water and is not belong to the settlers, despite they have been living there for a few generations. Some families even claimed that they have bought a piece of land there, like Ibu Nuriah who moved to Kampung Sewan about 15 years ago. This illegal settlement then led to eviction plan, where majority of the settlers that live there unable to show the legal proof of land certificate and were accused of living illegally in state's property.

Ibu San Nio's husband's reputation as a leader of the 2010 community protest was well spread, especially after it made national headlines. Despite being well known, Ibu San Nio said that it does not make any change to her life; they still live as usual, only temporarily free from government eviction plan. In 2015, as she recalled that two foreign women came to her house, looking for her husband. She was a bit agitated by the fact that these women wear *jilbab*, as she has bad experience with that type of women. For Ibu San Nio, women that wear *jilbab* are hypocrite, which she concluded from her own experience dealing with local bureaucrats that usually ask for money in return for administration service. For being ethnically Chinese, she has to pay extra fees – or people call it “smoothing fee” – when she processes papers otherwise the papers would be long delay. That is why she always ask her husband to deal with the government people and she did not bother to know about '*urusan pemerintah*' – government-related matters – in particular, having any relation with bureaucrats. She noticed that these two

women came every day to talk with her husband and they also brought gifts, like fruits, cakes, and many other things that she could not remember. Because she was disturbed by their visit, Ibu San Nio did not show any interest to know what was going on. She only heard from her husband that they came to give 'beneficial' activities for the Chinese Benteng women in that *kampung*. After a few weeks, she knew that those women are from WRDC, an organization that help urban poor community like them to set up a cooperative. At that time, she did not even bother to ask further why those women came to their *kampung* and what do they want.

One day, her husband told her to attend a gathering in her house, which she did not feel like to. Did not want to disappoint her husband, she dragged Ibu Herlina who apparently just passed by to her house to accompany her. She did not know what was the purpose of the meeting and especially she already had antipathy towards these women. Ibu San Nio said it was a very short meeting, *"They only explain what is a cooperative, what's the benefit to be member of cooperative. They said that it also can help women here to have useful activities, rather than doing nothing,"* as Ibu San Nio explain what she remembered about her first meeting with Ibu Tuti and her other colleague Ibu Winarti. In the beginning, Ibu San Nio said that she had no interest about the cooperative; but because of her husband's request, she felt hesitant to refuse. She continued that it was 25 women from the same neighborhood that join the meeting. Most of them related to her husband, especially those who participated in the 2010 eviction that Pak Heri led. Despite she thought that those women were as speechless as she was, but they were loyalist of her husband. In her word, *"They are indebted to my husband. Because he helped them defended their house, so the eviction plan is cancelled."* In the following week, they met again and should agree on what to name their cooperative. On the second meeting, they also elected the *pengurus koperasi*, which were responsible for the operation of the cooperative. According to Ibu San Nio, at that time nobody wanted to be chairwoman, because they were afraid and not confident enough; but Pak Heri just appointed some of these women to be *pengurus koperasi*. He was also the one that decided who to be chairwoman, secretary, and treasurer. Ibu San Nio then admitted, *"If not because of my husband, we don't have cooperative. At least my husband has contributed to this cooperative."* Somehow, she is grateful that her husband allows her to participate in the cooperative, as long as she puts household matters as her main priority.

The saving/lending cooperative is now very well established. Ibu San Nio even illustrated that because of this cooperative, her *kampung* becomes 'fragrant' and no longer negatively stigmatized. She mentioned that because of WRDC regular visits to her *kampung* and taught the women how to manage cooperative, she now has more experience in doing 'important' things and no longer a 'kitchen bug'. As one of the *pengurus koperasi*, Ibu San Nio is always included if there is any meeting with the government people or visitors that came to their *kampung*. Not only that, Ibu San Nio is also one of the *Cokek Sipatmo* dancers in the dance group that always perform in the welcoming ceremony. Due to such increasing activities, she admitted that she has met a lot of new people and doing new things that she would never think of previously. For her, these activities were fun to do and she is happy to do activities together with other women. However, throughout my interaction with her, she rarely cites any fundamental knowledge about gender inequalities or women rights that she learns so far. Instead, she kept saying "get to know more people" and "experience new things" when asked about what she benefits from this cooperative.

Despite her increasing activity outside the house, Ibu San Nio is glad that her husband fully supported her. Having said that, she still prioritizes her task in the house and taking care of the children. Even though her children are all grown-ups, Ibu San Nio feels obliged to ensure that her children's needs are well taken care off. She always makes sure that all her tasks in the house are done before she is going out for the cooperative, as she mentioned, "*If we have meeting with the government, I always finish my tasks first. Like washing and drying the clothes or cooking, so when my children and my husband get back, they have the food ready. For ironing, I can do it later in the afternoon when I finish the activities with the cooperative. It is good that the activities always finish before 5 p.m, so we still have time for taking care of our responsibilities for the family.*" Sometimes she also compared her situation with other women who still have small children. She pointed out her aunt's daughter-in-law who used to be very active in the cooperative and as dancer in the *cokek* dance group, but since she just had baby, she has to stop everything.

Story like Ibu San Nio's is not unique in the context of 'transforming' Chinese *Benteng* women through "Peduli Program". By employing WID approach in empowering women as a pathway to realize inclusion, WRDC postulates that the Chinese *Benteng* women should be economically empowered because they are seen

as vulnerable, have no valuable assets and no decision-making power in the family. For that reason, the *koperasi simpan pinjam* is initiated to provide access to finance – in terms of micro loan – for these women to set up home-based economic activity to supplement the household income. In many areas in Indonesia, especially those areas that attract development intervention, many NGOs have significantly contributed in operationalizing WID discourse that promotes economically empowered women through various income generating activities. Generally, through support from donor-funded projects, women – especially the poor ones – are intentionally targeted as beneficiaries of development projects.

WRDC is no different, which they explicitly mention that their works are driven by Boserup's writing, where economic activities are used as an effective entry point to solve social problems. Through small-scale economic activity that operated by *koperasi simpan pinjam*; WRDC postulates that Chinese *Benteng* women become poor not only because discrimination and exclusion that they face but also lack of access to financing from formal financial institutions like banks. Thus, the lack of access to financing argument is often used to justify WRDC's main strategy to design and eventually to implement all activities regardless variations of the beneficiary groups. This is the way in which WRDC develops the theory of change to insert women into development projects. Not only focusing on institution of the *koperasi simpan pinjam*, the NGO also teach their beneficiaries to create micro-scale home business so they can be economically productive without leaving their children and still be able to manage their chores duty. Food/snack production business is extremely popular among women that still have young children to take care of. In addition, other type of business activities that are popular is petty trading of daily items such as clothes, imitation jewelry, kitchen utensils, or children's toys.

Longstanding experience in facilitating urban poor women through empowerment technique has shaped WRDC as a skillful organization that understands the 'problem' of urban marginalized communities such as the Chinese *Benteng* people and what type of activities that suitable for them in order to solve their 'problem'. I mentioned in the previous chapter, the identified 'problem' of social exclusion of the 'problematic people' in this project context lies on the assumption of Chinese *Benteng* people inability to cultivate beneficial and meaningful relationship with various actors, including the government and broader society. Therefore, as a way to solve the 'problem', establishment of *koperasi*

simpam pinjam is advocated as 'social inclusion' medium to include the 'problematic people' in development. Thus, capitalizing on their experience in operating this institution as community organizing tool, WRDC's intervention approach underlines the logic of creating a common platform for 'inclusion', where the Chinese Benteng women would no longer feel excluded and would benefit from development. However, despite its claimed success in increasing the number of cooperative members as well as the size of the cooperative assets, I am interested to see how the cooperative as "social inclusion" tool operates on the 'problematic people' and in which way this information deploys technique of women empowerment to facilitate "social inclusion" that it promises.

Upon its establishment as "social inclusion" platform, the saving and lending cooperative has been applauded by a number of development projects. Ibu Tuti mentioned that throughout her years of experiences, facilitating urban poor women to involve in development project is not an easy task either. She admitted that she had to be extra careful that the proposed activities would not 'disturb' the women's daily tasks, especially childcare and house chores. Ibu Tuti and her colleagues are completely understood that encouraging women to participate in development projects also means obtaining permission from the husband to allow their wives to join the activities. As Ibu Tuti recalled her own experience when she approached the Chinese Benteng women for the first time, she cited, "*We cannot just approach these women. We had to speak with their husband and asked for their permission to let the wives to take part in the cooperative activities. Like in the beginning of the project, I always meet the husband first before taking these women to a meeting. I had to explain everything to the husbands, like where are we going to, with whom we meet, what are we going to talk about, what are the purpose... Everything!*" Since then, Ibu Tuti never forgets to remind these women that she is willing to request permission from their husband before attending the cooperative's activities. It is then important to note that if husbands' permission were not obtained, these women would unable to achieve what they are doing now. For the field worker like Ibu Tuti, husband's permission is an extremely important key to make sure that these women are free to do what the NGO proposed in this project. Within this project, obtaining husband's permission is seen as a proxy of women's success in negotiating with their husband, despite the power inequalities between men and women within the household remained unaddressed.

For NGO like WRDC that represent the vast majority of small-scale local NGOs in Indonesia, empowerment is merely seen as technical tool to solve 'problem' faced by a certain population. Despite there are some NGOs that adopt a more radical approach of empowerment, but the majority of NGOs like WRDC remain trapped in conventional model that framed within modernization framework which undermined its transformative element. Craig and Mayo (1995) have warned us that the 'bottom-up' strategies have been popularized in the context of poverty, polarization, and social exclusion (p. 3) in such a way that they become effective instrument in improving efficiency and cost effectiveness to enhance development delivery. For that reason, rather than claiming to change and to transform the Chinese Benteng women as the 'empowered women' that no longer excluded, the establishment of *koperasi simpan pinjam* simply instrumentalizes liberal view of empowerment that facilitates social inclusion as a mean to integrate them into the current 'undisturbed' system and structures (Baden, S.; Oxaal, 1997; Rowlands, 1997). This hegemonic model of women empowerment remains focus on economic aspect of individual project beneficiaries through activities held by the cooperative, just as the prescription given by the WID promoters that aim to integrate the excluded and marginalized women into realities shaped by the dominant socio-economic system without an attempt to challenge existing structures and gender relations.

In the light of the dominant WID paradigm that WRDC lies their work on, it can be said that this organization emphasizes more on pursuing what Mayoux (2000, 2001) describes as women's 'practical' gender interests, as opposed to the 'strategic' ones. In their way to pursue the 'practical' gender interest, WRDC focuses to achieve on what Blackburn (2004) has described as, "[...] *the requirement of women to fulfil their gender roles as determined in any particular place or time, without challenging the gender status quo. Thus, in order to be good wives and mothers according to prevailing gender ideology, women may consider they need better health facilities for infants, or better domestic science education in school*" (p. 14). Therefore, the qualities of being responsible mother and dutiful wife as the collective imagination idealized by both WRDC and the Chinese Benteng women, activities promoted by the *koperasi simpan pinjam* were included some one-day trainings that branded as 'critical education' and 'awareness building'. Heavy jargons imbued with fancy buzzwords that characterized development projects were materialized into

capacity improvement activities like trainings that titled “Who Am I?” and “Family’s Finance”.

Ibu Ratna is one the participants whom attended these trainings. For her, such activity was an eye opener as she considered it a fruitful activity, which she described as ‘full of information’. In that training, about 30 selected women – members of the cooperative – were taught about what are the right things to do, including how to manage household income, to be a good administer in the house and how to get supplementary income if the husband’s income is not sufficient for household expenses. Ibu Ratna excitedly describes that how she was inspired by the trainer from WRDC who taught her and other participants to be good ‘finance manager’ of their family. She says, “*It is true that we [wives] are the finance manager, because we are the one to make sure that our husband’s income is enough for the whole month. Sometimes my husband doesn’t want to know how if the expenses increase, so I have to be smart on how to manage the money.*” In that workshop, they were also taught about government social welfare programs for low-income families in order to get extra cash or non-cash benefit for the household, such as PKH program, RASTRA, or education fund support. Not only that, some technical skills and tricks also taught, for instance on how to cleverly allocate budget for different purpose through creating simple cashbook to manage the money. They are demanded to be *irit*¹⁰³ in ensuring the money is sufficient for the whole month. Ibu Ratna also thinks that learning to be good ‘financial manager’ for her family is extremely important skills to learn since she has been juggling with her husband’s low income and inclining household expenses. She terms it as ‘*harus pintar pintar mengelola pemasukan*’ (means have to be smart in administering the income) and ‘*harus putar otak*’ (to know many tricks) in her never-ending monthly survival mode. In those trainings, they were taught to believe that as wives/women, it is their *kodrat* to prioritize family – children and husband – before themselves; and what they have earned is secondary to their husband’s earning. As responsible mother, they are taught about the importance of ensure that their children is in well upbringing. This emphasizes care function that these women have to pay attention too. It is often that they have to sacrifice what they desire for the sake of family needs, because they are responsible mother and wife. Not to forget, when ‘proposing’ such

¹⁰³ Translated as tightly managing finance

trainings, WRDC's field workers should make sure that those activities would not disturb these women in doing their domestic activity. This means that such activities should start after 9 a.m. in the morning – after these women completed their house chores – and finish by 16 p.m.

In many cultural practices, including Indonesia, conservative gender roles are commonly entrenched and accepted as uncompromising God-given reality between men and women. In the context of this particular group of Chinese *Benteng* women, they tend to accept subordinate roles and less likely to question those in power. These women rarely challenge their marginalized access to household resources, such as inheritance or family assets, and their subjectification to domestic violence in which contributed in undermining their own wellbeing. To explain this, Kabeer (2005b) argues that in society where family and togetherness are the dominant values, gender roles may be narrowly defined by and household resources are controlled and dominated by men. In turn, women may not seek out power or resources separate from their male counterpart, which are considered socially inappropriate or personally undesirable. For that case, Kabeer concludes that individual empowerment might have less impactful effect since structural inequalities and traditionally rigid gender roles constraint women to make strategic choice. She also pointed out that evidence showed that such individual empowerment approach has limited impact on gender equality which then place women in a difficult situation by making considerable sacrifice as a result of exercising their autonomy.

It is important to highlight that the creation of 'responsible mother' and 'dutiful wife' are crucial to subjectify Chinese *Benteng* women as produced by the social inclusion project. As the project implementer, WRDC ensures that activities that part of "*Peduli Program*" should not lead the Chinese *Benteng* women to abandon their role as 'mother' and 'housewife' which confirm with their *kodrat*. Here, women's domestic responsibilities that perform non-wage labor housework should be prioritized in such a way that should not be disturbed by the cooperative activities. The existence of *koperasi simpan pinjam* that designed as social inclusion infrastructure, deploys common narrative of apoliticized term and narrow definition of women empowerment towards collective idealization of Indonesian women that created on based on Javanese aristocrat women. This collective image of 'empowered' Chinese *Benteng* women is rest on her ability to do both worlds,

namely domestic non-wage works and 'outside' voluntary activities that imbued with public feminized tasks. As a result, these women are strongly encouraged to first prioritize their motherhood wifedom responsibility on top of their own desire and other aspiration, in which further restrict them to choose due to social pressure. This results in some women that initially active in the project should suspend their involvement due to the 'double-burden'. The case of Mariah and Sariwati – a distant relative of Ibu San Nio – are among some women that had to quit in participating in many activities sponsored by the project due to their new born babies. By rationalizing their domestic responsibility with the newborn in addition to regular housework and child or elderly care as a result of their frequent absence in the project activities and meetings, their strategic position in the cooperative as rising *kader* are replaced by other women that do not have domestic load. On the contrary, Chinese *Benteng* male are deliberately excluded from the project activities by normalizing men's role as main breadwinner of the household which have been busy enough to participate in the project.

The practice of limiting women's role outside the house/domestic sphere emerged as a politics of housewifization entrenched deeply into Indonesian society. Indonesian women were primarily constructed as mother and wife due to an idealized singular bifold identity based on their biological capacity according to their *kodrat* as God-given function and reality. Thus, the creation of responsible mother and dutiful housewife in the social inclusion project reflects what Petersen (1996: 190) portrays about the political state intention to create and to maintain, "*rules of law, the technique of management, and also the ethnics, the ethos, the practice of self, which would allow these games of power to be played with a minimum domination*" (Foucault, 1991: 18). For about three decades during the New Order regime, Indonesian women have been constructed as submissive subject and compliant ancillary of their husband (Suryakusuma, 1996, 2011) in the state-sponsored project. Until this day such construction remains but under a very different circumstances as these women no longer disciplined as docile subject, but were crafted into rational and voluntary do what they think they ought to do in carrying out their *kodrat* as mother and wife.

8.6. FROM “DORMANT SETTLER” TO “SOCIALLY ACTIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS”: THE CHANGED IMAGE OF CHINESE *BENTENG* WOMEN

Koperasi Simpan Pinjam of the Chinese *Benteng* women has increased the popularity of its *pengurus inti* and the *kader* as an outstanding example of empowered women. Ibu Herlina and her colleagues are constantly exalted by the Pak *Lurah* and his staffs as representatives of ‘good women’ in *Kelurahan Kembangan*. With a proud tone, Pak *Lurah* said that the deep-seated and long history of assimilation between Chinese and native culture is very apparent in this area, marked by the Chinese *Benteng* settlement in *kampung Wetan*. “This area is very unique. One of the oldest Chinese temples is also here. My intention is to make this area as touristic destination. Ibu Herlina and her cooperative have developed original *Cokek* dance. They also have economic activities, like making cakes and cookies. With this cultural tourism idea, the livelihood of the Chinese *Benteng* people will also be improved. They can sell the cakes and other type of handicrafts to visitors.” With such vision, the *Lurah* looks excited and proud of what these women have done – successfully in implementing ‘fruitful’ activities that have attracted wider attention, rather than doing nothing because most of them are housewives. Backed up by the *Lurah* endorsement, the cooperative also gained elevated social status as one of the recognized and formal social organization in *Kelurahan Kembangan*. Moreover, it is often the case that these women play the role as “shadow apparatus” that are send out by the *Lurah* or his staff to attend various meetings or events in the Local Government offices representing *Kelurahan Kembangan*.

Advertised as government-endorsed project, the creation of the *koperasi simpan pinjam* among Chinese *Benteng* women has been claimed as a motor of change of their previously bad reputation. Since the arrival of WRDC in 2014 that educated them how to work together in an organization; these Chinese *Benteng* women were expected also to be active in and form part community activities that sponsored and organized by the state. Such message was strongly communicated by Ibu Mufida, the director of WRDC in her presentation in front of more than 50 local government cadres, NGOs and the Chinese *Benteng* women that attended a national government workshop. She started her presentation by highlighting some achievements of Chinese *Benteng* women in the social inclusion project, marked by successful set up of *koperasi simpan pinjam* as the only formal organization that

recognized by the government that was initiated by Chinese *Benteng* women. She said that since the Chinese *Benteng* women joined the *koperasi*, they have started to engage 'politically' in the domestic sphere, that is their own family. She continued that the Chinese *Benteng* women were getting familiar in practicing 'politics' in their family which marked by their successful negotiation to be permitted to attend 'outside' activities, particularly from their husband. To close her presentation, Ibu Mufida started to raise an issue that quite foreign for them which is gender sensitive budgeting by highlighting the importance to increase women's awareness about how public funds are being spent, especially in activities that become women's concerns.

Picture 10 – Socialization event at the *Kelurahan* Office



Chinese *Benteng* Women, together with fellow community members and government staffs attended socialization events prepared and facilitated by WRDC

For Ibu Mufida and her team in WRDC, women are not seen only as responsible mother and dutiful wife, but also as development agent that should concern about how the state is being run. For her NGO, this could be done through ensuring that women, especially the excluded population like the Chinese *Benteng* women, should also benefit from the public funds in which is highlighted as the key aspect of social inclusion of what WRDC comprehend. Not only benefiting

from public funds, WRDC also tried to push these women to be socially active in getting public services, in particular administrative registration paper which have been their longstanding problem since a few decades ago (Kortchak, 2010). For NGO like WRDC that highly dependent their sustainability on donor-funded project, their interpretation of inclusion is a technical approach in which the excluded people can also benefit from development by creating a number of activities that could engage all members of the community without further interrogating the causes of exclusion that they experience in the first place. Thus, to operate this technical tool, the Chinese *Benteng* women were selected as the appropriate target population whose life is to be intervened then corrected by this tool. Moreover, the social inclusion intervention operated by WRDC as implementing agency has continued to maintain segregation of women and remove them from their interaction with men without actually addressing the underlying causes of power relation. For instance, these women never invited any men to participate in their activity, like trainings or meetings with the government. Unless, when the meetings were hosted in the *Kelurahan* office, some male government officials were present also as part of their job description. Therefore, such intervention focuses on correcting women and expecting them to comply with standard and values made by men, without interrogating the masculine sphere – as determined by the *kodrat* – thus normalize men's task and role which lead to their uninterrupted power in the society. Here in the social inclusion project, women are understood as economic being with economic lense and their work is calculated and assessed based on economic parameters.

Since its 'official' relocation to the *Kelurahan* office, *Koperasi simpan pinjam* of Chinese *Benteng* women is claimed as the ideal prototype of community-initiated organization in *kampung* Wetan which serves as inclusion platform for *all* inhabitants of *Kelurahan* Kembangan. Such relocation is understood as a symbolic acceptance from the *Kelurahan* as the representative of state power towards the 'previously excluded' Chinese *Benteng* community that finally get their recognition. However, this relocation did not mean the same to everyone. Ibu San Nio has told me previously that activities of the *koperasi* was held in her living room or the front yard. Because of that, it was very convenient for many members that mostly live close to one another. Mak Lan Ing is Ibu San Nio's aunt. Her house faces Ibu San Nio's house, where they share the same front yard. Mak Lan Ing is 65 old widow

and lives with his son's family. In the early days of the *koperasi*, Mak Lan Ing was quite delighted when her neighborhood always busy with people. Mak Lan Ing is also a cooperative member, despite as she said that she does not have much money to save, but she just likes to have people around. *"My daughter often gives me money. She is a good daughter. My son also good. But because I live here with him and his family, the income is for our daily needs. I save the money from my daughter in the cooperative. Sariwati (daughter-in-law) was also active in the cooperative. But now, not anymore. Since she gave birth last year, she didn't do the activity anymore. Just saving. But since the cooperative moved to Kelurahan office, I don't go to cooperative anymore. It's too far."* She also said that when the cooperative was hosted there, Sariwati's noodle stall always full of people buy the noodle from her, *"when people waited their turn and it is already lunch time, they ate here too."* Now, surrounding areas of Mak Lan Ing's house is not as lively as before; it is now quiet. Sometimes few neighbors passing by, mostly door-to-door snack sellers that offer her afternoon fritters or the garbage man that regularly collect unused items to re-sell. Sariwati's noodle stall is not as busy as before, which she now relies on her own neighbors that do not prepare any food or someone like me that went there quite often.

Mak Lan Ing is not the only one that disappointed when the cooperative activities move to the *Kelurahan* office. Few other members also shared similar experience. Many other members felt hesitant to go to the *Kelurahan* only for the weekly sessions. Just like what Mak Lan Ing said that they also cited that the *Kelurahan* office was too far and they were not really comfortable to go there. Some other women even said that they have to spare time to go there, while they still have things to do in their house. At least, they must have spent about an hour or so just for the cooperative sessions alone, while previously they did not have to spend that much time. Because Ibu San Nio's house is nearby, they can just ask neighbors or relatives to watch the children for a while when they go for the cooperative sessions. Others commented that going to Ibu San Nio's house was like visiting neighbors which they do not have to wear something formal, just whatever they like to wear. Some women even wear home dress, which for most people were considered inappropriate and not polite for going out, or short pants and sweat shirt. For that reason, they felt a little bit hesitant to go to the *Kelurahan* office because they have to dress up 'properly', as they often get unpleasant comments from the *Kelurahan* staff due to the way they dress.

Since mid 2016, the cooperative is no longer operates in Ibu San Nio's living room. Unlike before that they did all the activities on the floor, now they have a proper 'office', despite they still have to sit in the floor, as the previous *Lurah* allowed them to use the vacant room. The vacant room was not very big, just enough to store piles of saving books, banners, and some important documents. There they also store "The History of Chinese *Benteng*" spiral bound booklet written by WRDC, which they usually give to the 'important' figures like the government officers or guests. Actually, there is nothing special about this booklet, it is just one of the project outputs that are targeted in the beginning of the implementation. This book is a compilation of whatever aspects of Chineseness marker that the writer collected recklessly. The book itself contains a number of chapters that discuss about Chinese *Benteng* history, their cultural characteristics, their traditional outfit, how they live their life and cultural festivities including the meaning of each celebration, and not to forget a special section about *Cokek* dance that became key activities in this project. Despite its good intention in collating various information about the Chinese *Benteng* culture, but Engkong Oey Tjin Eng, a respected figure of the Chinese *Benteng* community, told me how problematic that booklet is. In the beginning he did not know that such booklet exists, which he finally received from Ibu Tuti in a short visit to the oldest Chinese Temple in Chinese Old Town where he works. At that time, Ibu Tuti and WRDC team invited him to discuss about the *Cokek* dance which the project tries to reconstruct and to give a new image. According to Engkong Tjin Eng, most content of the booklet is inaccurate and lack of accuracy, especially because many of the description only cite free content from the internet. He then added how the representation of *Cokek* dance that WRDC tried to recreate in *Cokek Sipatmo* dance was simply a mean of whitewashing the authentic form of *Cokek* that is still performed in the rural area until now. He thought that because WRDC implement government program, the erotic image of *Cokek* dance that closely associated with the art expression of Chinese *Benteng* people, should be abolished and re-created by a professional choreographer/dancer. However, despite the inaccuracy, the booklet is still used as a token for guest that visited *Kelurahan Kembangan* and the cooperative.

Because of the frequent presence of the Chinese *Benteng* women in the *Kelurahan* office, they are gradually familiar with the state bureaucrats and how they work. Not seldom, the *pengurus koperasi* were treated by the *Kelurahan* officers

as one of their own kind. These women do not have to go through formal mechanism of registration and waiting whenever they are in the *Kelurahan* office. They enter the premise's area without hesitation and sometimes also permitted to use the computer of one of the *Kelurahan* staff for the purpose of *koperasi's* administration and correspondence. For that reason, Ibu Tuti told me that for the very first time, in February 2016, these women were invited as representatives to attend the most important decision-making forum about their local development in *Kelurahan* office. This forum is called *musrenbangkel*, a bottom-up deliberation decision making meeting host by the *Kelurahan* which also involved community representatives. Results from the deliberative process are proposed and escalated to *Kecamatan* level that continued up until city government. In this *musrenbangkel*, community proposals are to be gathered by the *Kelurahan* staff and ranked according to the community's priority. To ensure that *musrenbangkel* is representative and inclusive, the *Kelurahan* is mandated to include representative from various community groups, in particular the poor and the disadvantaged that also include women.

In the *musrenbangkel*, community groups are idealized to speak about issues that need immediate attention and problems that should be solved promptly. Community proposals are quite various in types that cover a wide range of activities, including small scale infrastructure projects and local community trainings or events that would be financed by the government funds. *Musrenbang* commonly understood as 'deliberative' decision-making process, conducted at the lowest administrative level in Indonesia – applied for both rural and urban areas – in which community participation is claimed to be its main foundation. This process is implemented in a bottom-up way, started from series of community meetings in each ward and neighborhood, and such meetings collects proposals, inputs and suggestions from *Ketua RT* (Neighborhood chief), *Ketua RW* (ward chief), respected religious leaders or community leaders. These local figures are usually regarded as the key representation of the community in the formal *musrenbangkel* meeting in the government office. The meeting usually led by the *Lurah* and his staff; and community proposals are listed according to their priorities – usually based on the urgency – which then decided by voting. In addition to that, some activities that require higher decision-making process are escalated to the *kecamatan* level of city government to decide.

In many areas in Indonesia, *musrenbang* meetings are regarded as the most important bottom-up decision-making forum. This meeting often described and symbolized as one of the most important events due to its importance in deciding what will be financed by the government funds. It is often the case that *musrenbang* also become the arena of power contestation where those in power would defend their proposal for projects to be financed by the state money. Knowing the high importance of *musrenbang* process as a contestation arena, one of “Peduli Program’s” aspiration is to make sure that the concerns of excluded people are heard through having representative to voice their concerns. By the project grand design, excluded people are to be empowered by NGOs to play such role in *musrenbang* and to equip them with public speaking skills, which ultimately would materialize inclusive decision-making process at the local level. Ibu Tuti proudly said that for the past two consecutive years, these Chinese Benteng women are always invited by the *Lurah* to attend the *musrenbangkel* in *Kelurahan* office due to their good work in the cooperative that ‘empower’ women in *Kelurahan* Kembangan. Despite the invitation was not personalized, but addressed to the cooperative; Ibu Herlina as the leader is the one that has authority to decide whom she will take with her to the *musrenbang*. In February 2018, Ibu Pin Lan was the one that she chose; a year before, Ibu Herlina brought Mariah along with her in the meeting. According to Ibu Tuti, the women of cooperative are always invited by the *Kelurahan* which she thought was a very good indication of recognition towards the Chinese *Benteng* community. As she explained to me about how the Chinese *Benteng* women are no longer discriminated by the *Kelurahan* and the government, “Since the cooperative exist, these women always be the first to be invited. This is because of their contribution to their community. Like the *Cokek* dance is very popular now. They receive a lot of invitation from the mayor’s office. This made their area ‘fragrant’ and no longer has bad reputation. The *Lurah* is very proud of them, as the asset of the *Kelurahan* Kembangan.”

Interestingly, in another occasion, Ibu Pin Lan has a quite different interpretation about the *musrenbangkel* invitation. Although she was quite happy that Ibu Herlina took her to the meeting, Ibu Pin Lan did not understand about what was happening in the meeting. As she says, “I just sit and heard. I didn’t say anything. I had nothing to say, because I don’t understand [...] They mostly talked about construction project in the *Kelurahan*” Because of her lack of information about the

meeting itself, she preferred just to listen what people were discussing. On the contrary, Ibu Tuti interprets otherwise. She considered that the social inclusion project was quite successful in achieving its objectives which are seen from indicated changes and improvements of these Chinese *Benteng* women. Ibu Tuti repeated that these 'formerly excluded' women are finally acknowledged by the *Kelurahan* because they received a formal invitation with the government letterhead, addressed to their cooperative, to attend the most important decision-making forum – which previously never been the case.

Through the narrow project lens, as technical devise, Ibu Tuti emphasized the project's achievement that indicated by *Kelurahan* government to acknowledge the existence of Chinese *Benteng* people from the 'good work' they have done 'cultural preservation' activities as well as eradicating loanshark through the *koperasi simpan pinjam*. In contrast to what Ibu Tuti commented earlier, Pak Yahya from *Kelurahan* has different opinion. For him, these women from the cooperative were not really a group of active 'empowered women' due to their 'fruitful' activities through saving and lending. He viewed them as a group of local housewives that previously did not really have social activities in their communities. Despite he did not deny that the *Kelurahan* also benefits from the activities conducted by these women that has elevated good reputation, but in his perspective that these women are key element for ticking the box of 'inclusion', 'gender mainstreaming' and 'women participation' in development plan. For Pak Yahya, it is quite *visually pleasing* to have these women conduct their activities in the *Kelurahan* office. As he said to me that administrative works in his office can be very monotonous and the presence of these women excites him which he describes as "*a little bit of freshness*". Once in a while I also witness how he is very friendly to these women and they are very fond of him as well, even though sometimes I notice a little bit of flirtation between him and one of them as they shown through visual gesture or words. He ingenuously explained that his demeanors towards them are some kind of 'kindness' and 'support' for these women that have tried to make themselves active and socially beneficial for the community. He told me an example that he always orders cookies for the *Lebaran* from the cooperative's economic unit, although he does not really like the taste, "*Honestly, it does not taste really good. I just want to help them making a little bit of profit from the business [...] This year I bought 10 boxes for my house. It was almost untouched by guests.*" At the end what

it is important to him is not really about the Chinese *Benteng* women that are empowered as a result of the cooperative, but they were merely seen as embellishment of the government of *Kelurahan* Kembangan.

Prior to the arrival of social inclusion project through the cooperative, relationship between the Chinese *Benteng* women with the government was problematic. As I illustrated in the previous chapters, longstanding discrimination combined with intergenerational poverty has shaped their particular attitude towards the government. Through a government-sponsored social inclusion project, some of the Chinese *Benteng* women are indeed changing their preconception about the government people and have rather different type relationship with them. Ibu Pin Lan said that if not because of the WRDC that helped them in forming the cooperative, she would never think that she could participate in a formal meeting with the government. Previously, she always felt uncomfortable and unease when dealing with government people, like processing paper works for administrative registration or any other matters that involve any kind of interaction with government. But since WRDC came to their *kampung* and taught them to form the cooperative, she started to change her view about the government. Likewise, Ibu Nuriah also commented that she was happy to be able to meet new people by attending such meeting. Not only that, she also thought that in those meetings, she would get new knowledge that is beneficial for her and her family. *“Last time, I participated in a meeting with the Food Security Agency. The lady from the government spoke about chicken farming. I paid attention to her carefully what she said. When I returned, I told my husband about that. Now, I have a few chickens in my yard. It is not a lot. It’s ok. When they spawn eggs, it is really beneficial for me. At last I don’t have to buy eggs in the market. I also have goat.”* Ibu Nuriah seems cheerful when she told me about her chicken that just recently spawned eggs. Now she has new goal, catfish farming.

In the beginning of my early visit in 2016, I was rather surprise to hear from Ibu Tuti that within just two or three years since the very first meeting, these Chinese *Benteng* women were constantly narrated as successful example in establishing co-existed relationship with government as well as broader community, as if they were extremely isolated and discriminated before the project existed. Like climb up the social ladder, these women *pengurus koperasi* have been perceived by other women in their neighborhood as gaining their importance along

with their intimacy with the government. Their sign of importance often associated with how frequent they wear *batik*¹⁰⁴ blouse to attend the meeting with the government. Ibu Pin Lan proudly showed to me her only red *batik* blouse illustrated with trees, birds and flower that she has. She said that around two year ago, Ibu Herlina offered all the *pengurus* and *kader* to order uniforms for the cooperative that made from *batik*, which they can pay through a year-long installment plan. For each month, they should pay Rp. 90,000 (around 6€) for the *batik* blouse. Ibu Pin Lan still remembered when Ibu Herlina talked about the *batik* uniform, which they would wear often, especially when they had to represent the cooperative in important meetings with the government. She also remembers what Ibu Tuti told them to wear *batik* whenever they go to meeting with government, “... so it looks polite and appropriate when we go to government office. It is just after joining the cooperative that I have *batik*. This is the only *batik* that I have. Maybe this year we are going to make another one. Just for a change.” During our time waiting for another meeting, Ibu Pin Lan then tease Ibu Indah, who also *pengurus* and cadre for PKH (*Program Keluarga Harapan*) that wore different *batik*, not the cooperative uniform. Ibu Pin Lan was curious how Ibu Indah has different *batik*, the one which she does not have. Proudly, Ibu Indah said that this *batik* was another uniform from the PKH project where she is also part of. It seems that Ibu Indah really enjoyed when other women praised her *batik*, which is different from the rests.

One of the main priorities of “*Peduli Program*” is to ensure that the excluded people also receive government-sponsored social support and public service. In the second phase of this project, PfGR as WRDC’s main donor for “*Peduli Program*” continuously promoted strong and collaborative engagement with respective local governments where they implement the projects. In their strategic document for project extension (2017), PfGR-funded NGO partners, including WRDC, were demanded to collaborate with the local government wherever they work. In addition, these NGOs were also required to continue facilitating the target population, advocating on polices and regulation, also building network with the local stakeholders. Therefore, with such direction, WRDC has started to set up courtesy visit to some sectoral offices of the local government, which called

¹⁰⁴ See Geertz (Geertz, 1976: 288–9) that explains how batik is implicitly associated with the life of those from the highly educated Javanese society

“audiensi”, in order to introduce the presence of the Chinese Benteng cooperative. To attend this *audiensi*, usually Ibu Tuti delegated the selection of participants to Ibu Herlina as the chairwoman. Oftentimes, during the Tuesday activity Ibu Tuti just asked verbally to those who she is familiar with, especially those who are the *pengurus koperasi* and *kader* also those regular members who are seen active in other activities hosted by the cooperative, like the dance group or baking group. For instance, when Ibu Tuti asked to Ibu Nuriah to come to the meeting, she said *“Ibu Nuriah, let’s go to the audiensi tomorrow morning, ok?”* with a tone of instruction and order but communicated in a soft and polite manner, which these women interpreted as genuine kindhearted invitation from Ibu Tuti. That day, with the help of Ibu Herlina, she was able to gather 10 women from the cooperative to visit the government office.

The *audiensi* with government sectoral offices were never scheduled on Tuesday, as these women have mandatory commitment of saving/lending activities for the cooperative. They invited me to come along in some of these *audiensi*, ‘undercover’ as one of the cooperative members. Ibu San San even said that because I am looked just like them, the ‘government people’ – whom these women refer to any bureaucrats – would not notice that I was not part of the cooperative. It was the *audiensi* with sectoral office of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, which WRDC thinks that meeting with this bureau was relevant and important for these women. Beforehand, Ibu Tuti has made her move to contact this bureau and navigated her way to find the right person with whom they could meet. Not only that, she also prepared a formal letter with WRDC letterhead to request a meeting with the relevant bureaucrats. For Ibu Tuti, it was part of her job in opening the communication gate with the local government, in which she also described as *“advocacy work”*. Such *“advocacy work”* as also encouraged by the project donor implied as a harmonious effort to approach the local government, in which these Chinese *Benteng* women could obtain financial supports as an important indicator to ‘sustainability’, especially at the time when the project will end. After continuous followed up for several weeks, Ibu Tuti finally secured the important date when she could bring these Chinese *Benteng* women to meet the bureaucrats. Not to forget, she also reminded them to wear the red batik blouse as the cooperative’s uniform as well as forbade them to wear *“inappropriate”* outfit like short pants, flip flops, or t-shirt. As she once told me, *“If I don’t remind them,*

they just wear whatever they like. Back then, when I set up the audiensi with government for the first time, they wore short pants and t-shirt. Just like the outfit for going to the market. But now, they don't do that anymore, because now they have understood that it is not polite."

Picture 11 – *Audiensi* with Local Government



Chinese Benteng Women and WRDC attended *audiensi* with Local Office of Food Security

In the beginning, I had assumed that all processes in determining activities were participatory as WRDC had claimed previously when they developed their funding proposal. This organization even mentioned that before designing activities for the Chinese *Benteng* women, community organizers like Ibu Tuti undertook needs assessment in a participatory way as a mandatory step before

initiated women empowerment project. However, most activities that implemented under the “*Peduli Program*” were generally proposed by and decided by the NGO, which sometimes passed through a slight cross check with Ibu Herlina that is assumed to homogenously represent various needs and interests of Chinese *Benteng* women in *kampung* Wetan. Like that day, most women that I spoke to had no idea about the purpose of the *audiensi*, some even did not know where would they go. One of them even said that maybe *audiensi* with bureaucrats from women empowerment office could make them more ‘productive’ and ‘be inspired’, which also could boost their motivation to earn income for their family. Some women even mentioned simple reason like “*for me to know*” or “*rather than not doing anything*” to rationalize their participation in the *audiensi*. A day before, Ibu Tuti reminded them that the *audiensi* would start at 9 a.m. in the city government office. She reminded them over and over again, saying that they should not be late. For that, they should be ready in Ibu San Nio’s house about an hour earlier to gather beforehand. Despite the weekly activity has moved to *Kelurahan* office, Ibu San Nio’s house remain served as ‘unofficial’ basecamp due to the historical development of the cooperative. In addition to that, Ibu Herlina also mentioned that gathering in Ibu San Nio’s house is a way to honor Ibu San Nio’s husband, through whom these women were introduced to WRDC.

In the following morning, I saw few women have gathered in Ibu San Nio’s veranda. There were even more women whom I have never met before, chatted one with another. I talked with one of them and her name is Ibu Esih. It was her first experience to attend an “important” *audiensi* with the ‘government people’ as she described. She had no idea why Ibu Herlina asked her to come; she wondered because she is usually not so busy in the morning, unlike other women that have younger children. Ibu Esih only has two children; all of them are in the university. She assumed maybe because of that, which made Ibu Herlina to take her along too. According to Ibu Esih, she was informed by Ibu Herlina, through short text message a night before, which told her to come for *audiensi* with the government and instructed her to be ready by 8 a.m. in Ibu San Nio’s house. Ibu Esih said that Ibu Herlina also told her to wear the cooperative uniform. Until the time I spoke to her, Ibu Esih still did not know where they would go; what she knew only “*go to the government office*”. Despite she has been a member of the cooperative for two years now, but it was her first time to be selected by the cooperative to come along

in an *audiensi*. Originally her intention was not to be active in the cooperative, since Ibu Esih has also been busy as a treasurer in her church parish community. She thought it would be overwhelming if she also took another responsibility in the cooperative. But if it is only a one-off activity like *audiensi*, she does not mind to come along. Similar situation with Ibu Esih, the other women also seem know nothing more than “go to the government office” or which department of the government would they visit, let alone the purpose of such meeting. These women were basically obtained no more information about the visit to the office of women empowerment and child protection.

Unlike majority of the women that came for the meeting, Ibu Herlina is the only one that usually know more information, at least to which government offices that they would go despite it is unlikely that she would question the purpose of it. She was very confident that whatever activities WRDC had suggested, those must be good for the growth of the cooperative as well as the improvement for these women too. Like that day’s *audiensi*, Ibu Herlina just took the instruction from Ibu Tuti to arrange the snacks and lunches for the participants. That morning, while the other women waited in Ibu San Nio’s house, Ibu Herlina and Ibu Tuti went to pick up snacks and lunches that they have ordered previously. It was common that along with the meeting invitation, the participants received snacks for every meeting that they attended. And when there are two consecutive meetings, usually in the morning and in the afternoon, they are also received lunches in between. That day, Ibu Herlina distributed to everyone a small plastic pocket filled with snacks; it was *lontong* – a kind of steamed rice cake filled with vegetable wrapped in banana leaves – and *pastel* – a kind of fried pie stuffed with sheared chicken, egg, carrot, and glass noodle – and a cup of mineral water. She also brought with her carton boxes of lunch, *nasi padang*. It is common type low budget lunches that many Indonesians eat, which is white plain rice with meat or chicken cooked in various styles, seasonal vegetable, cracker, and fruit. Then, she put those boxes in the kitchen and would be distributed after the meeting.

Ibu Tuti mentioned to me that since the project was just extended until 2019, WRDC has received extra fund to carry out more activities like meetings with government and hosting some events or activities to promote their ‘authentic’ Chinese Benteng ‘culture’ like *Cokek* dance and Teh Yan instrument performance. Prior to the extension, WRDC had to survive with no extra financing, which forced

them to reduce some activities and only maintain the important one, mainly the regular facilitation and mentorship for the cooperative. Due to funding shortage the weekly visit should be reduced to bi-weekly, letting Ibu Herlina and her fellow women to run the cooperative without Ibu Tuti's supervision. Sometimes she even said that it might be a good training for these women to be independent and not relied too much on her anymore. Furthermore, once the fund was received, this enabled WRDC to design new activities as approved by their donor, in which also included printing some promotion materials such as booklet and banners. During the extension period, WRDC had proposed to their donor that they would support the *Kelurahan Kembangan* to develop thematic *kampung*s for the tourism agenda. Since they have been successful in revitalizing *Cokek Sipatmo* dance and with the support of *koperasi simpan pinjam*, their *kampung Wetan* could be prototyped as thematic *kampung* with particular Chinese *Benteng* characteristics. Besides that, some budget allocation was also given to these Chinese *Benteng* women, but not as capital injection for their cooperative. Instead, some women that participated in *audiensi* or other types of meetings with the government and other stakeholder usually received cash allowances, which referred as *uang transport* (means: transport allowance), also snacks and lunches – like the one that Ibu Herlina had prepared. Generally, for one-time meeting, WRDC allocated IDR 50,000 for transportation allowance and approximately about IDR 10,000 to IDR 20,000 for snack and lunch package per person. At least, one could receive around IDR 60,000 to IDR 70,000 (around € 4 or € 5) to attend one meeting. In the case when there would be two meetings in a day like those meetings that I also attended, each one of the meeting participants could bring home cash up to IDR 150,000 (€ 10).

For these Chinese *Benteng* women, getting cash incentive and food become a new “tradition” along with their familiarity with the idea of participating in government-sponsored activities. By the end of the meeting, Ibu Tuti has prepared an attendance list that these women have to fill by writing their name and signature. In a separate occasion, Ibu Pin Lan told me that such practice was brought a surprise to her. She never thought that she would be paid just to attend a meeting, “*just sit and listen*” as she articulated. In addition, there was also food – snack and lunch – that she could bring home. Sometimes, when there were not many people that able to attend meeting, which means excess lunch boxes and snacks, Ibu Pin Lan always bring the leftover home for her son. She was happy with

such arrangement as she gets double benefits, new information, money, and food at the same time. That's why she never rejects the invitation for meeting with the government, although she does not really understand the topics of the discussion. She also compared the experience in participating with WRDC-initiated activities and the community protest to reject the government eviction plan organized by Pak Heri almost ten years ago in 2010, "*With him, we got nothing. No money, no food. Just cup-water. Here with WRDC, there are so many benefits. I got to know government people, had new experience sat in meetings, or sometimes traveled outside of the city. We are becoming educated now,*" as Ibu Pin Lan expressed her gratitude due to her active involvement in the cooperative.

The local office of Women Empowerment and Child Protection is located in the government office compound. In this compound, each local government bodies have their own buildings that are clustered surrounding the great mosque of Tangerang, Al-Azhom. The Al-Azhom Mosque is considered as the most important city landmark and source of local pride from majority muslim population in the city of Tangerang. The city's vision to restore the Islamic identity as part of Tangerang's authentic identity that has explained previously is extremely apparent by symbolical placement of government premises as the materialization of public interest with great mosque that emphasis religious affiliation. When we entered one of the buildings for *audiensi*, we were greeted by Islamic religious prayers melody came from ceiling speakers that apparently installed throughout the building. It was almost 9 a.m. in the morning, where most of the government officials were still in morning prayers – as instructed by the city mayor during the holy month of *Ramadhan* – and we were requested to wait. After waited for about 15 minutes, the government officials finally received us; three women which one of them was the chief of the section and a man.

The meeting started with an introduction, as Ibu Tuti introduced these Chinese *Benteng* women as member of a cooperative that is facilitated by national government sponsored project. She emphasized that this project focused on empowering women by creating a community platform that able to bring benefit for the Chinese *Benteng* community. By having the saving/lending cooperative, her organization hoped that the Chinese *Benteng* women are willing to improve themselves on managing finances, especially their household incomes. It was apparent that Ibu Tuti was experience in talking with the government. Her gesture

was extremely polite in combination with her articulate explanation about the cooperative project. Her introduction about how the Chinese *Benteng* women have been actively participated in community-based initiatives was resulted in a good impression from the government bureaucrats. Ibu Tuti knows well how to frame their visit to the government office by linking the government priorities with the cooperative project, despite some of her explanation seems irrelevant or somewhat exaggerated. On the other hand, other 10 women that went with her were just nodded signaled their agreement with Ibu Tuti's statements.

Besides explaining the cooperative project with the Chinese *Benteng* women, Ibu Tuti also touched some issues about women's vulnerability towards domestic violence in Kampung Sewan, where these women live. Ibu Tuti's understanding about the focus and interest of the Women Empowerment and Child Protection bureau on the issues of women and child protection has showed her expertise in facilitating the 'unempowered women' like the Chinese *Benteng* people. As Ibu Tuti brought up the interest to know more about domestic violence and how to act upon such incidents, I noticed that some women seem not interested, like Ibu Devi, who sat next to me, was busy typing with her cellphone and did not really bother to pay attention on the talks. Ibu Tuti remarked her closing by expressing the intention to collaborate with the local bureau and seek possibilities to invite them for a seminar in the *Kelurahan* office to socialize the issue. Certainly, response from the Women Empowerment and Child Protection office was as expected; they applauded good effort made by the cooperative to empower women in their neighborhood.

Picture 13 – Women from the Cooperative with Government Staff



Group photo session, after an *audiensi* meeting in the government office

Ibu Siti Hayati, the section chief of Women Empowerment and Child Protection office spoke in a very normative manner. She emphasized that most cases of domestic violence towards women and children are usually caused by their dependency on the men, i.e. the father or the husband. She theorized that such dependency prevents women to report if such violence occurs. Adding to such simplification, she mentioned that most cases that they found were those from economically weak household. Such reason then justifies the important of economic empowerment that focus on women to reduce their dependency. Ibu Siti Hayati also pointed out that women are lack of awareness and capability to organize themselves around this alarming issue, in which have contributed to their vulnerability. Despite being named “Women Empowerment and Child Protection” this agency does not project any progressive policies towards women or children. It rather focuses on women financial capacity that is assumed to rescue women from their dependency on their male-spouse, and at the same time also normalizing violence behaviour of their male-spouses. The *audiensi* lasted more than an hour, which was basically dominated by the bureaucrats preaching these women about numerous government regulations as well as government-sponsored programs and initiatives around preventive policies against domestic violence, which mostly focus on the idea to educate women to be financially independent so they could avoid domestic violation. Not only ‘women’ issues that were discussed in the *audiensi*, ‘children’ issues were also discussed. Unlike ‘women’ that are target of preventive policies, ‘children’ are target of promotive policies which all *kecamatan* with the municipality area are encouraged to have ‘*kampung ramah anak*’ (child-friendly *kampung*). The policy of ‘*kampung ramah anak*’ was symbolized by the appointment of a local girl name Ayu as the municipality’s child ambassador, who travels with the city to promote normative ‘children’ activities. As I have expected before, ‘children’ activities are focus around the beautification of local infrastructures such as competition in decorating local library or activities that promote ‘creative’ traditional ideas like ‘cultural preservation’ on dancing, singing, or storytelling.

Despite the *audiensi* was dominated by the bureaucrats, some women attempt to engage in the discussion by posing some questions and raising relevant issues

that they hoped would bring the government attention. As usual, Ibu Tuti gave the floor to Ibu Herlina as the head of the cooperative to say something. After a few sentences of introduction, Ibu Herlina brought up issues about difficulties to access the national exam for non-formal schooling, especially for drop-out children. She asked to the bureaucrats whether there are any solutions about such problems, as she has heard many drop-out teenagers who are unable to sit in the national exam due to expensive cost that they should bear. But the bureaucrat's response disappointed Ibu Herlina, as she was told that she sent the complaint to wrong address, "*You better ask and check with the education office. They are the appropriate entity.*" Likewise, Ibu Indah also reported that she suspected indication of illegal taxing on the distribution of social welfare benefits for the poor; but she also received similar response, "*You better talk about this to social protection office. They are the one that deal with the project. I think the office is close to your neighborhood, isn't it?*".

Besides meeting with Women Empowerment and Child Protection bureau, WRDC also arranged other meetings with other agencies in the office of local government. Like the usual approach that WRDC always do, they are the one that decide with whom these women would meet and also arranged all the meetings. Just what happened with Ibu Esih, the other cooperative members also often left speechless about the meeting plan. They just followed what WRDC has decided for them and rarely ask question about what WRDC does. Commonly those who are invited to attend meetings are the *pengurus koperasi* and *kader*; and only if one of them unable to participate, Ibu Herlina started to ask other cooperative members to come along, to replace the allocated spot that WRDC has budgeted for. Moreover, with the new top-up of project funding until 2019, WRDC had more room to initiative new activities, including organizing meetings with government and host a number of small festivals on behalf of the *Kelurahan* Kembangan. Since the meeting with Women Empowerment and Child Protection bureau, these Chinese *Benteng* women were quite busy attending meetings with other sectoral department, such as Education office, Health office, Population and Civil Registration department, as well as Cultural and Tourism department.

The establishment of *koperasi simpan pinjam* of the Chinese *Benteng* women as social inclusion platform – as the NGO claims it – was seen as an attractive mechanism to economically women from low-income household. Since the cooperative has showed 'good' performance and being valuable asset for the

Kelurahan in its way to create a positive image, the *Lurah* fully endorses the cooperative also its extra activities by providing almost anything that it needs. The cooperative 'good' performance also inspired the *Lurah* to make *Kelurahan Kembangan* free from loansharks by encouraging the community to join the cooperative. He said that to set a good example for his people, he is also member of the cooperative. Not only that, Pak *Lurah* also mandated the rest of the *Kelurahan* staff to join as member. As Pak Yahya explained once that actually he has no interest to join the cooperative; but because it was a mandate from his boss, he has no choice rather than follow the order. Besides that, later on he thought that it might be good to help the city government program, "*Satu Kelurahan, Satu One Koperasi*" (one cooperative in every *kelurahan*). Following to that initiative, the Chinese Benteng women cooperative is used as the main prototype of community-based financial institution to eradicate loanshark. Fully backed up by the *Kelurahan*, Ibu Herlina does home visits to the residence of key women figure on the other hamlets in *Kelurahan Kembangan* to socialize the existence of the cooperative. Ibu Herlina seems happy to do it all alone by herself, nor she asked other *pengurus* like Ibu San Nio, Ibu Pin Lan, or Ibu Nuriah to come with her while making house visit. Like she told me before that she often doubts the capability of the other *pengurus* to explain about the cooperative, what it does and how it functions without her presence. She also said that the other women do not have strong commitment to the cooperative as she does. Therefore, she prefers to do it by herself, without involving other *pengurus*. Lately, Ibu Herlina seems keen to take Shinta along with her and delegate some invitation for her to attend on behalf of the cooperative.

Through the cooperative established by "*Peduli Program*", the Chinese *Benteng* women are expected to help themselves by increasing their visibility in various activities sponsored by the project. In one local event, I had the opportunity to talk with the Assistant Vice Deputy of Coordinating Ministry of Human Development and Culture about how the "*Peduli Program*" has been empowering the excluded group. The national government has its own idea about what does social inclusion mean for them, which was unlike the mass model of welfare support such as direct cash transfer to finance their daily needs. In "*Peduli Program*", the national government envisaged the poorest and marginalized population could be catered in poverty reduction initiatives through empowerment scheme. As the Assistant Deputy says, "*Supposedly, these people are*

to be given the 'fish'; but here in "Peduli Program", we don't do that [...] we give them skills and knowledge. Why we have this project? It is designed so the excluded people are able to access welfare program from the government. So, we hope that these people get their ID cards and be included in the government database." She then explained different social welfare program for the vulnerable such as *Kartu Indonesia Sehat* (healthcare support card), *Kartu Indonesia Pintar* (education support card), BPJS (universal healthcare coverage system), and *Kartu Keluarga Sejahtera* (family social welfare support card), in which the excluded people should be able to access once they are included in the government database. Therefore, from the government perspective, this social inclusion project refers to the way in which government welfare policies for the marginalized community could reach its target population by ensuring the 'problematic' people like Chinese *Benteng* community are recorded in the government database.

After three years since its initial operation, *koperasi simpan pinjam* of the Chinese *Benteng* women reported notable changes in many ways. Ibu Tuti and her colleague Ibu Winarti are the one that feel really proud of some changes that occurred in these women's life. Even Ibu Tuti described them as 'brave and superb' women as he views that they have improved significantly since they join the cooperative. Despite Ibu Tuti does not deny that the cooperative still has a lot more to learn as a new organization in comparison with other cooperatives that she has helped to established from other development projects, she applauded the Chinese *Benteng* women's perseverance in running the cooperative and helping out others neighbors as community cadres for *adminduk* (administrative and population registration). Ibu Tuti always referred the ideal model of true empowered women in the Chinese *Benteng* community is like Ibu Herlina, whom she views as the one that really grow as community-born champion to promote 'inclusion' among the Chinese *Benteng* community. Ibu Tuti cannot hide her contentment when she talks about Ibu Herlina as the best protégée of the project. She always nominates Ibu Herlina to attend cross learning activities that often initiated by their donor, PfGR, because she thinks such learning opportunities are good for her to grow, so Ibu Herlina can learn from the 'outside' also to make connection with other beneficiaries of this social inclusion project. She then described about their unforgettable experience when participated in an 'knowledge sharing' excursion to a remote village in Banten district, about 120 km away from their *kampung*.

This excursion was initiated by their mini donor PfGR in a form of one-off activities to bring beneficiaries from one sub-project to other project location in which they could share some exciting activities. Idealized as an activity that would generate new innovation and learning as well as promote good practices among local communities that benefit from this social inclusion project, grand idea of 'knowledge sharing' often implemented rather technically in which transformed into entertaining picnics. As implementing partner that facilitates communities in easy-to-reach area, WRDC often selected as NGO partner that has higher chance in accessing such initiative in which also highly affected the chance of their beneficiaries to participate in this activity. The change of getting selected by PfGR is generally determined based on project budget efficiency that in turn influence the choice of which NGO partners they should finance for this 'knowledge sharing' activities. Due to financial efficiency argument, the bottom line always points out to those NGOs with easy-to-reach location that does not required high transportation cost. To strategize such activities, it is often the case that activities involve a representative of the project beneficiaries that accompanied by the field worker of the NGO to travel to another project location which relatively nearby to teach their skillset that termed by the project as 'knowledge'. Commonly, the NGOs that are designed to provide the learning select the most presentable community member from the beneficiary groups to travel along.

As a one-off activity that designed to tick the box of 'knowledge sharing', this model often focuses on the economic oriented activities that aim to boost income generation for livelihood betterment. Frequently, the skillsets that the 'knowledge' provider will bring are practical skills which oftentimes not relevant with the recipient's context but depends on what the provider able to do. This type of activity is commonly very appealing for many women beneficiaries to engage in, even though there are some activities that also interest male beneficiaries, like the one that WRDC participated in. WRDC is one of the implementing partners that had the opportunity to share their 'knowledge' with one indigenous village lays on the foothill of Mount Halimun Salak in Banten province. To do this, Ibu Tuti took Ibu Herlina as the chairwoman of the *koperasi* and Ibu Netty as lead of the bakery unit to teach the indigenous women of Cirompang village on how to make cakes. According to Ibu Tuti, the Chinese *Benteng* women that master in baking and bakery should also share their skills to other "Peduli Program" beneficiaries. For

her organization, such 'knowledge sharing' initiative cost nothing because all expenses, including transportation cost, food, and accommodation were paid by PfGR. On top of that, they would go for interesting excursion to a place that they never go before. The three of them were accompanied by Ibu Ani from PfGR that brought them to the village where they stayed in the village for three days. Ibu Netty explained how excited that trip was, including exhausting 6 hours car ride from where they live and all equipment and supplies that they had to bring like baking trays, oven, flour, margarine, and eggs. For both Ibu Netty and Ibu Herlina, they were glad to be able to teach the indigenous women making cakes; and Ibu Tuti expected that with the new baking skills, the indigenous women could replicate the bakery business of the Chinese Benteng women.

As the best protégée of this cooperative project, Ibu Herlina could be considered as the most successful example of how women empowerment technology works upon the 'excluded people'. The technology of women empowerment in social inclusion project is used to create a particular subject like Ibu Herlina that able to stand on her feet in order to create her life. Ibu Herlina felt that she was given a chance by WRDC through this project and is trusted to run the cooperative. She never thought that someone like her whose past experience were 'dark' – as she says – is given a chance to lead an organization. In the "Peduli Program", I understand 'women empowerment' is what Rose (1999a, 1999b) describes as *technologies of the self* or *responsibilization* in which focus on combination of techniques to steer individuals to be responsible for social risk. In this project, Chinese *Benteng* women learn that they are *morally responsible* for maneuvering social world around them by activating their rational choice and cost benefit analysis for the sake of individual and/or group's benefits. Among other women that joined the *koperasi simpan pinjam*, Ibu Herlina is one example of how technique of women empowerment works best in responsabilizing and automatizing individuals according to the contemporary governmentality principle.

8.7. MANIFESTING "SOCIAL INCLUSION" AS NEOLIBERAL SUBJECT MAKING PROCESS

The neoliberal governance forms are developed through the creation of socially interventionist policies and delegation of authority to non-governmental

agent (Griffin, 2007; Mahon, 2010; Peck and Tickell, 2002). The language of women empowerment has reached ubiquitous development buzzword and diluted in its meaning. 'Empowerment' is now functioned as widely accepted non-binding goals that diverse groups can support without subscribing to any specific feminist principles (Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Moore, 2001). Calkin (2014) writes that in the neoliberal empowerment, goal of women empowerment is taken for granted as global rhetoric consensus. Feminist scholars have been long argued that empowerment framework have indeed instrumentalize feminist language to legitimize the neoliberal policy goals by reducing transformative and radical framework into a curtailed instrument of empowerment solely as economic participation. By doing so, women visibly rendered within problematic neoliberal discourse as entrepreneurial subject and promotion that fits women with development model. Using Calkin's (2014) notion of 'empowerability', I found it useful to understand how empowerment plays in development discourse. Here Calkin finds specific characteristic that construct women's "inborn qualities" as a process of learning and acquiring skills in which developed along neoliberal mode of development that required a series of 'activation'. Along this line, the narrative of women empowerment used in development projects capitalized on particular kinds of neoliberal women in which certain reductionist assumption of 'empowerability' would be applied to them. Through the notion of 'empowerability', Calkin illustrates how empowered women are discursively constructed as neoliberal subject based on the idea of femininity, productivity, and most importantly market rationality in an extent to which their exclusion and silences are reproduced and maintained.

In the context of "*Peduli Program*", 'empowerment' operated by NGO is instrumentalized as prerequisite element for social inclusion. Such 'empowerment' model is far removed from its radical root, in which is depoliticized and deradicalized one. Technique of 'empowerment' has been capitalized and replicated in industrialized scale by neoliberal institutions, such as the World Bank and donor agencies, that is adopted by Third World countries through fundamental role of international and local NGOs as technologies to improve the population which aligned with modernization fashion. Oxaal (1997) argues that the focus of empowerment project remains on the individual economic enhancement through micro-credit and micro-enterprise establishment. This view of

empowerment is primarily advocated by WID promoters that seeks to integrate women into existing system and see women as feminine economic unit which underline their confinement into particular role of childbearing and care as unwaged labor thus understood as domestic and unproductive. For that reason, this approach thus makes no significant effort to transform existing power structure and gender hierarchical relation, other than further exploiting women by integrating their unpaid labor into pro-capitalist system in which results the normalized conception of women's double-burden. Mohanty (1995) even criticizes empowerment by saying "[empowerment] is the method of how the politics of the oppressed and the poor is restrained and channelized by dominant forces in society. Their right to struggle is circumscribe to these forms of political bargaining. And the state is assumed to be an impartial arbitrator trying to 'enable' the poor to pursue these forms of politics. Thus, instead of allowing the oppressed to expand their realm of political struggle this notion of empowerment actually limits its" (p. 4135). Batiwala (2010) also posed similar critique towards the notion of empowerment which she described to become a more technical term, lacking association with power analysis and fail to challenge power relation. Such instrumentalization lead to a simplified language of efficiency and economic growth, in programs adopted by international development agency (Eyben and Napier-Moore, 2009). Furthermore, the concept of women empowerment that adopted by many NGOs along with the donor's priority and climate has failed to challenge existing power relation that embedded in a radical backbone of women empowerment that conceptualized by reformist scholars (Batliwala, 2010; Charmes and Wieringa, 2003; Kabeer, 1999, 2001, 2005b; Sen, 1997).

In the context of *koperasi simpan pinjam* project for the Chinese *Benteng* women in *kampung* Wetan, popular understanding of women empowerment refers to its narrow definition in which associated with a series of economically and socially productive activities initiated mostly by outsiders, in particular the NGOs that assume responsibility to empower them. This type of NGO-driven empowerment model may disempower them rather than helping these women to be empowered (Batliwala, 2010). Despite WRDC has attempted to encourage the Chinese *Benteng* women to be empowered by introducing them to the "foreign 'outside' world" through numerous entertaining activities, the women subject might not think that such interventions are relevant nor making any immediate impact to their situation

(Wee and Shaheed, 2008). And in the context of women empowerment according to neoliberal development model, the notion of social inclusion used by WRDC in this project is seen as a process of subject making that Berenschot and van Klinken (2018) describes as transactional nature of democracy in Indonesia. Despite the project's strong aspiration to increase women's participation in the name of social inclusion, the *koperasi simpan pinjam* is not designed to challenge unequal gender relation or to address imbalance power structure in the Chinese *Benteng* community itself. As a normative policy language, social inclusion jargon used in this project was bundled together with a technical language of empowerment that is expected to create meaningful changes in the life of the Chinese *Benteng* women, despite it is not always the case here. This resonates with Mayoux's (1998) criticism towards this particular move, as she describes that 'participatory development for women' is no more than increasing the unpaid contribution of women for development programmes which they often benefitted very little (p.236). From 'change stories' that the NGOs narrate, within the project's communication strategy of showing its best practice, donor agencies and government counterpart assume that because of the intervention from the "Peduli Program", these Chinese *Benteng* women are transformed into empowered local champion and change agent that would fight against exclusion, gender inequality and oppression and at the same time able to articulate their 'needs' for their future endeavors. In practice, it is generally found that their attendance in *musrenbangkel* meeting is used to tick the box of including 'women' as one of mandatory community element that should present. Not only that, their 'exotic' ethnicity background indicated by their Chineseness and minority status are often instrumentalized to serve the government-mandated requirement for an 'inclusive' development planning process. Furthermore, it was not clearly seen whether the physical presence of Chinese *Benteng* women – as claimed to be participation – in the *musrembangkel* have resulted in greater strategic benefit for women to actually leverage their political position to be able to voice crucial issues that would bring greater advantage for all women in *kampung* Wetan. Unfortunately, WRDC in which these Chinese *Benteng* women perceive as their 'savior' simply accepting their 'inclusion' and 'participation' in government-led local development planning meeting as a positive acknowledgement to those who were previously excluded, discrimination, and inactive in community social activities.

Activities initiated on behalf of the *koperasi simpan pinjam* were generally simple and easy to follow. Beside the regular saving and lending activities, they also carry out fun-looking activities that attract many women to join such as practicing *Cokek Sipatmo* dance and cookie baking activities that relatively open to any members that interested to join. On the contrary, there were also some activities that I found as more restricted and limited to only selective members of the cooperative. Those who are able to access these non-regular activities were those who are proven to be active and reliable participants of the regular activities which then earned the trust of WRDC field officers or the leader of the cooperative. For some women members, these activities were generally considered entertaining and therapeutic in which allow them to learn new things, making new friends of just have little time for themselves away from daily house chores. Not only function as a way to encourage sense of togetherness and social belonging among their community, these activities also 'visibilize' them in such a way that they are rendered visible under the development project. In "Peduli Program" the Chinese *Benteng* women are shaped through a delicate process of construction and recreation in such a way as suitable subject into pre-determined path of development with a particular destination. Furthermore, by gaining more apparent visibility in the community as well as in the national outreach, the Chinese *Benteng* women are not only become agent of development, but also as 'champion of inclusion' which termed as *pandu inklusi nusantara*¹⁰⁵ by the project. As 'champion of inclusion', these women are participating in an idealized picture of development project that promoted by NGOs, sponsored by Western donor agency, and endorsed by the government. Their insertion into such framework at the same time also shaped them as 'socially active' members of the society, as opposed to just 'dormant' settlers, where the discourse of women empowerment has activated their economic related value and capability for the community. As the empowered 'champion of inclusion' of government-endorsed development project, their visibility in public domain is theorized from gendered assumption on division of labor which emphasizes on their primary role as *ibu* that responsible for child bearing task and development also their role as *istri* (wife). Kothari (2001) then note

¹⁰⁵ *Pandu Inklusi Nusantara* literally means those who guides towards inclusion in the archipelago

that such gendered division of labor has reproduced a particular representation of women that characterized based on their passivity in public arena as associated with minimum contribution to wider economic growth.

Moser (1993) once described that in early development model that focused on relief work and 'welfarism' model, women are often envisioned as no more than passive recipient of aid. Again, this view works based on the assumption of gendered division of labor where traditionally 'feminine' area, including health, nutrition, family planning and education that closely associated with domestic work or women's matters, are sectors that oftentimes supported by welfare-oriented development aid. Moreover, by framing women as passive development recipient, such welfare-oriented development project created for women are those with exciting activities which stimulate women's interest to engage with the goal to generate additional but only temporary income source for women to fulfil domestic-related expenses, the areas that they are 'naturally' responsible for. Therefore, by participating in such projects, women in development are represent as no more than secondary income earners whose visibility in development are capitalized merely as instrument of social reproduction of gendered division of labor. Moreover, as this "*Peduli Program*" focused on gendered responsibility based on women's 'feminine' quality, key activities encouraged by WRDC as the main promotor are tend to reproduce earlier constructions rather than to challenge them. As a result, a more radical aspect of women's rights, freedom and choice, and capabilities are set aside from the project target.

In the "*Peduli Program*", the Chinese *Benteng* women are subjected to a series of corrective intervention that ideally would capacitate them to be active members of Indonesian society. At the same time, these women also are constantly reminded not to neglect or prioritize their domestic responsibility before participating in any social communal activities outside the house. By juggling these two roles, as responsible mother and dutiful wife in the domestic sphere and as active members of the society in the public arena, the Chinese *Benteng* women that participate in the *koperasi simpan pinjam*, especially the *pengurus* and *kader*, are demanded to have 'professional' qualities – such as be on time, be responsible, and be diligent – and fully committed when they attend in WRDC-proposed activities. Those women who are not 'professional' and committed, this would fuel disappointment that might led to anger or dissatisfaction of the idea on collaboration and working

together. Shinta once complained that despite she understands that these women are housewives and mothers, Shinta does not like when they are often come late when preparing the weekly saving/lending activities in the *Kelurahan* office. “*They have a lot of excuses. They often complaint that they still have many things to do in the house before that. They even said that starting the activities at 10.00 a.m. is too early. Some of them often arrive at 10.30 or 11.00. They don’t feel guilty at all,*” Shinta described one of those days that usually Ibu Herlina was out for other conflicting agenda.

Likewise, Ibu Herlina also shared similar complaints. She often repeated several times that she also has a toddler and she expected that her colleagues also shared the same level of commitment, professionalism, and attitude as she does when dealing with the cooperative’s matters. Ibu Herlina once said that her son often complaints that she is too busy with the cooperative and does not have enough time for him. Her son was the youngest one, at the time of the interview he was about four years old. Despite so, Ibu Herlina was quite fortunate to get some extra support in taking care of her son. Besides that, she also does not want to quit the *koperasi simpan pinjam* as she is very happy in doing this ‘social’ work. Further Ibu Herlina said that she has sacrificed a lot of time and effort for the cooperative, which she does not complaint and keeps her commitment as the leader. Even though the work is tiring and requires a lot of effort, Ibu Herlina feels no burden because she enjoys it. Echoing what Shinta has previously said, Ibu Herlina then cannot rely too much on the other *pengurus* or *kader*, especially during the regular saving/lending day when there is cash involved that should be properly recapitulated. Like that day when I was dragged in to help them recapping the final weekly transaction. Shinta said that the cooperative was short IDR 1.3 million (nearly €95) on the previous transaction and she suspected that Ibu San Nio must have made another mistake during the calculation. As someone that used to work in a courier company, Shinta often discontents of unprofessional attitude of the *pengurus*. She said that every time Ibu Herlina is not around, everything becomes so chaotic. She pointed out what was happened a day before when Ibu Herlina had another meeting, miscalculation and discrepancy on the cashbook always occurred. Adding to her irritation, Shinta pointed out that other women did not want to take the responsibility about such discrepancy. Of course, this irritated her because she was left alone to solve the problem, “[...] *I was so confused and scared if there was some*

money missing. I sent a Whatsapp message to Ibu Herlina and reported to her directly what had happened here."

As the most active participant in "Peduli Program", Ibu Herlina is the one that the cooperative always relies its leadership on. Ibu Tuti had initially hoped that the establishment of cooperative in *Kampung Wetan* could generate a number of women leaders in their area. Other than Ibu Herlina, Ibu Tuti actually expected that Mariah could be trained as the next leader given her good interpersonal skills and her education that is relatively higher than the others. As the best protegee created by the popular women empowerment model, Ibu Herlina reflects the quality of neoliberal subject that make herself compliant, professional and autonomous. Ibu Herlina told that once she was approached by a small supermarket chain to run a joint venture model of small grocery shop in cooperation with the cooperative. In the beginning, she was quite tempted with that idea which could expand the cooperative and at the same time also help other members, especially those that are poorer and do not have steady income. But Ibu Herlina rejected the proposal after considering that there are not enough people to run the grocery stall. She was rather hesitant if her fellows would have the same commitment like her to run such business opportunities, especially she was unsure how the other *pengurus* and *kader* were able to manage the new business if the regular saving/lending activities without Ibu Herlina's presence would be chaotic. Then she just turned down the offer by saying that she does not have reliable and committed squad to run the stall, "I cannot be the one that responsible for everything."

Social inclusion project through the establishment of *koperasi simpan pinjam* emphasizes on official narrative of excluded Chinese *Benteng* women has focused on correcting their behavior as 'proclaimed champion of inclusion' without interrogating the broader social system. Deprived narrative about these women were capitalized and over abused as victim of discriminatory practice committed by the state in which used to justify the government benevolent intention to include them into development. By focusing on practical skills around income generating activities and some trainings that concentrate on individual self-improvement, the implementation of social inclusion project has trivialized complicated reality that structuralized exclusion that emanate from neoliberal development with colonial mask. Just like many critiques of neoliberal empowerment model (Batliwala, 2010; Cornwall, 2018; Mohanty, 1995; Rowlands, 1997; Sardenberg, 2008), the

establishment of *koperasi simpan pinjam* as a platform for social inclusion was not design to fulfil the radical notion of empowerment thus eliminates critical questions towards the state and its hegemonic view of development. As Chakravati (2008) argues that microfinance model delivered through self-help groups has created a 'good woman' in neoliberal discourse, the creation of *koperasi simpan pinjam* for the Chinese Benteng women as social inclusion platform also produces the same effect operated under the formal gender ideology of state *ibuism* which under no circumstances is intended to challenge the unequal power relation in the family nor contesting hegemonic structure designed by the state.

8.8. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have elaborate the process of constructing a particular type of neoliberal subject through various assemblages that produced by "social inclusion" project. Furthermore, what it was intended as "inclusive" project implementation, did not necessarily led to what "social inclusion" has promised as a policy concept. I started with generalized narrative that often used to justify the state of victimhood of Chinese *Benteng* women as saveable victims. Through what it intended as "social inclusion" is initiative, this research points out gendered implication that occurred as counter-effect is inevitable. Not only that, this chapter also unravels on how "*Peduli Program*" presented women-focused saving and lending organizations as neoliberal way to govern Chinese *Benteng* women that are seen as "problematic population". This chapter also has provided in a more detail description how women's empowerment is instrumentalized to implement externally inducted notion of "social inclusion".

In the "social inclusion" project context, common negative stereotypes about Chinese *Benteng* that are depicted as "poor Chinese" has generated perception about their "laziness" as deviant behaviour in comparison with what public has assumed about "wealthy Chinese" because there are diligent and hard-worker. My encounter with Mak Hwa Ing and her granddaughter has shown the most common example of typical Chinese *Benteng* Women that always attracted mainstream media attention. Their misery is continuously fetishized as commodification to generate pity from Chinese Indonesian-dominated companies and associations as

the main target of voluntary activities. Consequently, being constantly portrayed as “poor Chinese”, this generalized simplified homogenization of Chinese *Benteng* community in such a way that overlooks embedded power relation that exists among this community. Such universalized and generalized framing are indeed problematic which maintains negative stereotypes about them that always rely on donations from private entities.

Homogenous representation as victims of discrimination and negatively stereotyped by the government and broader community where they live; the common imagination of Chinese *Benteng* women is constructed as suitable target groups for the social inclusion initiative in the “*Peduli Program*” to work on. In this chapter, I have explained how the unfamiliar “social inclusion” discourse is used as a technical tool, not to challenge and disturb existing power structure in the community, but instead to maintain such structure through Development project that intervene those who are seen as “problematic population”. Moreover, the use of popular “women’s empowerment” technique is crucial to explain what Foucault called as *subjectivation* in which the Chinese *Benteng* women as the target population of a *social inclusion* intervention were corrected therefore crafted to desire personal freedom and self-actualization through the promise of “participation” and “empowerment” as technology to govern themselves. The creation of Chinese *Benteng* women as subject of “women empowerment” came into existence through constant reproduction of anomalies that deviant from the imagined homogenized narratives about fixated representation of Chinese Indonesians.

In this chapter, the framework of “State Ibuism” from Julia Suryakusuma (2011) is very helpful in explaining the operational logic behind the use of “women’s empowerment” as technology to govern Chinese *Benteng* women as “social inclusion” subject. The strength of “State Ibuism” as the analytical knife in this chapter has allowed me to interpret that the imagination of utopian-desired “inclusive society” harmonious Indonesia, unfortunately, is steered, dominated, and controlled by patriarchal manipulation of the feminist notion of reformist women’s empowerment and at the expenses of women’s body under the hostile panoptic surveillance of the society. Such patriarchal manipulation of “women’s empowerment” is adopted by WRDC as NGO project implementer through creating the Chinese *Benteng* women as responsible mother, dutiful wife, and active

Indonesian citizen through their participation in nurturing public life in a state-sponsored Development project. Consequently, this model of “women’s empowerment” did not interrogate, let alone to challenge and to contest, the existing construction of women’s role as expected and demanded by patriarchal society. Furthermore, the notion of “social inclusion” that operated by this kind of “women’s empowerment” focuses on corrective mechanism that emphasize on Chinese *Benteng* women’s lack of visibility among the community where they live and subjectified them to be socially active in the community while at the same time also complying with their domesticated role.

**IX – SOCIAL INCLUSION –
THE POLITICS OF SUBJECT
MAKING**

IX – “SOCIAL INCLUSION” – THE POLITICS OF SUBJECT MAKING

9.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I have explained how the existence of Chinese *Benteng* women from *Kampung Wetan* that labeled as ‘socially excluded people’ became an important correction target of a government-sponsored social inclusion project to work on. Their involvement in this project was promoted by WRDC, a Jakarta-based local NGO with more than 20 years of experience in facilitating urban poor women to form saving and lending cooperative as their communal platform to solve their day-to-day problems. By showing their persistence attitude through constant approach towards these women, nicely framed around the benevolent narrative of ‘a genuine intention to help’, WRDC successfully garnered curiosity from the Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* to start attending activities initiated by the NGO. Moreover, their increasing curiosity was mobilized by WRDC, following a mechanistic template that they always use in almost every project they implement, into a women-administered saving and loan cooperative as an idealized collective platform for these women to solve their problems.

The history of “*Peduli Program*” as social inclusion project cannot be detached from its predecessor project, a World Bank-managed empowerment project, as an intention to deliver the ‘benefit’ of development to some of the most marginalized groups in Indonesia. It was oftentimes claimed as an innovative and creative approach in delivering development project that the Bank rarely does – granting funds directly to Indonesian NGOs to implement projects. At that time, for the Bank, it might be worth to elaborate alternative channel to deliver development to these disadvantaged groups via NGOs that are seen to have more experience in facilitating, supporting, and empowering these community which are perceived as socially excluded from development processes that prevent their participation in important decision-making arenas. However, after subsequent deadlock in high-level negotiation among country level Bank’s bureaucrats; it led to the Bank’s withdrawal from continuing the project. Since the decision to let this

project go, “*Peduli Program*” was directly picked up by the Australian’s government aid agency that was the dominant source of project’s financing. Moreover, without much changes in the original implementation structure, the “*Peduli Program*” remains relying its delivery mechanism through local NGOs to reach marginalized groups that were identified earlier as the project’s ‘beneficiaries’.

Moving a step back from “*Peduli Program*” initial inception in 2010, an initiative to collect stories about them who are forgotten by development projects was undertaken by The World Bank-funded facility. The idea to document evocative narratives of those who are defined as ‘the invisible people’ – as the common theme identified in the final product – was considered an important step to map out who are being left out, particularly by the government welfare programs and policies. Among a number of community groups that the writer interviewed, Chinese *Benteng* was one of them. One section in the book was dedicated to narrate the story of three Chinese *Benteng* women that live in West Jakarta in relation to their disappointment in facing the state apparatus in obtaining their legal identity, in accessing health services that is too expensive for them, and other negative experience in claiming their entitlement as citizens. With a very clear framing, the writer took a specific angle of state-citizen relationship in illustrating negative experience of the Chinese *Benteng* women in which the writer does not use to frame narratives from different groups. Because of that specific angle, the section about Chinese *Benteng* is titled as “Chinese *Benteng* – Barely Indonesian” that emphasizes their victimhood of the state’s policy due to their racial nonconformity as Indonesian. Unfortunately, when the Bank’s started to design the intervention blueprint, the Chinese *Benteng* communities were not part of the initial target population. The reason of not taking them into account was very administrative and technical – the Chinese *Benteng* communities did not work with any NGO, which should do the ‘empowerment’ work.

As an NGO that has been working extensively with urban poor women in many economic empowerment projects, WRDC was the one that eventually approach Chinese *Benteng* community to be their prospective intervention target for the newly refined “*Peduli Program*” under the new management structure. Unlike the initial phase that focused on the ‘empowerment’ aspect, the refined “*Peduli Program*” explicitly focuses on ‘social inclusion’ as an approach to

accelerate government's poverty alleviation effort through inclusive fulfilment of public services, access to economic opportunities and livelihood, and local/national policy change towards inclusivity. To do such, the current focus of refined "*Peduli Program*" seeks to include the excluded individuals/groups into a series of corrective intervention operated by a network of local NGOs that financially linked to a number of national NGOs and are clustered based on their expertise in dealing with issues particular to specific target population. A slight modification from the earlier version of the project, current grouping scheme focuses on the target population based on their social identity. This grouping model also maps out how individual problems of the target population are associated with the prescribed identities. Furthermore, the project started to associate the 'root causes' of their exclusion around the specific 'pillars' that refers to the collective social identity created by the project. By grouping the population target into 'pillars', "*Peduli Program*" seeks to rationalize how individual issues, such as inability to access public services, lack of employment and housing, or individual freedom of expression are tailored into collectivized issues that affect other community groups in the same 'pillar'. Interestingly, Chinese *Benteng* communities are grouped together with Indigenous People and other marginalized groups that rely their sustenance on natural resources, in particular forest-generated resources. Despite the mismatch logic in grouping Chinese *Benteng* people in the same category with Indigenous people, the project manager from PfGR who manage this pillar admitted that they should have not taken this sub-project under their portfolio. But due to WRDC's internal lobby – backed up by expert gender advisor that sat in one of the technical working group – PfGR was let with no better option other than to take WRDC under their wing with the expectation not to damage their relationship with the gender advisor. Furthermore, this means that individual problems faced by a Chinese *Benteng* person is associated as a collective problem for the whole Chinese *Benteng* population regardless their position in their society. Therefore, by collectivizing individual problems into identity-based collective problems, especially in a community with shared ethnic background and racial complexion, WRDC has participated in series of corrective operation where they construe complex realities of the Chinese *Benteng* community into a solvable technical puzzle based on the project matrix provided by their financial patron.

In the earlier chapter, I have explained the process in which the Chinese Benteng women are technically shaped to fit ideal preconception about Indonesian women on the context of neoliberal development regime. By participating in the “*Peduli Program*”, these Chinese *Benteng* women are actively involves in the course of social engineering by co-creating neoliberal subject through operationalization of reductionist understanding of social inclusion as per the project’s prescription. Through intensive ‘facilitation’, ‘capacity building’, ‘mentoring’, and ‘guidance’, WRDC as the implementing agent has an important task in this operation to capacitate the Chinese *Benteng* women to self-help, to self-improve, and to self-discipline according to project’s vision of sustainable poverty reduction that shall be achieved when the social relations on governing access to resources and economic opportunities would be changed and social inclusion of the formerly excluded people would be improved. Moreover, the predetermined ideals about Indonesian women that encompass feminine elements of being responsible mother, dutiful wife, as well as active member of the society underpin almost all activities initiated by the WRDC to shape the Chinese *Benteng* women as neoliberal subject. To explain further about the politics of neoliberal subject making, I present two life narratives of Ibu Herlina whose life has been changed dramatically once she started to engage in “*Peduli Program*”, followed by Mariah’s narratives which face rather distinct effect from her participation in the same project. I will continue to explore how the Chinese *Benteng* saving and lending cooperative operates as sphere of governmentality by adopting European-model of ‘social inclusion’ in ahistorical and apolitical way through the work of community development NGO as development broker. Through their work, Chinese *Benteng* women are constructed as ‘needy subject’ (Timmer, 2010) which required corrective salvation. Such operation is based on market-based rationale that viewed these women as economic unit whose productivity should be enhanced. Lastly, I will present how “*Peduli Program*” deliver the notion of social inclusion through deradicalized women empowerment and rather focus on economic empowerment based on the logic of women as economically rational, responsible individual, and efficient that socially shaped under Indonesia’s gender ideology, *State Ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). Furthermore, such neoliberal development logic that underline social inclusion project like “*Peduli Program*” continue to work based on market-based

technical solution to overcome social exclusion face by the Chinese *Benteng* community.

9.2. THE WOMEN'S NARRATIVE AS FOUNDATION TOWARDS DOMINATION – A SUBJECT IN THE MAKING

9.2.1. “I never image to be like this” – The Narrative of an Emerging Community Broker

From all women of the *koperasi simpan pinjam*¹⁰⁶ that I have encountered, Ibu Herlina fits the description of most empowered women according to the technical definition of “*Peduli Program*” that operated via new discourse of social inclusion. As I previously described in the preceding chapters, Ibu Herlina is presented as the Project’s best creation as it gives, despite not much, contribution to Ibu Herlina’s newly found ability to cultivate harmonious relationship with various parties such as government bureaucrats, the NGO’s community organizers, or other neighbors and members of local communities where she lives. My initial impression about Ibu Herlina was nothing extraordinary, simply as *regular* woman that was approached by the WRDC to be part of “*Peduli Program*”. I could have called her just Herlina, as we are about at the same age; but I decided to add the pronoun ‘*Ibu*’ as a courteous way to address her as ‘Indonesian woman in the making’. Throughout my reflection in the later stage of this research process, I wonder that by calling a woman as ‘*Ibu*’, was not only just being polite and respectful, but there is a process of reinterpretation and reconstruction of what does it mean to be a woman or an ‘*Ibu*’ in Indonesia that often overlooked.

Ibu Herlina was born in 1979, just a year older than me. We basically grew up in the same era, when Suharto’s authoritarian power at its paramount and highly praised as Indonesia’s most rapid development era. Due to massive development projects proliferated across the capital city and some of its neighboring areas, Suharto was given the title “Father of Development”. By the same token, the regime also curbed the visibility of Chinese Indonesian like us and denied our presence as ‘child of the nation’. Physically, Ibu Herlina is not very

¹⁰⁶ Saving and lending cooperative

different from me; like also female members of my family or any women from the neighborhood that I grew up in. She does not have dark skin complexion, like common representations about the Chinese Benteng people that is always depicted as having darker brownish skin and big round eye and not slanted eyes like many Chinese's almond-shaped eye. Ibu Tuti from WRDC was the one that introduced me to her sometimes in November 2016, when I visited *Kampung Wetan* for the first time, where Ibu Herlina spent most of her youth in that neighborhood. I clearly remember how Ibu Tuti passionately described her as the most empowered woman in the *koperasi* that she helped to established. It was quite obvious that the standard of being an empowered woman for Ibu Tuti is when Ibu Herlina was confidently always asked to represent the Chinese *Benteng* women in many prestigious events, mostly at the national level to represent the category of 'successful beneficiary'. Such representation often used to illustrate those beneficiaries whose life have been successfully changed by the project as they are now 'have been improved'. For Ibu Tuti that has been helping the Chinese *Benteng* women to form a *koperasi* for more than three years now, the experience of Ibu Herlina to fully realized her full potential is defined as the Project's successful achievement in creating the most promising and inspiring prototype of social inclusion cadres that projected as engine of mobilization for the Chinese *Benteng* community.

Ibu Herlina is no longer live in *Kampung Wetan*. Despite so, her attachment with this neighborhood is inseparable. Throughout her life, she lived there with her aunt as she also refers as her mother, whom she calls *Emak*¹⁰⁷ *Wetan*, together with her uncle and their family. According to Ibu Herlina, during her childhood and adolescence, lived with *Emak Wetan* was more convenient in comparison to living with her birth mother in Bekasi – about sixty something kilometers from Tangerang area. In her confession, she said that she does not have strong emotional attachment with her birth mother, unlike what she felt with *Emak Wetan*. "Do I look like a Chinese *Benteng* to you?" she asked me once, "No, right? It is because I am not purely Chinese

¹⁰⁷ *Emak* – Low Malay language means mother. In the past, low Malay language was referred as bazaar Malay or *Melayu Pasar*, where people spoke malay in the market for the purpose of trading. This dialect was very prominent among the Chinese *Peranakan* people, which indicate their high level of assimilation with the native, prior to the arrival of the Dutch colonial.

Benteng. I have Dayak¹⁰⁸ blood, from my [birth] father," she continued talking while I helped her packing the cookies to sell. In a slight glance, I saw some kind of uneasiness when talking about her father. Unfortunately, she never knew her father and her mother were illegitimate second wife of her father. She learnt all of this from her mother's story that her father once was a reputable *lurah* in West Jakarta who was captivated by her mother's charmed and beauty. He then married her 'under the table'¹⁰⁹ and made her the second wife. Ibu Herlina's mother is a Chinese *Benteng* woman who was born also in *Kampung Wetan* and moved out to Jakarta to find better living. In order to distinguish the two mothers, Ibu Herlina calls her biological mother as *Emak Bekasi* as she is now live in Bekasi, a peripheral city near Jakarta. However, Ibu Herlina's mother did not stay long in Jakarta and due to the sudden death of her husband, her mother moved back to *Kampung Wetan* for some other years before she remarried with a Balinese man, whom Ibu Herlina know as her only father.

Despite her mother has been remarried and lived in Bekasi, little Herlina was brought up by *Emak Wetan* – the younger sister of her mother – who lives in *Kampung Wetan* until now. Every day, *Emak Wetan* sells yellow fried chicken, a typical fried chicken marinated overnight with many spices: turmeric, galangal roots, lemongrass, red shallot, and candlenut. *Emak Wetan* sells the pre-cooked fried chicken door to door, from one neighborhood to other, or even to Jakarta from one market to another. Until today, *Emak Wetan* has to wake up at 3 o'clock in the morning to get fresh whole chicken at the old market – *Pasar Lama*. Those are the chicken that she will marinate later to sell on the following day. Despite the profit is relatively low, she is able to maintain her living, send the children to school and to see doctors for medical treatment, when needed. Ibu Herlina still remembers her childhood memories how she sometimes helped her *Emak Wetan* to prepare the chicken and also to sell those fried chickens. Back then, *Kampung Wetan* was basically an abandon area; at night they did not have electricity in which they had to rely on small lamp powered by kerosene.

¹⁰⁸ Dayak is the indigenous tribe from Kalimantan (Borneo)

¹⁰⁹ The expression of 'under the table' is a common phrase which means illegal or without proper administrative paperwork

For Ibu Herlina, *Kampung Wetan* is her forever home, although until recently, her husband bought her a comfortable house in Sepatan area, which just 10 kilometers away to from *Kampung Wetan*. There in Sepatan, she lives with her second and third daughter – both from her previous marriage – and her only son from the current marriage. Her first daughter does not live with her anymore. “*You must have thought that I have been like this [active cadre of the koperasi, knowledgeable, popular, and confident] since the beginning, right? I bet you would not believe if I told you that my previous life was a hell. My past was dark ... very dark,*” as she started to open up to me, during 6 hours bus ride from Tangerang to Bandung trip organized by Local Department of Performing Art and Culture of Municipality of Tangerang area for mini-comparison study visit. Unexpectedly, she brought me along to accompany her to Bandung, because she did not want to go alone and much later she also needs a female companion because her husband is often get jealous of male acquaintances from her outside activities who she later befriend. “*My husband often gets jealous, if he sees me being friendly with men. So, I have to take care of his feeling. If he is really jealous and forbid me doing this koperasi thing, it will be troublesome because I like being involved in this activity so much. The koperasi is my life now, beside my family.*” The invitation to travel to Bandung was part of a two days seminar about dance group management which was hosted and finance by the local government office. Since Ibu Herlina and her dance group practices *Cokek Sipatmo* dance which they learned from a private dance lesson, taught by a professional dancer, as part of the “*Peduli Program*” activity; Ibu Herlina and her fellow dance mates have been constantly performed in government-hosted public event. They are also oftentimes invited by the government office to attend trainings, short-course, or workshops as those that represent women from their *kelurahan* – just like the one we attended that day.

Since young age, Ibu Herlina’s life has been difficult. She described herself as brave and rebellious girl which often broke the rules. Despite so, she also recognized her brightness in school. She recalled the time when she got the highest final score in her junior high school which send her straight to one public high school without entrance test. Because of that achievement, she got tuition fee waiver scholarship for the whole first year. Despite her brightness in school, Ibu Herlina admitted that she was also got bored easily which often provoked her to skip classes frequently, especially when she started to date her boyfriend which

often persuade her to skip classes. Due to her constant absent from the class, Ibu Herlina was warned by her teachers about her falling grades and bad academic performance. She knew it, but decided to ignore her teachers' warning which made her performance even worse and eventually she lost the scholarship. Losing the scholarship has resulted bad in her future education which she had to stop because of her parent's financial hurdles. "Because I didn't have the scholarship anymore, my parents had to pay the school fees. We didn't have the money for that, even we were struggling for eat. That's why I decided not to go to school anymore [...] My boyfriend suggested us to get married, rather than doing nothing. So, I got married." Later, her decision to tie the knot with her boyfriend became her biggest regret ever, which sometimes still haunted her until recently.

Putus sekolah, literally means break from school, is a term that Indonesians use to refer to children or young teen that discontinue their education. Often *putus sekolah* associated with those who do not have sufficient financial means to continue formal primary and secondary education level. Because Ibu Herlina stopped her schooling when she was 16, this means that she never graduates from high school which made her *putus sekolah*. Being *putus sekolah* is also her one-time decision that she forever regrets. Not only that, her marriage with the boyfriend was far from what she had imagined and he was not the type of husband that she ever hoped for. Unfortunately, her marriage was far from dreamy and happily ever after kind of marriage. They eloped in 1996, when Ibu Herlina was not even yet 17 years old and her boyfriend was two years older than her, 19 years old. They did not bother to go through legal administration process for marriage registration in the civil office and instead just went to modest religious procession in a *Vihara* (Buddhist temple) followed by family gathering for lunch. Beside they did not know how to handle the marriage registration paperwork, Ibu Herlina and her husband also did not really bother with the issue of having such legal documents for their future children. Not only the civil registration, they also did not go through a *Cio Tao* ceremony as an important part of adulthood according to Chinese Benteng tradition.

Cio Tao traditional ceremony is an important part of Chinese *Benteng* tradition, which is known as a rite of passage into adulthood. Despite this ceremony does not literally mean traditional wedding ceremony per se – as many misconceptions about this process which have been disseminated informally and

verbally – *Cio Tao* procession normally held in the beginning of two-three days wedding celebration for majority of the Chinese people in Tangerang, including the Chinese *Benteng* people. The *Cio Tao* procession itself is rich with many symbolical meanings for both adult men and women that decide to enter an adult life by forming their own family. For majority of Chinese *Benteng* people, doing *Cio Tao* procession in the wedding is actually more important than having their married registered in the civil registration office. They believe that the *Cio Tao* procession will tie the couples together also in afterlife, even when the marriage life would not work and they would eventually divorce. However, such procession cost a fortune, in addition to the main wedding parties, which commonly is found only in well-off families. On the contrary, for those families that cannot afford such procession, they rarely do that – just like what Ibu Herlina and her husband did.

Ibu Herlina's marriage life was unlike what she had imagined before. It is common for the Chinese Indonesian community that a married daughter leaves her own family to join her husband's family; and Ibu Herlina's case was no different. She left her family's residence in *Kampung Wetan* to join her in-laws in Karawaci. As a newly married couple, Ibu Herlina and her husband had to adjust their lives one with another which led her to find out her husband's explosive temper towards her. In the beginning, Ibu Herlina thought that it was just a simple misunderstanding which made her husband angry and yelled at her. Later his yells were repeated frequently, often added with slap and hit, which she did not consider such violent treatment as physically abusive relationship. This recurring brutality led to create her own assumption about herself that she always made mistake, she did not understand her husband, she was lack of affection towards him, she was useless, and many more. She did not realize that she gradually degraded her own self-esteem and always victimized her own self. Even so, she never thought to leave her husband and ended the marriage; and the reason was she loved him. Ibu Herlina's first daughter was born nearly a year after their wedding and during that time, she gradually learned that her marriage life was not as easy as she thought before. Both she and her husband did not graduate from high school, has no regular jobs, and lacked of livelihood skills. But because they lived with her in-laws, they did not worry about housing or food. She just had small worries which were the supplies for her newborn baby girl, like milk, baby clothes, and healthcare.

When Lola – Ibu Herlina’s baby girl – was born, she was so pretty but very small. She oftentimes worried that Lola would not grow as normal as the other children. Lola’s arrival brought her some mixed feelings. On one side, she was happy and hopeful that her husband might change his violent behaviors; on the other side she was worried because of their bad financial situation. To earn more money, Ibu Herlina helped her *Emak Wetan* to sell the pre-cooked fried chicken. Early in the morning, she brought her baby with her to *Kampung Wetan* to pick up the food. *Emak Wetan* has prepared the chicken marinated in yellowish-looking spices and packed the different chicken parts into small transparent plastic bag. Ibu Herlina usually took up to 40 plastic bags to sell. She went door-to-door, from one house to another, wandered around across narrow alleys to sell those chickens. If she had a little bit of money, she took public transport to other destinations; if not, she just walked on foot carrying her infant daughter and a basket full of pre-cooked fried chicken. It was also often that she travelled across the Tangerang’s border to West Jakarta which there were no direct route available as she had to take multiple routes and changed different types of transportation. Taking taxi was not an option, as the fare was just too expensive to bear, so *angkot* – badly shaped mini bus that operated within or across city/districts – was the only option to take.

For a few years in her marriage, Ibu Herlina’s hope to see her husband’s behavior to change was evaporated, just like dreaming an impossible fantasy. Her husband just never changed, in fact it got worse every day. She lost counts on how many abuses that she encountered on a daily basis. She could not remember anymore which incidents that provoke her husband to hit her. Even at the time when she told me this, she could not understand how she had that strength to stay in the marriage, “[...] or I was just too stupid to leave him” as she tried to analyze herself. Even when she found that her husband had cheated on her and tried to confront him, she had no intention to leave her husband despite his repeated accusation of being stupid and unworthy wife. She knew that her husband always says those words to her, as she was unable to give him a son. Her husband also called her useless wife, directly pointing to her inability and failure to fulfill her obligation to bear a son that was seen as symbol of family pride and honor. Despite had been in constant abuse, Ibu Herlina remained faithful to him, until one day that he could have caused her lost her life.

As she showed me a small mark on her hand, where her husband hit her with woodblock, she recited what had happened that day – the day that she finally decided to leave him and promised not to look back. It happened approximately ten years ago, when Ibu Herlina just about to drop her youngest daughter to school. She rode her motorcycle in a rush with high velocity, speeding from her house in Poris to *Kampung Wetan* where her daughter went to school. Suddenly another motorcycle speed very fast came from the opposite direction. There was not enough time to steer her vehicle away and avoided the other motorcycle; the accident was inevitable. *“I fell on the ground and my daughter was released from my hand. She was darted off and I saw her slammed on the ground further away from me. Luckily, she wore helmet! Can you imagine what could have happened? She might be dead [...] The other rider ran away. It was useless to chase. My hand was trembling and I could not move it, but I had to go. We went to my mother’s house to get help. It was close by.”* As soon as she arrived at *Kampung Wetan*, *Emak Wetan* got them medicine. She thought that Ibu Herlina better stayed there for a while to rest, let her daughter to skip school to as she worried that the girl might got concussion. Ibu Herlina thought likewise, as she had nothing to feed the girls. Her husband has not been working for months and got more violent every day. After a while in her mother’s house, she called her husband about the accident and intended to inform him that they will not be home for a few days. Hoping to get a thoughtful attention from her husband, Ibu Herlina instead was forced to go back home and return the motorcycle as he needed it for ‘work’. She recited to me the story as she was outraged, *“I could not believe that he said that. He didn’t even care whether I am still alive or dead. He didn’t ask about her daughter either. What he cared the most was the damn motorcycle. He finally came to my mother’s house to get the motorcycle, just because I could not ride home. He did not come to see us or brought us home. You know what he did? He hit me! With a wooden block [...] See this part of my thumb? The bone bends, because of that! My mother saw him beat me and kick him out from her house. I stayed there and did not returned.”*

Ibu Herlina just left like that and took her three daughters with her. There was no divorce process, because she did not register her marriage in the civil administration office. For her, it was like blessing in disguise as she did not have to deal with divorce process which might complicate her life even further. Having three young children and without job, she had to do anything to feed her daughters. She started to open a rice stall near the main road. Every morning she went to the

market, cooked the rice as well as the condiments, and opened her stall by mid-day as she found that it was the best timing to have customers. She said that her rice stall was quite good as it attracted more and more customers to come. Despite so, she quitted the business as she believed that her competitors were jealous of her success and spelled her out with black magic. *"You may believe or not, but for many days, no one came by to buy. I always went to the same spot, but my customers said that they didn't see me. It was so weird. Eventually I knew another seller was jealous of me and she did something to make us 'unseen'. That was why I wondered that I have done everything to attract customers, like waved my hand or tried to stop them, but they did not stop to buy my food."*

After failing the rice stall business, Ibu Herlina started to find a job as motorcycle sales girl. She thought that it was quite easy job to do, especially for someone like her that has no school degree. Just with a small talk and dress up a little bit provocative, she believed that it might worked out in attracting prospective customers to purchase motorcycle. Her strategy apparently worked well and she often exceeded her monthly sales target. According to her, the showroom manager was very fond of her because she always met her target. Not only that, she also had a few loyal customers that secure her targets, some of them were attracted to her – perhaps sexually – as she said. Despite her good performance in her job, she thought that some of her colleagues were jealous of her and stabbed her in the back which made her sales number drastically dropped and eventually was fired. After being fired, she tried to find another job, but she did not fine one – until a friend asked her if she was interested to be an escort. Without thinking twice, she accepted the offer to be an escort – a freelance one and was not tied up to one place. She said that her job was not difficult, just accompany businessmen in karaoke bar, restaurants or entertainment places. Despite she admitted that some of her clients oftentimes teased her and requested sexual relationship, but she refused to do so, as she said *"I am not a prostitute. I just give them company and I get paid."* She continued that the money was good. Even though she was not rich, she was able to pay her daughters' education and gave a little bit of her earnings to *Emak Wetan* with whom she left her daughters to be taken care of. This job made her foreign to *Kampung Wetan* as she often went out at night or even days. *"I didn't come home often, maybe once or twice in a week. When I was in the house, I slept. I know that people in this Kampung were talking bad about me. They said that I was a 'night woman' or*

'naughty woman'. I didn't have a good reputation, but I didn't care. At least I can feed my children and I didn't beg for people pity to feed them. I didn't care what people said about me."

As freelance escort, she did not attach to a one karaoke bar/restaurant only. She just received 'on-call' request, which was usually introduced via her friends. From that job, she learnt and understand about nocturnal world. She even admitted that she had tried different types of drugs, like meth and ecstasy pills; but she said that she was not an addict. From there, she also learnt that it seems normal that police officers were involve with the businessmen, backing them up on their dirty business. Even some of her clients were also from the police. *"As long as you give shares to the police, you can play around and you will be safe. Because of that I also befriend with some polices. They often participated in the karaoke with the bosses."* From that job, Ibu Herlina met her current husband which she believed that it was a destiny for her to meet him. With a blushing face, she told me about her husband, *"Actually he was my friend's client. I knew that they were not just client, they had relationship (love interest) too. It was weird that every time they went out together, they took me along too. I quite liked him actually and apparently, he also has the same feeling for me. He chased me around, but I know he was with my friend."* I asked back to her, *"What happened with the girlfriend then? Your friend?"* She responded, *"You know what? She cheated on him with a guy and he killed her ..."* My jaw was dropped when I heard that part of the story as she continued explaining to me how she had to testify in front of the police and identified the body. *"It was around May 2010 and it was on TV, Lativi News [...] Maybe you have seen it on TV. The man with whom she was killed her in a hotel. It was horrible."*

Because of her traumatic experience with an abusive husband, Ibu Herlina did not even think to remarry. As she says, *"What does it for to be the first wife, if you are beaten and abused every day? I even made a vow in my temple, in front of Kwan-Im Goddess, that I would have chosen to be a second wife instead. It doesn't matter if it is not legal marriage. If the man loves me and my children, I am willing to do that."* Ibu Herlina did introduce me to her current husband, a well-dressed man and seemed polite, during one event in the *Kelurahan* office. She said her husband has transportation and logistics business. After she revealed that her abusive experience with her first husband, she admitted that the husband she introduced to me the other day was not the father of her daughters. *"I am his second wife. My daughters are not his, but my*

son is. We got married in 2011 and he already has a wife – the old wife.” I then asked her if her husband intends to divorce his first wife and made her legitimate wife. Surprisingly Ibu Herlina answered reluctantly while mumbled, “No. He won’t divorce her. She has diabetic and it will not be fair if he divorces her. She does not make any mistake and why he has to divorce her. I am willing to be this way [...] That’s OK!”

Just like her previous marriage, Ibu Herlina does not legally register this marriage. This mainly because her husband is still registered as a married person. On her wedding day, they just celebrated the wedding in a restaurant and made a wedding photo in a studio. The photo is hung on the wall in her house. She looked very happy in that photo, wearing a white wedding dress and had pretty make-up on. I asked her, “*Did you do the Cio-Tao with your current husband?*” She just shook her head, “*He did it already with his old wife.*” For the Chinese Benteng people, *Cio Tao* procession can only be done once in a lifetime. Once they had it, they cannot repeat another *Cio Tao* with a different person; because their *Cio Tao* will be forever and their *Cio Tao* partner would be their afterlife partner. Ibu Herlina does not seem bother not completing *Cio Tao* procession. Her main concerns were whether her current husband loves her child like his own and kind to her – is not physically and mentally abusive towards her and her daughters as well as financially responsible of their welfare. She continued, “*I really don’t mind living like this, as long as he is responsible. He is a nice person. He finances all my daughters’ education. Now I have my own house under my name, even though he is the one that pay. My husband never sleeps there, because he sleeps over there [with the other wife]. I never complaint and I never ask too much. I know my position, only a second wife. Maybe this is my destiny.*” Ibu Herlina felt that her husband has saved her life and lifted her from the ‘darkness’. She thinks that her husband really loves her and she tries not to disappoint him. Especially when she finally gave birth to a son, she felt that her husband loves her even more.

Having a son was a source of her joy. At that time, Ibu Herlina felt complete. Her husband told her that she did not have to work anymore, which he referred to Ibu Herlina’s previous job, because he would fulfil what she needs. She just had to concentrate in raising their son, be a good mother and stay-home wife. She does not have to worry with the school fees of her daughters, because the husband will take care of everything. About eight months after giving birth to her son, one day she was dragged by her neighbor, Ibu San Nio, to an informal gathering at her

house. She remembered that at that time, Ibu San Nio pleaded to her for accompany to attend that gathering even though Ibu Herlina herself had been busy with her baby. Actually, she wanted to refuse Ibu San Nio's request, but she felt rather hesitant because Ibu San Nio's husband was the one that helped the whole neighborhood to resist the eviction plan. Sometimes Ibu Herlina felt indebted to Pak Heri due to the eviction incident and she usually agrees if Pak Heri asked her to do something, like on that day when there was a meeting with two women come from Jakarta that want to explain activities for women in *Kampung Wetan*. Ibu San Nio did not want to attend the meeting by herself; even though it was held in her house, she did not feel want to sit down and listen to what they said. Because Ibu San Nio said that the meeting would be short, Ibu Herlina then thought that it would be alright to spend ten to fifteen minutes in Ibu San Nio's house.

That was the first time that Ibu Herlina met Ibu Tuti and Ibu Winarti from an NGO called WRDC. She did not know what is an NGO. In the beginning, she thought that these two women want to donate something or to do community volunteering like free health check that many associations from Jakarta usually come to *Kampung Wetan* for. What she heard then that these women came to their *kampung* to teach them how to form a *koperasi*. In that meeting, she also met Ibu Ling Ling who apparently was also dragged by Ibu San Nio to come to that meeting. There was also Ibu Pin Lan that live next to Ibu San Nio's house. Ibu Herlina did not really remember how many women attended the meeting with Ibu Tuti, but she can tell that the meeting was very quick. She described that meeting was rather awkward, especially because Ibu Herlina knew that many women in the neighborhood disliked her and often talked about her past. She said that none of the women in that meeting said something, they were just listened to these two women with *jilbab* that talked about cooperative. As the meeting ended, Pak Heri told them to meet there again in the following week so the *koperasi* can start. Initially, Ibu Herlina did not really understand why they should form a *koperasi*. But because Pak Heri instructed them to be there again, so she did not have much things to say, as she wondered that this may be good for them. In the following week, she went to Ibu San Nio's house again, "I was just curious. I just wanted to know what the *koperasi* is. At that time, my husband did not know. Because he does not live here. So, I did not tell him." In the second meeting, it also did not last very long, less than 30 minutes. Pak Heri appointed her to be the chairwoman of the

cooperative, together with Ibu San Nio and Ibu Pin Lan that were told to be treasurer and secretary respectively. She thought maybe because they live close by one with another, so that would be much easier for any coordination. In the beginning, she refused her new title that came with responsibility which she could not committed to do. But after a little push from the other women, she took the new role, *“Finally, I told my husband about this. He did not agree, especially because I just giving birth and my son was still very little. But Ibu Tuti insisted me to be the chairwoman. She talked with my husband and persuaded him to allow me participate in the koperasi. She said it was for my own good and even guaranteed that I would not neglect my responsibility as mother. Thanks to her, otherwise I cannot be like this!”*

In the beginning of the cooperative, Ibu Herlina was not really confident about herself and her ability to lead an organization. She used to think that she is uneducated and *putus sekolah* as she does not even have high school certificate. As the chairwoman of the cooperative, Ibu Herlina was mainly mentored directly by Ibu Tuti, not only about how to run the *koperasi* administratively but also how to lead her colleagues to expand the *koperasi*. She thought that because of her strongly driven self, her motivation and her sense of social empathy, Ibu Herlina felt that she has found her place in the *koperasi*. Besides her husband to whom she felt indebted in relation to her past, she also felt indebted to Ibu Tuti and WRDC that trusted her to run the cooperative. From simple administrative task in running a cooperative of 25 members, she was further challenged to find new members for the *koperasi* and to increase the size of the *koperasi*'s asset in the following year. It was also because of her previous experience as a sales girl, getting new members was a quite easy target to achieve. However, unlike what she has done previously as motorcycle sales by dressed a little bit provocative to attract male customers; here in the *koperasi* she could not do the same approach, because most of the prospective members would be low-income women that mostly rely on their husbands' income to save in the *koperasi*. *“It was not as easy as I thought. Many prospective members were as poor as I am or even poorer than me. They still need money for daily needs, how can they save?”*

For months, Ibu Herlina went with Ibu Tuti door-to-door to explain about the *koperasi* also the benefit to join as member. Ibu Herlina paid attention closely what Ibu Tuti has said to present the cooperative. She even copied Ibu Tuti's response and memorized the words when prospective members posed frequently asked

questions. At the end, Ibu Herlina always promoted that the prospective members could borrow money with a low interest and longer duration of repayment, which she compared with methods used by the local loansharks. She says, *“Slowly I learn the trick. I always talk about the loanshark when promoting the koperasi. Most of the people here are victims of loanshark. It is easy to borrow from them. You don’t have to fill the administrative paperwork and you have the money now. But the interest is like 30 or 40 percent and you have to start paying the next day. I always say that it is a little bit of paper work for the koperasi and there are many rules. But the interest is low and they can decide their own terms of payment.”* Ibu Herlina can give detail explanation about how those loansharks work, because for several times she also borrowed money from them. She remembered how her old days were full of misery when she had no money at all and borrowed the loanshark was her only option. Sometimes, she also borrowed money as initial capital for her food business which she finally quit. Besides that, she also explained how most people in *Kampung Wetan* were afraid whether the *koperasi* will run away with their money. But Ibu Tuti has equipped her with answers that provide some securities to the prospective members, as Ibu Herlina continues *“[...] that is why our koperasi is now already registered in the Department of Cooperative. We are also a legitimate cooperative of our Kelurahan. See, we have our letterhead that has the Kelurahan logo and address. So, people do not have to be worried, because the cooperative will not go anywhere. We are always be here in the Kelurahan office.”*

Besides establishing *koperasi*, Ibu Tuti and WRDC also taught the women in *Kampung Wetan* many other activities that they never encounter before. In the beginning, Ibu Herlina and other women were brought along to many government offices. Despite she did not know why Ibu Tuti brought them there, but she was happy just to know new things and get to know more people. She said her tasks for this type of meeting are simple, just find around 10 people – including herself – to attend the meeting and to buy food for them. Because of attending this meeting, the government people started to know her as the representative of women from *Kelurahan Kembangan*. Ibu Herlina did not hesitate to ask for the government staffs’ phone numbers so just in case she can contact them directly for further coordination or anything that she could be helpful for the government. Furthermore, Ibu Herlina popularity in the government offices continues to increase along with their newly establish dance group that perform typical dance

of Chinese *Benteng* people, *Cokek Sipatmo* dance. Her network continues to expand along with her frequent presence in many government offices for meetings. Not only that, Ibu Herlina even appointed by the *Lurah* to lead a group of community-based health cadres that responsible to set up monthly health post in *Kampung Wetan*. She would never think that the *koperasi* that she leads could brought her to this situation where people respect her and treat her with dignity.

Ibu Herlina is one of the busiest women in *Kampung Wetan*. Despite she no longer lives there, but people in the *kampung* still treat her just like before – when she used to live there. With her prominent presence in not only the *Kampung Wetan* but also in other *kampung*s in *Kelurahan Kembangan*, Ibu Herlina always act as the spoke-person of any *koperasi*-related women activities. Like in an evening, when she invited me to attend a ‘torch ceremony’ that hosted by the *Kelurahan Kembangan* to start the Ramadhan period of fasting in Islamic tradition, she was asked by the *Lurah* to speak in front of the public about the history of *Cokek Sipatmo* dance which they have been practicing for three years. In front of a group of young audience, she explained very fluently about how the *Cokek* dance becomes an important part of Chinese Benteng cultural expression which should be preserved. In her word, “*If not us, who else that are going to preserve our culture? I am very glad to teach all of you to dance for the sake of preservation,*” as she encouraged the youth, especially young girls to participate in the dance class that she and her other fellow dance group members taught. Not only that she seemed to be very knowledgeable about the *Cokek* dance, but she appeared to be extremely confident in speaking in front of the government officials. For her, this was the result of continuous mentorship from WRDC, otherwise as she thinks that such courage would never be there.

Despite her increasing load of activities, Ibu Herlina remains identifying herself as a housewife and a mother to her four children. Because her first daughter has been married and no longer live with her, her three other children remain stay with her. She is less preoccupied with her daughters as they are all grown up and able to take care of themselves. Now, her focus is the youngest son which is still five years old. Being busy outside the house does not made her forget her day-to-day tasks. Every morning, she still wakes up at 4 in the morning to cook, to wash the clothes, to iron, to clean the house, and to get her son for ready for school. Once she finished with all her house chores, she often in a rush and run to start her

activities. It is not rare that her husband warns her not to neglect her main duty as mother. As in the beginning that her husband did not allow her to be socially active, Ibu Herlina often should make a promise to him that she would reduce her frequency being outside the house. *"It is not because he wants to restrict me, he is afraid if I leave him, because now I have many friends hahaha,"* as she giggled when describing how her husband is often extremely jealous if Ibu Herlina does not explain her social activities in details. But this does not make she quit her social activities and instead she learns how to balance her time so it does not make the husband furious. *"I know when to reduce my outside activities to balance my time in the house. If this week I am very busy, I will compensate it next week. I will not go anywhere. But it is not always easy! You know I cannot count on the other women. I cannot delegate. Actually, I wanted to quit as daily committee. It is too busy. But no one wanted to take my position."*

As the chairwoman of the *koperasi simpan pinjam*, Ibu Herlina always present in every weekly saving and lending session in the *Kelurahan* office. She is the type of person that likes to socialize and to talk with different kinds of people. Due to her sociable personality, Ibu Herlina always greets almost every member of the *koperasi* that come to the *Kelurahan* office on Tuesday regular session. When the day is not so hectic, she regularly pays attention to members that want to chat with her. Despite many people have seen her as a quite important figure in their *kampung*, Ibu Herlina does not hesitate to talk to fellow women about her past hoping that other could learn from her stories and do not repeat the same mistake like she did in the past. With her current position as the chairwoman, she indirectly transfers information about how it is important for women to have at least saving to protect themselves if unwanted occurrences happen to them. I once asked her whether she often gives advices to fellow women, especially the ones in *Kampung Wetan*, about domestic violence and women's right. As a figure that many women in *kampung Wetan* look up to, I was wondering if it was ever occurred to her to encourage other women to speak up regarding their condition. She just shook her head and sighed, *"How I could speak and encourage other women whereas I am a second wife myself. It would be hypocrite. I just cannot. I better don't say anything."* Her response made me think even further about many other women in *kampung Wetan* that face similar situation with Ibu Herlina, trapped with abusive husbands and or oppressive in-laws/families that punished them and made them pay the mistake that they never did. Ibu Herlina was not the only story that I heard around the issues on domestic

violence and abuse that many women in *kampung* Wetan experienced. For instance, husbands' of Ibu Pin Nio and Ibu Ling Ling also left them and do not divorce them. They were forced to willingly accept their abandonment after their husbands remarried to other women. Ibu Pin Nio was left with a son and Ibu Ling Ling was left with two children. Unlike Ibu Herlina that did not register her previous marriage, these two women are legally married and had properly registered their marriage to the civil office. After their husbands left, Ibu Pin Nio and Ibu Ling Ling have to find their own living to finance their daily expenses, including school fees and healthcare for their children. It was never occurred to them to file a divorce as that process would cost them a fortune and will be more painful than what they are facing right now. With her new social status as the one that other women listen to, Ibu Herlina could have been the voice to other women that face similar experience. However, she chooses not to involve further in advocating that issue, she prefers not to interrupt other people's personal affairs. In addition to that, Ibu Tuti and WRDC are pulling themselves out from this issue by arguing that familial matters were out of the project's scope.

Ibu Herlina is the most successful case of creating a new empowered woman who is then titled as *Pandu Inklusi* which mean leader of inclusion. Because of her own will to change herself from what the government labels as *sampah masyarakat* (trash of society), Ibu Herlina has successfully rebranded her new image as an empowered woman that is leading the most popular organization in the *Kelurahan Kembangan*, the *koperasi* for women. Her narrative then tells how not only among the Chinese *Benteng* community in *Kampung Wetan*, but also now other communities and the government have also paid high respect to her. Having said that, she does not take the credit all for herself; as she always said how grateful she is for the valuable experience that given by WRDC. Without saying too often about the "*Peduli Program*", Ibu Herlina shows that she has been able to restore her dignity which she had lost before, especially when people called her 'night woman'. She is now a dignified woman and enjoys a relatively prominent status in the Chinese *Benteng* community in *Kampung Wetan* as a result of her high mobility and her growing connection, in particular with the government bureaucrats. In the future, she wants to continue her activities in the *koperasi*, although not as extremely active as the present days, and promises herself that she will not stop doing that.

9.2.2. "I know they don't like me..." – A glimpse of the unexpected anomaly

Beside Ibu Herlina, Mariah is also one of my key informants in *Kampung Wetan*. I knew her in 2016, just about the same time when I started to know Ibu Herlina. During my fieldwork preparation time in Spain, we continued to be in touch via social media until I started my fieldwork in a year and a half later. Mariah is a 28-years old woman and a mother of 3 young children. Her first born is a 10-years old boy and her second born is a girl of 8 years old. By the time of my arrival, Mariah just gave birth to her third child, a baby boy, several days prior to my visit. Unlike most of the women that I met in *Kampung Wetan* who often claimed themselves as the *authentic* Chinese *Benteng* people, Mariah instead does not identify herself as the *authentic*. She instead describes herself as just *orang* Wetan, because she grew up in that area. Mariah has 5 siblings – two older brothers, two older sisters, and a younger sister who live also in *Kampung Wetan*. About four months earlier, Mariah and her husband decided to rent a modest two-rooms occupancy not very far from her mother house. They thought that her mother's house is not hygienic enough to raise a baby that would come in a few weeks. She said her mother's house is a *rumah gedek*¹¹⁰ with no ceramic floor to cover the dirt floor and the roof often leaks. She describes that her mother's house almost falls apart as it is built with cheap materials. Besides that, her two other sisters also live there. Despite all of her sisters already have their own family, but they are unable to afford to rent a place like Mariah does. In the mother's house, Mariah and her siblings have their own room to be occupied with their family. They collectively share common areas like kitchen or the living room.

Mariah's mother's house lays on the riverbanks of Cisadane river. It was a semi-permanent bamboo house which her father built once they moved back to *Kampung Wetan*. Previously they lived in Mangga Dua, West Jakarta; but were forced to moved out from that area. A few years after their return, Mariah's father passed away and buried in a communal cemetery nearby. Mariah said that her father always wanted to be buried in his soil, *Kampung Wetan*. Mariah's mother

¹¹⁰ *Rumah* means house and *gedek* means walls made from weaved bamboo. Many Chinese *Benteng* people also refer their traditional house by *rumah gedek*, since the wall made from bamboo or plywood. *Rumah gedek* often associated with poverty, indicated by inability to have brick-walled house.

does not exactly remember when the eviction was. What she remembered is that forced eviction was conducted during the Soeharto's era, perhaps in the late 1980s, as she tried to recollect her memories, due to building a trade center. Back then, in the late 1980s, law enforcement on regulations was not as strict as these days, especially the ones that regulated urban planning and public spaces. Besides, land price in Tangerang was a lot cheaper than in Jakarta. Together with fellow eviction victims, Mariah's family moved to Tangerang and find vacated area along the Cisadane river. In that area, a number of families formed an informal settlement colony and built their semi-permanent house with whatever materials available, mostly with bamboo, scrap wood, and thatched roof.

For more than twenty years since they started, this informal settlement in Cisadane riverbanks expanded. Even though it is not a private-own property, earlier settlers often involved in illegal land trading that sell the land that they occupied with a very low price to the new settlers. Generally, most of the new settlers were also victims of other evictions in Jakarta or recent evictions in Tangerang City center due to river normalization project. Since large majority of these settlers were families of low-income groups, they just could not afford house in formal housing market. Where the government did not provide any type of housing support for these groups, they were left with no option other than squatting around the city trying to find empty spot to settle in. In 2010, the Cisadane riverbank's area was targeted for the Tangerang's plan for river normalization project that would include pavement construction and green area development, in which led the government to evict these groups. As the consequence, the eviction plan would have demolished Mariah's house and their surrounding neighbors. The settlers resisted the plan and refused to be evicted; they guarded their *kampung*, so the local police and guards were not able to enter the settlements. According to Mariah's mother, the community resistance attracted wide national attention, as I showed her a number of images from online media that made her photographs as headline. She was surprise when I showed her those images, disbelieved that her face was all over the internet. Mariah, which was living in her husband's hometown at the time of the eviction, was extremely worries when she saw her mother on TV, struggling to resist the police that tried to break the human chain. She immediately called her sister several times, asked how come their mother could participate in such action. *"I was so worried and afraid. I don't want*

bad things happen to her while I was away far from home," Mariah still remembered how nervous she was, while waiting news and update from Jakarta. After a few days of community resistance, the city government put the eviction plan on hold until further notice. Many locals have speculated that the eviction plan was postponed due to the instruction from the President that was the chairman of a political party that dominated the local legislative council. Despite the eviction plan has stopped, the status of the plan is still temporarily being hold. This create an impression that one day, the eviction plan might be re-executed. Certainly, this perception has made the communities that live there become very anxious – wondering whether the eviction might finally happen without notice. Mariah said that this is also the reason why they decided to move out from the parent's house and find other places to live.

Mariah's new address is not difficult to find. She was really kind to arrange a motorcycle-taxi to pick me up in the Tangerang station. She said, if she was not in her postpartum period, she would have pick me by herself with a motorcycle. The area where Mariah lives called by *Kampung* Rawakucing, known as waste dumping ground area that receive enormous quantity of different kinds of garbage from three districts: South Tangerang, Tangerang City and Tangerang Regency. *Kampung* Rawakucing is not far from *Kampung* Wetan, maybe about 2 km; but they are under the different *Kelurahan* administration. Unlike in *Kampung* Wetan, where predominated by settlements area, *Kampung* Rawakucing is predominated by landfill, Chinese cemetery and medium size factories. In this area, Mariah rent a two-rooms occupancy in a two-floor building that consists of 18 occupancies with uniform model. On each floor, there are 9 units which occupied mostly by middle and low-income family with approximately 5 to 6 individuals in every household. The size of each housing unit is extremely small – maybe less than 20m². The width of every unit is about the same, approximately 2 to 2,5 m and the length is approximately 6 to 7m. Despite the housing is small, it has all basic necessities like a small reception area/living area, one-multipurpose room with air conditioner, one bathroom and kitchen/service area. To rent such place, Mariah pays IDR 600,000 (approximately €40) exclude the electricity bill and water, which normally could be up to IDR 500,000 or IDR 600,000 alone. In total, for housing only, she pays around IDR 1,200,000 to IDR 1,500,000 (around €80 to €100). For her family, housing expenses are roughly less than one third of the overall their monthly spending.

Mariah did not have the chance to finish her high school degree. She quitted her school when she was 16. At that time, she was in her second year of high school and just another year to finish. In a relatively young age, she got married with her husband whom she had been dating for more than a year. When she told me her story, often she giggled and said that I might not believe her story. She described the time when she just met her husband, "*I saw him almost dying on my way home. He was very skinny almost fainted because he did have lunch.*" She then brought him to her house and help him to get rest, also feed him. Later, she learned that he just came to Java from his hometown in Belitung archipelago in Sumatra. Mariah continued that day was his first days in Java when he tried to work as a salesman which she finally found him almost fainted. In the beginning Mariah did not have any particular romantic feelings toward him; but as their frequent meeting intensified Mariah thought that he might be a good husband for her. Beside that her mother also pursued her to marry the man. She still remembered her mother's advice about local men from *Kampung Wetan* that have a bad reputation as womanizer and like to gamble. Her mother also told her better not to marry local men, since they also like to do *plesiran*¹¹¹ with *Cokek* dancer and perhaps drinking. She was often told not only by her mother but also by her sisters about someone's husband that left his wife and run away with a *Cokek* (dancer). According to her mother, it is a lot better to get a mediocre and not-so-rich husband from outside of *Kampung Wetan* rather than marrying someone from that *kampung*, even though he may be a rich man. With that consideration, Mariah married her husband and finally moved to Belitung, the hometown of her husband. Later I asked her whether they also performed *Cio Tao* ceremony in their wedding. She then responded, "*No... Because I am Christian, so we don't do the traditional ceremony anymore. It was just blessing ceremony in our church.*"

Mariah lived in Belitung for more than eight years, where her first two children born. In Belitung, she lived with her in laws who she is really fond of. She told me that her mother-in-law cares about her, which made her felt grateful, as many Chinese Benteng women in *Kampung Wetan* do not have good relationship

¹¹¹ *Plesiran* is a local terminology that literally refers to activities that brought fun. However, this term often associated with 'fun' activities that many middle-age men do, especially dancing with *Cokek* dancer.

with the mother-in-law and often these women experience emotional abuse. Mariah also mentions that her late father-in-law cared so much with his son, "*My son was his favorite. It is because that my son is his first grandson. My in-laws treated my son like a king.*" She described her life in Belitung was rather boring, but at least it was peaceful and not too much gossips like in *Kampung Wetan*. However, despite living in Belitung was a stress-free life, but their economy did not progress as they would like. There were no many jobs available in Belitung other than farming, opening up a small grocery stall for daily necessities, or worked as laborer in mining company. Mariah herself said that when in Belitung, she basically only helped her mother-in-law doing house chores. Having said that, she really hoped that she could be back to Belitung to have more peaceful life in comparison to her life in Tangerang. By late 2014, she returns to Tangerang with her husband hoping to get better life as they already have 2 young children. Mariah described that God is still good to her family and as devoted Christian, her family always go to church every Sunday to pray for prosperity and blessing. She then correlated her devotion to her religion that made God grants her husband with a relatively well-paid job. Her husband works as a technician that responsible to supervise and to monitor a number of machines in a company that produced pirated DVD. Mariah said that despite her husband has a night shift, from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m., she does not mind at all, "*As long as he got money for the family...*" When her husband is in the house, he spends his time sleeping as he wakes up all night to work. It was only one time that Mariah was nervous when her husband is working, which was during the time she gave birth to their third child. Other than that, Mariah does not really complain about her husband's work. On a monthly basis, her husband makes around IDR 7 million (approximately €460) – double the size of Tangerang's minimum wage in 2018 – but Mariah always thinks with his current salary, the household expenses are still too tight and she does not have any leftover for contingency. Their expenses keep rising, especially when her husband decided to buy a second-hand car, which became the source of gossip around the neighborhood. "*She said she is poor, but she bought a car...*" as she recited one of the gossips that she often heard.

Everyday Mariah has to juggle in making sure that her husband's salary is be enough for the whole month. For her, joining the cooperative is a rather helpful because she can borrow from the cooperative to cover her family regular expenses. Her involvement in the cooperative started when her mother was asked by Pak

Heri to attend a meeting with one organization from Jakarta in his house. Mariah's mother is often asked by Pak Heri to attend community gatherings about various issues – like socialization event about election or information dissemination about radicalism given – or regularly be recipients when there are charity events from Jakarta. Did not want to go alone, Mariah's mother dragged her along to accompany her in that meeting. After attending the meeting with WRDC, Mariah instantly interested to join the *koperasi* while thinking that she could do something fruitful, rather than sit and do nothing. Since then, Mariah started to come regularly to the weekly activities. This also because she was asked by Pak Heri as a back-up secretary and treasurer to help Ibu Herlina in daily operation of the *koperasi*.

Mariah describes herself as a determined individual and likes to learn new things. This was also the reason that Mariah really enjoyed her involvement with the *koperasi*, as she was so excited whenever she accompanied Ibu Herlina to attend meetings with government bureaucrats or to participate in off-town activities. Because of her active involvement, Mariah was once appointed by WRDC to attend 2 days computer training in Jakarta. In the beginning, she did not know why she was the one that appointed to represent Chinese *Benteng* women to attend the training; but Mariah assumed that it might be because she was relatively younger in comparison with other women like Ibu Pin Lan or Ibu San Nio and she showed her intention to learn and to develop as a person. After the computer training, she said that the *koperasi* received a laptop given by "Peduli Program". Since then, the cash registration is computerized; despite Mariah still has to rely on handwritten cashbooks and members' deposit books as the main source. Not only that, she was also extremely proud when she brought the laptop home to keep as told by Ibu Tuti. Despite she has attended computer trainings, Mariah only knows how to run Microsoft Excel that the *koperasi* uses to register the financial database. Now, she does not remember how to operate Microsoft Word anymore as the training was two years ago and left her without any follow up practice.

When I visited her a few days after her labour, she was stayed in her house. She said, according to Chinese *Benteng* practice, a woman that just had her labor should be 'confined' for forty days in her house and was not allowed to go outside of the house. In addition, she also wore *kain* – traditional cloth that tightly wrapped her lower body, instead of home-style pajamas short pants – as part of the postnatal care to protect woman's fragile womb. During that time, her mother came every

day to help her doing the house chores and not to forget bringing her *ayam angchuu* (steam chicken in Chinese rice wine) which is believed as key dish to feed to the postnatal women. During early period of the forty days 'postnatal confinement' Mariah enjoys that experience, especially abundant attention given to her and the newborn as guest keep coming to her house for visit. One day, women from the *koperasi* together with Ibu Tuti came to her house to visit her newborn baby. It was an unplanned visit to her house nor a surprise visit, as previously these women said that they were too busy to organize a proper visit. It was also because the "Peduli Program" just injected fresh fund, Ibu Tuti and the women from the *koperasi* were starting to re-arrange multiple visits for *audiensi* to the government's office.

Mariah's house was suddenly full when these women visited. The small living room was cramped with five women sat altogether in the floor, as Mariah does not have sofa or chair. Some of the women had to stay outside of the house as there are no more space for them to squeeze in. After a few minutes of small talk about the labor process and the baby, Ibu Herlina suddenly asked Mariah about her pending loan installment that she has not paid for a while. Once a while Ibu Herlina slightly glanced to Ibu Tuti seeking for approval to bring up this issue and with a composed manner she asked when Mariah will pay the installment. Suddenly, the supposed 'friendly' visit then turned into a 'serious' meeting-like conversation. Being "shoot" in front of the other colleague, Mariah cannot say much. She just nodded several times and promised to pay as soon as possible as she was seeking for Ibu Herlina's understanding and exception since she is still in recovery period. For about fifteen to twenty minutes, Ibu Herlina was the one that dominate the conversation while the other women just silent and did not say a word. Ibu Herlina then ended the discussion with a 'soft' threat, not specifically targeted to Mariah but a very broad solution how to face borrowers' delinquency on credit payment. Ibu Herlina even mentioned that radical measures such as confiscating valuable items of the borrower or filing report to the police will be taken when they don't pay the installment. Ibu Tuti, on the contrary, did not give any advice as she usually does. Instead, she showed 'wait and see' gesture and did not attempt to intervene such internal tension. In a different occasion, Ibu Tuti said that it was the right thing to do, "*They have to learn how to manage their internal conflict. We cannot intervene their own process. In a young organization like them, it was very normal. They will learn by themselves.*" As I already expected, Ibu Tuti and

WRDC were taking a very normative approach on how to facilitate internal tension between these women. She deliberately pulls herself out from these kinds of matters and let them work their way on conflict resolution. And for me, it was very odd that I was stuck in the middle of that awkward situation until all these women finally departed from Mariah's house.

Since Mariah gave birth to her last child, her task in the *koperasi* basically was replaced by somebody else. Interestingly, rather than proposing new names from their internal members to be discussed democratically by key cooperative committee, WRDC instead decided to hire someone – Ibu Nuriah's daughter in law – to be the one that responsible in recapitulating financial data of the *koperasi*. WRDC's decision to hire someone was in consultation only with Ibu Herlina as the *koperasi*'s chairwoman; unfortunately, such decision was taken without considering other women's opinion, especially Ibu San Nio and Ibu Pin Lan which also have the same right to be consulted about such changes. Not only was replaced, but Mariah also was no longer included in the information circulation for the *koperasi* that established via WhatsApp group. Despite she often misses participating in activities with the *koperasi*, but the childcare tasks are taking so much of her time. Sometimes Mariah wonders whether *koperasi*-sponsored activities are really suitable for women like her that has to juggle with 3 kids and other chores as well. Mariah often compares her situation with Ibu Herlina that she describes as 'already in comfortable situation', or Ibu San Nio whose children are all grown up. For Mariah, those women have more liberty to participate in the *koperasi*'s activities as they have more free time than her. When I asked her further about her outstanding loan, she did not deny that. She said that her debt to the *koperasi* was around IDR 14 million (almost € 1,000) which she used to cover household expenses here and there. "You know, even my husband's salary seems big, but it does not enough! Half of his salary is for the car. Maybe it will finish in 5 years... I don't know... I already told my husband what's the car for. But he said that it was a good deal. It is a second-hand car and not very expensive. Before I gave birth, I took another loan for the clinic, doctor, and midwife." Besides, she also admits that her husband does not know that she has a loan with the *koperasi*. She was afraid that her husband would get angry at her. Because of that, she rather keeps the loan as a secret and tries to pay the installment with petty income that she gets from selling snack. But she is aware that sooner or later, she should tell her husband about that.

Before she gradually reduced her activity with the *koperasi*, she was also involved in the *Cokek Sipatmo* dance group. Mariah remembered when Ibu Tuti gathered all the women together and asked them about what local performance that they usually do, "At that time, I told her that we don't have traditional performance. I just said that here we only have Cokek dance that usually performed in the wedding with Gambang Kromong music." She remembers telling Ibu Tuti that *Cokek* dance was not a pleasant dance. Most dancers often have bad reputation as 'naughty' women, especially she regularly hears many cases that married men have affairs with *Cokek* dancer and left their wife penniless. After a few weeks passed by, Mariah realized that Ibu Tuti indeed proposed to them to learn the *Cokek* dance. In the beginning, Mariah was quite surprise and wondered how Ibu Tuti instead told them to learn that kind of dance that has a really bad reputation. But once Mariah attended the class, she started to realize that this was different kind of dance that she used to see in the wedding parties. Ibu Tuti told them that WRDC had done a 'research' on a history of *Cokek* dance and they have found the *authentic* form of *Cokek* dance. In addition, they also brought a professional dance choreographer from Jakarta to teach them on this *authentic* form. Not only women members of the *koperasi* that were allowed to participate, some school girls that interested to learn were also welcomed. According to Mariah, their 10 weeks-class were done in *Kelurahan* office, on the third floor where there is big auditorium. After the classes finished, Ibu Tuti also proposed that these women should form a dancing group that specialized in *Cokek Sipatmo* in which would help them generate income for the *koperasi* if they started to perform for the public. At the same time, they would also contribute in preserving the *authentic* form of *Cokek* dance. Moreover, together with Ibu Herlina and six other women, Mariah was part of the *Cokek Sipatmo* dance group that formally established as one of the business unit of the *koperasi*. Mariah herself said that she was happy to be part of the dancing team, in which she got to travel outside of *Kampung Wetan* to dance in front of many people. Because her participation in that group, she also had the chance to perform in front of the government officials as well as bigger audience in Jakarta as part of ceremonial event hosted by "Peduli Program". Mariah says, "Ibu Tuti always told us to keep practicing the dance and have to be diligent. She told us that to get the dance teacher to teach us dancing was expensive, so we have to be serious. WRDC also made costumes for us and taught us how to do the make-up." Currently, the activity for dance practice was dormant as the group did

not receive many invitations to perform. Even though Mariah is on break from the *koperasi* and dance group, she was still keeping the costume. She was pretty sure that once the dance group become re-activated, she has to return the costume to the *koperasi*.

Mariah recognizes that her involvement in the *koperasi* has brought other type of benefits that she initially assumed was part of the “Peduli Program”. Since she joined the cooperative, she learned that her family was also selected as household recipient for national cash transfer program for low-income family or PKH. “*It must have been because of the “Peduli Program”. ‘Peduli’ is a national government project, right? So, because we are part of this project, maybe we are prioritized, right?*” Mariah speculated the relationship between the two. But she did not dig more, as she was delighted enough to receive additional IDR 1,500,000 (around €100) in cash every three month that transferred through a local bank account. Compare to the *koperasi simpan pinjam* that held a lot of interesting and new activities, this PKH project was rather bored Mariah. Even though she was appointed as the group leader in her neighborhood, she felt that she did not get as much as skills and knowledge like the ones in the *koperasi*. She added that in PKH, it was rather cumbersome – as her task is to make sure that all her group members have received the cash transfer and organized the alimentation package distribution. There are times, members of her PKH group often asked her guidance on how to withdraw money from the ATM or other administrative issues. Every three months, when the alimentation packages are dropped to her house in balk, she has to gather her fellow members to help her in packaging and organizing the delivery. It is often that Mariah and the other group members have to use their own money to hire someone to do delivery. “*The food come in balk, like rice, eggs, flour, sugar and cooking oil. We have to package them in plastic for each recipient. We have to buy the plastic with our money. The members don’t want to come to my house to take the package... Many excuses. So, we have to send those packages.*” Despite all the hurdles in the PKH, Mariah still thought that the money was a good cushion for her family spending; in addition to the food package that helped her to reorient some finance allocation to other household items such as purchasing baby’s supplies like dippers.

Despite having baby, it does not make Mariah stop finding solution how to get extra money to cover her family’s expenses. Beside the PKH support that she receives every three months, which is extremely helpful, she also mentioned other

type of subsidies that she receives. Since last year or so, both her children receive government education support for the school fees. This additional allowance has helped her a lot to manage household expenditure. *“Being a housewife, we have to be smart in managing our husband’s income. My husband doesn’t want to know whether the money that he brings is enough or not. He gets upset when I told him that the money is not enough. Thank God I have the FHP money and education support, otherwise it is just not enough”* as Mariah told me one day while she made something to sell. That day I dropped by to her house, offering if I can help her with something, she was making cup pudding to sell. She said that her daughters’ schoolmates like them and she decided to make some, which her daughter brought the pudding to school. Before her daughter goes to school, she prepares the pudding made of gelatin powder, chocolate power, and condense milk that she buys in the nearby stall. Not only pudding, sometimes she also makes some snacks to sell. She outsources the selling part to her neighbor – a high school girl that resells the snacks to her schoolmates and return the unsold ones. Apparently, school children become Mariah’s customers for her snack-making activities. For Mariah, the snack making was not a business; but instead, it is just a supplementary income generating activities which she never wishes to do.

Mariah always wanted to work outside of the house. This is also the reason that she was excited in participating in the *koperasi*, as it gives her the opportunity to explore ‘outside’ world, not just the kitchen and taking care of her children. She told me that once she was working, although she does not complete high school, but it made her happy and accomplished. Long time ago, before she gave birth to her first son, Mariah worked in a beauty salon in Jakarta. In her job, she learned how to do facial treatment and body massage, which did not require a high school diploma. Even though the salon was not fancy, but she felt that she has a job and always commute back and forth to Jakarta for work; she felt empowered by doing such. Besides worked in the salon, she also once worked as a personal assistant in a small factory in Tangerang. There, she was really working in an office that made her proud. But that did not take long. She decided to quit the job when she moved to her husband’s hometown and eventually has children. Since then, she never got the chance to work anymore. When WRDC came to *Kampung Wetan* to teach them to form cooperative, Mariah thought that it was her opportunity to do something like what she wanted. Suddenly I remembered about the computer training that

she had attended a few times back and wondered whether she can use that skill to apply for jobs. Her respond shocked me as she asked, *“How to apply for job? What do you have to do?”* I suddenly realized that my logic in asking that question was different than her reality that never had the experience to apply for job. Mariah then told me that at that time, her friend dragged her along if there was any job opportunity. Like in the beauty salon, one friend that heard about the job asked her to come together. From what she described, it seems that Mariah prefers to have a job to where she can go, not a work in the house like snack-making. I asked her if she ever discusses this desire to WRDC that might able to help her. Sadly, she just shook her head, did not realize that such thing would even possible.

Because Mariah showed the quality of a potential cadre that usually termed as ‘community champion’ or ‘change agent’ – just like Ibu Herlina – she often got the opportunity to participate in activities that funded by *“Peduli Program”*. One of those activities were visit to a flour company where they also learn how to make cakes. Despite she was happy to be part of it, she found it difficult to be replicated in her own house. Mariah thought that such activities perhaps good for those that already have cake business like Ibu Netty – the head of the *koperasi’s* baking unit – but not for someone like her that does not own any equipment for bakery business. For her, it was just good to know how to make cake in a nice kitchen full with equipment and it was therapeutic too as she had the chance to have a short getaway. As I had helped Ibu Netty to prepare the cookie for a few times, I asked Mariah whether she was also participated in such activity. *“I participated only once... Only in the beginning... But now, not anymore. I can’t do that. I have children that I should bring, but she [Ibu Netty] says that it would make a mess. So, I stop going. Besides, it takes a very long time and I can’t do that.”* Beside Mariah, her mother also went along to the same training which she commented that activity was not suitable for her mother too. Since Mariah’s mother sells chicken porridge, the training for baking was useless for her. Now, even Mariah has to be creative in making snacks to sell, she still unable to apply what had been taught in the training because she does not have the right equipment and the ingredients are too expensive.

Recently Mariah has been offered to tutor some children from her neighborhood for extra classes. She told me that the leader of her church congregation had planned to open a place that offers extra tutorial class for students in the neighborhood as many of them cannot study well in their own

house. Relying on her experience in tutoring her own children in doing their homework, Mariah was confident that she could be perfect fit for the job. Despite at that time she does not really know how it would proceed, but the church leader had asked her to try some of the classes. It is quite common that parents with children in elementary school, approximately from 7 to 13 years old, pay tutorial sessions in non-formal school just to made the children do their homework. As many children do not have adequate space to do their homework, in addition to the mothers' inability to personally tutor them, majority of these children spend their afternoon in this kind of non-formal school. Mariah herself also send her two children to one non-formal school nearby her house. Since she is juggling with the baby, it is even more difficult for her to do everything on her own. Once I asked her what happened with the baby if she takes that offer and she replied that her neighbor would not mind to take care of her son for a little while.

Off school tutorial sessions apparently quite play an important part in helping some mothers to outsource this task. As I often heard that elementary school's curriculum is completely different from what these mothers had experience in the past. Even Mariah had experienced a period of frustration when their family moved back to Tangerang from her husband's hometown and the children had to experience a major change in the school. As much as she wanted to send her children in a good school, her family just unable to afford that. Often, she compares her situation with Ibu Herlina or Ibu Pin Lan that do not have to worry about the children education as their husband guarantees the children's education and send them in the best private school in the neighborhood. She said that even though her two children obtained scholarship in terms of tuition waiver, but there are still a lot of small items that she still has to pay, *"Even my children do not have to pay tuition, but I still have to buy books, school supplies, or small items for craft. Once a year, there's mandatory school trip and it is not cheap either. The scholarship does not cover such expenses."* For Mariah, sending these children to extra class is an important mechanism to retain the scholarship, as it would be discontinued when the children's mark fell. That day, she just came back from the trial class. She was pretty satisfied about how things went. Her tasks are quite basic and simple like supervising these students while doing their homework and sometimes helping them to solve some difficult exercise from their school. If everything went well, Mariah would be responsible for two classes which filled with students that sit in

the same level with her own children. According to her, it is better like that because she could follow the material from her children's school books. Until the last time we spoke, she said she would have started to teach the off-school lesson in the couple of weeks.

From these two contrasting narratives of Ibu Herlina and Mariah, it could be seen that the same project brought different affects to these women. Despite Ibu Herlina early struggle was extremely apparent, but her drastic turns started as she got re-married that has financially secured her family. Her involvement in the *koperasi* has elevated her popularity as the community new star that is seen as legitimate representative of refined image of Chinese *Benteng* women aftermath the inauguration of local financial institution that allegedly improved women's access to financing. Due to her relatively better economic condition, in comparison to majority women in *Kampung Wetan*, she is more intact in the *koperasi* and other type of community activities which seems to rely on her presence. Furthermore, by associating herself as a 'social' individual, she heightens her involvement in community activities due to her voluntarist aspiration to contribute to the society. On the contrary, Mariah which remain economically struggling is unable to be dedicated on voluntarily involved in 'social' activity like the *koperasi*. In addition to that, Mariah's constant critique and complaint to the government often perceived by the other member of the cooperative as unsupportive to what the government has provided for them.

"Peduli Program" as a "social inclusion" intervention that sponsored by the national government underlines a harmonious approach that prevent conflictive relationship between state and the local community. For such purpose, government apparatus at the local level, namely *Kelurahan Kembangan*, become the main partner with whom the *koperasi* should build and develop peaceful the relationship with. WRDC as the project implementing partner also focuses on nurturing the quality of Ibu Herlina's 'leadership' capacity which prioritized towards technical management and administrative of the *koperasi*, rather than encouraging a more radical model of women leadership that is not only assertive in pursuing women strategic interest (Kabeer, 2005a; Wieringa, 1994) but also willing to take dissenting and unpopular route to challenge women subordination. McLaren (2002) once said that a feminist theory of subjectivity should consider an analysis and critique of power that encompass both recognition of power asymmetry among individuals

and groups, in addition to take into account diversity among women in which culturally and historically specific (p.79). However, under this social inclusion “*Peduli Program*”, the establishment of the *koperasi* and nurturing women technical and administrative leadership that WRDC pursue, instead has perpetuated and reinforced stereotypical and essentialist notion of gender which McLaren warns to avoid.

9.3. INCLUSIVE COOPERATIVE: A SPHERE OF NEOLIBRAL GOVERNMENTALITY

The concept of “social inclusion” has gradually increased its importance within the poverty alleviation repertoire in many developing countries for more than a decade. Especially since early 21st century as promoted by UK government under Tony Blair’s leadership, the concept of “social inclusion” gains its popularity as preferable policy option to overcome income-based poverty. As the concept travels across the globe, its application often conflates with other popular buzzwords like “participation” and “empowerment” that are vastly promoted as effective instrument to alleviate poverty in many third world countries. The recent changes on social development landscape to some extent has created enabling environment to adopt the “social inclusion” terminology, which is understood as more appropriate way to address unequal benefits of the economic growth. By attaching ‘inclusion’ label into a wide range of social policies, it is believed that the intention could cater various needs of undeserved and disadvantaged population among broad category of ‘the poor’. Despite praised in terms of policy language, the use of “social inclusion” per se in prescribing structural problems of poverty in a divided society like multicultural Indonesia is extremely problematic as it focuses on the idea of harmoniously utopian imagined society where power imbalances are widely neglected.

A number of scholars have doubt whether ‘inclusion’ would always mean positive for everyone. For instance, De Haan (2015) argues that the Dalits that are traditionally excluded in the Indian society are indeed ‘included’ in the economy in a very disadvantageous term. This has brought to my attention and start to question about “social inclusion” not as a policy concept, but instead as a mode of governing that operationalized through a more popular concept like

'empowerment'. During the past decade, the use of "social inclusion" has been promoted by development aid agencies through short-term projects that specifically require the involvement of particular social groups. By such initiatives, target population are called socially excluded groups in which usually determined by identity-based affiliation according to the predetermined theme, for instance issues around disability are commonly branded as "social inclusion" projects and policies. As in the "*Peduli Program*" that is executed through capitalizing a wide network of Indonesian NGOs, language of "social inclusion" was prepared as the prescribed solution to solve the problems that the NGOs should find out later on – prior to planning and executing project activities – together with their target population. Thus, the process of determining problems of the excluded groups is depend on how the NGOs organized rapid 'needs assessment' followed by 'participatory planning' carried out by their community organizers which often referred as project's 'street level bureaucrats' (Mosse, 2005).

Many have understood that "social inclusion" and "social exclusion" are the complete opposite, as one is the positive reverse of the other. This often implies that reducing "social exclusion" in a certain population is another way to say it automatically will increase "social inclusion" of the same population. In the context of NGO-implemented project like "*Peduli Program*", "social inclusion" regularly portrayed as desirable and reasonable solution to overcome the "social exclusion". In comparison to its predecessor, "*Peduli Program*" capitalizes novelty of this shaky concept and turns into something attractive by bringing assorted groups of underserved and disadvantaged populations that are characterized by their distinctiveness or 'otherness'. With limited conceptual elaboration and lack of contestation, it silently deploys discourse of 'otherness' to activate this problematic conceptualization of "social inclusion" as the logical solution for the problem brought by "social exclusion". The static concept of "social inclusion" introduced in "*Peduli Program*" exhaustively stresses on the shortfall and day-to-day problem of the individual members of the excluded groups that are the project's target population. Rather than interrogates the systemic process such as normalized practice of bribery to speed up civic administration in which has made such groups excluded in the first place, this social inclusion project instead promotes activities that intended to 'empower' them in practical way to find doable solution of their own problem. The inclusion of Chinese *Benteng* people as one of the target

population in this “*Peduli Program*” focuses on the narrative of ‘exclusion’ that understood as their lack of ability to obtain necessary administrative documentation as the root cause of their poverty. Such “exclusion” stresses on their lack of social skills which in turn make them failing to engage with other community groups in that neighborhood. Therefore, the assessment performed by the NGO emphasis on their ‘failures’ in which are rationalized as key factors that determine their state of “social exclusion”. As a consequence of such reductionist operation in determining state of “social exclusion” in a particular community, “social inclusion” intervention like “*Peduli Program*” that relies its execution on local NGOs neglects macro level political and economic restructuring that exclude these groups in the first place or perhaps include them in disadvantageous ways like what De Haan (2015) points out above. As a policy language, discussion about “social inclusion” is dominated by benevolent discourse to counter negative meaning of “social exclusion”. Therefore, discussions around “social inclusion” often lead to a narrow conclusion that only associates ‘exclusion’ simply as not included. Moreover, when implementing “social inclusion” as a concept, the designers and implementers of “*Peduli Program*” have indeed dichotomized insider/included groups vis a vis outsider/excluded groups that underlined a simplistic binary view of membership-based society, which often individualized and exoticized ‘problem’ and at the same time also depoliticized political action of the excluded people.

It is commonly understood and practiced that “social inclusion” is seen more as preferred policy option that focus on the ‘inclusion’ of the excluded groups rather than pursuing ways to reverse the exclusion. This would mean that the understanding of “social inclusion” is exclusionary on its own, because the formation of society is defined in such a way that automatically excludes certain categories of people (Schrover and Schinkel, 2013) based on particular construction that differs according to class, gender, and ethnicity (Bouras, 2013). Therefore, project like “*Peduli*” is no different in adopting particular conceptual definition like social inclusion which strongly rooted in European discourse that tied up with its particular socio-historical trajectory. Furthermore, its usage in “*Peduli Program*” becomes word-by-word application without conceptual scrutiny and contextual elaboration on the specific social groups in which this concept is imposed on. As “*Peduli Program*” focuses to ‘include the excluded’ into the government-sponsored

intervention, this buzzword might become less meaningful social policies that bring minuscule effect to those that are poorer due to their absenteeism in such project or deliberately being left out from the project activities for various reasons.

A way back, since the "*Peduli Program*" was conceptualized for the very first time, it was not intended to adopt the European-model of "social inclusion". Instead, it only emphasized exclusively on the 'problematic' social groups of Indonesian society that were face various types of ostracism from many different angles, followed by developing the intervention around their socially ascribed identity. The operation of "social inclusion", as the "*Peduli Program*" carries out, aims to insert them into the predetermined activities, systems, and ways of doing things. Therefore, by centralizing the operation to specific 'problematic' social groups, "*Peduli Program's*" short term intervention would further reproduce different kind of exclusions to others due to its oversimplification of such binary definition of "exclusion" versus "inclusion". The category of 'excluded groups' to refer the target population was not only used by the programmers of "*Peduli Program*" but also by the implementing NGOs without complete and in-depth elaboration on their historical trajectory in such a way that ignore the complex interaction between different socio-economic and political context. As a result, rather than focus on the inclusivity aspects of the social policies, intervention like "*Peduli Program*" appears to simplify the meaning of "social inclusion" by centralizing the argument on compartmentalizing the broad category of 'poor' based on ascribed social identity and imposes certain corrective actions by using benevolently sounded terminology which leads to its complete vagueness.

Like its predecessor project, "*Peduli Program*" has anchored its identity formation to government-sponsored initiatives. Such project appears to have 'good' intention as it portrays the way in which some Indonesian NGOs play parts as government's 'partner' in executing poverty alleviation policies. In this execution, implementing NGOs operate as matchmaker that brokering the relationships between two extremes polar, namely the excluded groups on one end and the government apparatus as well as the 'broader society' that are presumed as the excluders on another end. With a 'quick and dirty' assessment that only viewed the superficial layers of Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan*, WRDC as the project executor only viewed the exclusion problem as a form of 'commonly found' personal issues in which the project was designed to address. Furthermore,

by framing the Chinese *Benteng* women's structural disadvantages into technically solvable problems of 'lack of business capital', 'lack of participation in social activities', 'lack of self-confidence', and 'lack of skills'; WRDC developed the project's theory of change by personalizing severe and systemic problem of class division, acute and corrosive patriarchal society, widening inequality, endless intergenerational poverty, and perilous intolerance which were to be overcome by establishing women's financial institution as their platform to work collectively. Moreover, with a limited understanding about the Chinese *Benteng* community, including how the women are situated in their society, this "social inclusion" project simply deals with managing the predetermined problem without pursuing systemic change that only look for individual solution.

Unlike 'empowerment' as the more popular term in which is conceptualized as a radical bottom-up concept; "social inclusion" can be seen as merely technocratic top-down understanding that performs selective identification on particular target populations to whom the "*Peduli Program*" would execute its operation. To avoid the fundamental failure of its predecessor project, "*Peduli Program*" was designed to focus only on six target groups in which were treated passively during the design process and should be empowered first by the NGOs before they can be considered as 'included'. Here, the Chinese *Benteng* women as the target populations were seen without agency as they were frequently depicted as 'restricted', 'subordinated', 'traditional', 'domesticated', and 'victimized' that are used to justify their living condition. Such representations play an important foundation to determine their 'inclusion' to the "*Peduli Program*" as decided by WRDC that would be responsible to empower them. On the contrary, the Chinese *Benteng* women themselves were not given the space to exercise their agency to be part of the project or not, in which their claims were not considered important and their involvement in the project is defined by the project's authorities. For an intervention like this, activities that encourage these women to boost up their 'self-confidence' is a crucial element to create an enabling environment to realize the state of social inclusion that WRDC is looking for, as prescribed by the project blueprint. Besides that, other type of activities that are also considered important is those that intend to change 'perception' about them in which will be determined as project's 'outcome' and further claimed as the direct result of its intervention. Moreover, for "*Peduli Program*", to include the socially excluded groups into the

mainstream, it also intends to create particular characteristic and behavior that could be 'cultivated' as empowered and responsible 'change agent'. On the contrary, those that does not match with the predetermined criteria and image that "Peduli Program" tries to portray could potentially experience different form of exclusion. By focusing on certain segments of Chinese Indonesians that historically have been label as 'problematic' population, the approach of 'including the excluded' undertaken by WRDC remains centralizing the issues of their exclusion based on the individual nature of structural disadvantages that they face. Assumptions based on dominant narrative that create certain stereotypes about how Chinese Indonesian should be, social inclusion intervention that promoted by WRDC capitalizes these Chinese *Benteng* women individualistic preference to exercise their autonomous-self to make certain choices based on their own interest and motivation. Therefore, reductionist understanding of "social inclusion" is used by "Peduli Program" and the NGO implementers to identify and to comprehend 'problem' of exclusion of the Chinese *Benteng* women which arise from their individual insufficiencies.

As commonly practiced in Indonesia's aid sector, good relationship between local and national NGO in project settings often determine future collaboration under different schemes, sometimes with bigger size of financing. "Peduli Program" relies its implementation backbone on a wide network that consists of national/local NGOs and most of them are what Whitelum (2003) characterizes as 'High-level Partnership: Grass-root Development' type. Such organizations, especially those that work directly with the target population already have strong and established relationship with the grassroots community. Not only that, these NGOs are also willing to work hand-in-hand with the national/local government authorities, as opposed to positioned themselves as watchdog, in such a way that focus on technical issues and quick fix solution which divert them away from critical discussion towards local form of patron-client relationship that often leads to corrupt bureaucratic system. In their work with Chinese *Benteng* women of *Kampung Wetan* in this project, WRDC can be seen not only as project's implementers but also operates as development broker that facilitates relationship between various actors. Thus, in the context of 'problematic' community like the Chinese *Benteng* people for instance, the ultimate goal of "social inclusion" could be achieved through a depoliticized empowerment model that require outsider like

WRDC to help them growing and cultivating new improved relationships, most importantly with the state.

Geertz (1976) once wrote that in Islam tradition found in many Javanese societies, the role of broker traditionally was performed by local male religious leader called *kyai* that were considered of having the highest form of religious knowledge and wisdom. By Jacobs (2014) the concept of brokerage was seen as closely connected with patronage and clientelism in which cultivated by the powerful figures that dominate access, service, and resources. In Indonesia's contemporary context, NGOs that bring social development initiatives such as empowerment project to local communities could also be viewed as brokers. Like many NGOs that engage in the "*Peduli Program*", especially the ones that have established high level of trust with the local community, they are often represent themselves as spokesperson of the local community and speak to external parties about the needs of such target population with language and buzzwords that are understood by the outsider, in particular among the donor community. In various context of development projects, brokering role is well-suited terminology to describe how a large number of local NGOs operate at the grassroot level, like what Bierschenk et.al. (2002) describe brokers are "*social actors implanted in a local arena (in whose politics they are directly or indirectly involved) and who serves as intermediaries who drain off (in the direction of the social space corresponding to this arena) external resources in the form of development project.*" (p.4)

Brokers are the very outcome of weak state that are often found in various context in postcolonial state like Indonesia, where power is exercised not only in the domain of formal bureaucratic institution but also a wide range of local assemblage which comprised of intricate relationships between local actors, informal institutions, and intermediary organizations like the NGO (Bierschenk et al., 2002). Once the *koperasi simpan pinjam* was established in May 2015, the Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* enter a new type of relationship with WRDC, in particular with Ibu Tuti which has walked them through the process of 'knowing the new world' and 'improving themselves'. Such relationship between these women and the NGO has transformed into a patronage kind of relation. Not only as the new 'patron' that these women are look up to, this new relationship has made WRDC as the reliable broker that able to articulate the 'problem' of the Chinese *Benteng* women with adequately appropriate terms within which the solution has

already been prepared (Blundo, 2000; Neubert, 1996) by the project beforehand. This is why Sodeik (2000) argues that brokerage is not possible in a zone that does not have projects, where many brokers often capitalized development aid as productive vehicle to dominate control and legitimation that shape the path towards a patron-client relationship (Lavigne-Delville, 2000).

Ferguson (1990) once argued that development works through constructing dominant problem in which it aims to correct that works as intervention to 'empower' a community like Chinese *Benteng* which never experience such project. This is a new operation that the WRDC should craft and work on. As the community organizer in WRDC, Ibu Tuti recited her initial experience when she encountered with the Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan*. Her first time visit to *Kampung Wetan* aimed to conduct a rapid situation assessment about the Chinese *Benteng* women at whom WRDC would propose as the target population of the "Peduli Program". As Ibu Tuti told me that she did not really know about the existence of Chinese *Benteng* people before, in which later she finally realized that this community lives not very far from Jakarta. Before her organization's engagement in "Peduli Program", WRDC was part of the predecessor's project that managed by The World Bank from 2010-2014 to target a wide range of marginalized people from various angles. Utilizing their previous experience in working with the urban poor women in one of the poorest districts in northern part of Jakarta for the project's predecessor, WRDC has prepared the same set of activities to be introduced to the Chinese *Benteng* women with the expectation that the same pathway would lead to similar result. For that reason, WRDC should develop a project proposal outlining what are the 'problems' of the Chinese *Benteng* women that WRDC would solve and how such proposed activities would contribute to the inclusion of these women.

As previously mentioned in the earlier chapter, WRDC's approach in understanding women empowerment strongly stem in Women in Development (WID) approach. By utilizing this model, WRDC's vision of women empowerment within the framework of social inclusion centralizes around the idea of establishing 'inclusive' financial institution for the Chinese *Benteng* women as a foundation to solve their economic problems. But only by proposing the establishment of financial institution was not sufficient to address complex issues of "social exclusion" that faced by this community. WRDC then found the 'connecting

bridge' between "social exclusion" as the 'problem' to solve and forming financial institution as the 'solution', namely 'cultural revitalization' initiative that could be materialized only if the Chinese *Benteng* women work together as a group and not as individual. Moreover, to activate the narrative of 'cultural revitalization' project, particular Chinese *Benteng* 'culture' was problematized through the involvement of 'performance research' did by a group of researchers from a well-known performative art institution. This research then concludes that the Chinese *Benteng* typical entertainment performance, namely the *Cokek* dance, has been 'distorted' from its *authentic* form in which has evolved into inappropriate and erotic-looking dance and often associated with covert prostitution. Such problematization then led to a series of sanitizing operation as justified by the 'performance research' in order to restore what the authentic *Cokek* dance should be performed. The 'quick and dirty' performance research then claimed as process of 'retrieving', 'reconstructing', and 'revitalizing' the *Cokek* dance so it could regain its *authenticity* as noble and majestic that aligned with its *authentic* identity *not* as grassroot performance but as 'religious performance'. Furthermore, to be able to restore back the dance *authenticity*, a strong institutional foundation is necessary to educate the Chinese *Benteng* women how to work together and to cultivate their desire to revitalize their *authentic* culture. Therefore, women-managed financial institution that WRDC established for these women operates as the project vehicle to link "social exclusion" problem with cultural preservation through the technology of women empowerment under the broader framework of short-term project-based "social inclusion" discourse.

Beside problematizing Chinese *Benteng's* community-based performance in particular *Cokek* dance, many other aspects of Chinese *Benteng's* people life were also problematized. One of many aspects that were problematized is stigmatization on their poverty imbued with racial narratives in which othering them from the dominant representation of 'wealthy' Chinese Indonesian that institutionalized since the New Order era, even still persist until now. By problematizing Chinese *Benteng* community, especially the women, WRDC has constructed the 'needy subject' (Timmer, 2010) by exploiting excessive narrative about their poverty that largely caused by racial discrimination in order to define them as a particular population which required immediate solution. Furthermore, Chinese *Benteng's* construction of 'needy subject' was re-organized as crucial work in maintaining

dominant narrative of benevolently-sound “social inclusion” promoted by “*Peduli Program*” through a series of activities and events to visibilize their invisibility. Chinese *Benteng* women’s representation as ‘needy subject’ therefore constantly reproduce perception of their poverty in combination with despair and hopelessness that enable WRDC to come and rescue them. It also can be said that excessive use of hegemonic narratives to show ‘excluded and poor’ Chinese *Benteng* people has overemphasized their victimhood which can only be liberated through projects like “*Peduli Program*”. What was very apparent is that it emphasizes on their victimhood due to the state’s discriminatory policy, in such a way that it illustrates their state of social exclusion. Such reductionist view in determining ‘problem’ of the Chinese *Benteng* community is historically blind in which the dominant representation about them is used to generalize the whole Chinese *Benteng* population and at the same time underlines particular policy prescription to correct them according to what is accepted in their environment.

As a women NGO that has existed since the late 1980s, WRDC is very much influenced by WID discourse that treats women as economic unit of the household. Despite WID has been constantly challenged by Gender and Development (GAD) discourse that stressed the importance of Freirian conscientization (Sharma, 2008) as critical foundation to women empowerment; however, in the context of urban poor setting, such approach remains prevalent in attracting women to engage in development intervention brought by NGOs. This scenario is exactly what has been implemented over three decades of WRDC’s existence in working with poor women which is operated through establishing women-managed *koperasi* as the backbone of their development intervention. Moreover, as the *koperasi* is branching out into smaller units, it ensured that those activities should bring economic incentives for the active participating members. For that reason, activity units supported by the main cooperative are those that economically feasible for women to run without leaving their house and less likelihood to abandon society prescribed gendered work. Due to WRDC’s understanding of women empowerment approach that treat women as economic unit, it can be argued that in the case of Chinese *Benteng* community, the women’s economic capacity is the one to be problematized. In addition to that, weak environment is also portrayed as correction target by this intervention so that would support women’s

entrepreneurial behavior, such as access to financing as productive capital, access to market, or technical skills on micro-production.

Like many other ethnic groups in Indonesia, Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* have also been traditionally functioned as the ones that are responsible for everything concerning childcare, domestic chores, elderly care as well as secondary breadwinner for their nuclear family also for their extended family. Their recurring representations as 'victim' of state discriminatory policies and constant 'target' of racial tension among the grassroot communities, in addition to their 'traditional' gendered role which associated with their ancestral 'Chinese' traditional culture have made them a suitable population target for the "Peduli Program" to correct through the language of social inclusion. The narrative of their victimhood is weaved together in a project proposal that emphasizes their state of exclusion in which requires solution with "social inclusion" lense. Moreover, to complement such victimhood narrative, various attributes are deployed in such a way that they enhance particular stereotypes and labels derived from universalized perception about the Chinese *Benteng* women. On the contrary, the Chinese *Benteng* community is symbolically praised as interracial harmony in the *Kelurahan Kembangan* through repeated narrative that only reinforce their 'chineseness' – both as culture and as religion. To a large extend, by emphasizing on their chineseness that contributes to their poverty, WRDC actively participates in reproducing the racialized discourse about their poverty and capitalizes such anomaly from the dominant narrative about heterogenous Indonesians of Chinese descent. Therefore, these double discourses are not only hail them in symbolical manner, but at the same time also marginalizes them through continuous reproduction of their misery and poverty as exploitative narrative for development projects to intervene.

As a semi-urbanized neighborhood in one of the poorest districts in Tangerang city, *Kampung Wetan* is populated by abundant newcomers from different part of Indonesia that drawn to economic opportunities offered by this city as factory labors. Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, many native settlers in Tangerang which comprised of mixed ancestry of Chinese, Betawi, Bantenese, Sundanese and Javanese have sold their land to companies – both state-owned and private – for various projects including airports, warehouse, hotels, factories, and housing compounds that facilitate the emerging of new upper-middle class in

Jakarta or in the neighboring cities. Many of those that sold their land have moved out from this area to obtain better quality of life for their next generations. Some of them have moved to the Tangerang City centre, Jakarta, or South Tangerang city. Unfortunately, those who are left behind in this area mostly are the working-class segments of that society which are trapped in vicious cycle of intergenerational poverty. For Chinese *Benteng* community that live in this area, 2010 eviction was a major incident that captured nationwide attention as rather 'unusual' community resistance that was done by the 'poor Chinese' community whose rights were violated by the city government. Such peculiarity about atypical image of Indonesians of Chinese descent rarely occurred in mainstream media channels. Therefore, this incident instantly attracted wide attention including various support from different parties including legal aid and some private donations. Regrettably once the eviction plan was finally put on hold which could be interpreted as the success of the struggle, there was no other similar community mobilization that ever occurred afterwards until the arrival of WRDC, which tend to take different approach than what had previously done by this community. Not only that, even the incident was never brought up anymore in any local discussions. Such effect has led to various assumptions from the outsider about how this community has become even more 'excluded' than before.

Picture 14 – Community Protest against forced eviction



Community protest against government eviction plan (Source Photo: Arie Basuki, TEMPO Journalist, 2010)

The eviction incident has painted a background to illustrate how Chinese *Benteng* people are portrayed as the 'excluded' others. Such representation operates

in a way that it reproduces never ending government fabricated image of Chinese Indonesians that represented as the 'newcomer', that bear problems to integrate with the 'native'. Through this construction, WRDC plays dichotomizing narrative of 'native' versus 'non-native' that situates Chinese *Benteng* people out of the equation which compose what does it define as 'native' inhabitants of *Kampung Wetan* as well as the surrounding neighborhood where the "*Peduli Program*" was about to enter. This binary view produces the desired effect towards Chinese *Benteng* women, in which are framed within the construction of their 'otherness', namely their ancestral Chinese culture that restrict them to engage in community activities. Therefore, by problematizing their ancestral culture, WRDC defines that most women in the Chinese *Benteng* community in *Kampung Wetan* are lack of productive activity despite they have more 'spare' time. Gossiping and gambling are further rationalized as the result of their lack of productive activity that led to their 'irresponsible' behavior as that underlined unwanted characters of responsible mothers, dutiful wives, as well as socially active community members. Their poverty is also seen as rational consequences of their inability to generate additional income to support their family. Because of such problem definition, WRDC came with a proposed solution to tie all of them together, namely creating a financial institution where these women could involve in collective activities with the non-Chinese *Benteng* community and at the same time also learn to be productive being.

Foucault (1988c) has taught us that 'technologies of the self' is instrumental to run governmental operation where power and subjectivity are rationally connected through a series of procedures that he defines as problematization (1998). Such procedures utilized intricate techniques that create separation between what is defined as normal and abnormal that function through a set of values and operationalization that attached to it. Furthermore, to make it even more complicated, governmental practices dispose specific types of rationality, regime of representation and interpretative model to support its operation. As a "social inclusion" initiative, "*Peduli Program*" and its NGO partner centralize their intervention on the welfarist notion of citizenship that commonly used in many western states. With such conception of citizenship, the 'excluded', like Chinese *Benteng* women and other communities, are represented as individual 'citizen' whose freedom and liberty should be protected from any kind of barriers created

by institution, social values, local norms, or cultural practices and belief. By employing welfarist conceptualization of citizenship, “Peduli Program” exploits particular type of representation which stresses on the aspects of collectivized victimhood due to particular understanding of “social exclusion” that violate their individual freedom. Therefore such “social inclusion” language that was employed to fuel “Peduli Program” as policy vehicle is well-suited to create neoliberalist subject that follow certain norms and ethics, as ‘self-help’, ‘voluntarism’, ‘empowered’, ‘productive’, in which contribute to what Miller and Rose (2008) describe as *‘building of responsible communities, prepared to invest in themselves’* (p.90).

As the main feature for contemporary form of government, “technique of the self” is key to ensure that ‘normalized’ subjects of government are capable to self-regulate themselves. Adding to that, Miller and Rose (1990) argue that through this way it creates important foundation in which government in a liberal democratic way could operate. Through this way, governable subjects are required to be self-activating that exercise their free-agency (Gordon, 1991: 119) in which ‘freedom’ would function as instrument of control based on new subject of power who intervene the constructed domain as ‘free society’. It is also called as ‘governing through freedom’ by installing the capacities of self-control in ‘autonomous individual’ (Dean, 2010; Lemke, 2001; Rose, 1999a). Foucault called this operation as ‘the management of freedom’ (2004b) in which neoliberal governmentality produce and manage freedom in such a way that subject become an ‘entrepreneur of self’. Therefore, this neoliberal subject making process intends to shape conduct of individuals, groups, and communities to follow their own interest. This governmental operation under neoliberalism, society is governed through self-discipline individual that are *“shaped by commercial assumption regime and politics of life-style. Individual is identified by one of a plurality of cultural communities”* (Rose, 1999a: 46). Rose also mentions that the power of governmental operation depends on the activation of the power of citizenship (Rose, 1999a: 166) in which its meaning has evolved into a more complex relationship than just citizen-state relation.

In Foucault’s (1997) view, governmental operation rests in the conception of social interaction that plays strategic games of freedom and liberty. In such form of government, external regulation is no longer intended to control the population by force, but it organizes certain condition under which individuals can capitalize such freedom for their own interest. In a market-driven society, neoliberal

development policies aim to make sure that individuals have equal access to opportunity and resources as well as free from barriers that restrict their participation in various domains of life. In many ways, “social inclusion” language promoted by “*Peduli Program*” stresses on a particular way how ‘inclusion’ is perceived as conduct of people’s conduct operates through technologies of ‘empowerment’ and rationalities that enable individual freedom. Whereas technologies utilized by such governmental operation deploy only particular knowledge, namely the technical ones that materialized in short-term activities that often only bring therapeutic effects rather than radical systemic change. Moreover, the problem of “social exclusion” represented by “*Peduli Program*” is descriptive in nature which enable the prescriptive and technical solution through ‘inserting the excluded’ approach. By doing such intervention, project like “*Peduli Program*” relies on insertion mechanism as ‘inclusion’ rather than focus on distribution aspect of wellbeing in which has its own contextual meaning for different population. Moreover, the debates on “social inclusion” in Indonesia are dominated by technical discussion and move away from conceptual debate about how power operates differently across various segments in different population in Indonesia’s contemporary society. Therefore, it can be argued that such “social inclusion” intervention actively participates in maintaining governmental practice by operationalizing certain techniques towards its target populations, namely individualization, self-realization, and self-responsibilization, in order to be compatible with market-driven society.

As abovementioned, ‘freedom’ is key to govern individuals and groups in which portray as positive incentive resulted from being a free subject. The discourse of “social inclusion” introduced by “*Peduli Program*” is underlined by such ‘freedom’ that operates through the technology of control which shape the conduct of both individuals as well as collective. At the national level, “*Peduli Program*” focuses on the notion of ‘inclusion’ that enable the ‘excluded’ segments of Indonesian population to obtain particular ‘freedom’, namely those ‘freedom’ that associated with their engagement in community activities and attainment of access to public services and economic resources. However, such ‘inclusion’ view does not take into account certain type of ‘freedom’ that might destabilize the harmony in the society where it operates. By being ‘included’ in this “*Peduli Program*”, it means that Chinese *Benteng* women of *Kampung Wetan* have been

educated through a technology of 'women empowerment' operated by WRDC as the benevolent broker to be neoliberal subject that characterized as free economic agent in a capitalist mode of production. Through the cooperative, WRDC also infiltrates 'technology of responsabilization' (Lemke, 2002) towards the Chinese *Benteng* women as a form governmental control that segregates what behaviors are desirable and the ones that they should avoid. Foucault himself called this 'indirect technique of government' which underlines the idea of transferring responsibility to the individual.

Ibu Tuti herself, as the field worker, often commented that there are many of these women that are 'lack of responsibility'. Similar view is also expressed by Ibu Herlina who thinks that she is the only productive engine of the cooperative. By pointing out to other's 'lack of responsibility' in running the cooperative, she is well aware that her leadership is necessary to encourage other women to come and work together with her. By engaging the Chinese *Benteng* women in the "*Peduli Program*", WRDC has performed what Hache (2007) describes as 'reorganizing of government techniques' through series of fun and therapeutic activities that have been constantly used in their other development projects. For example, groups trainings that focus on educating these women on family financial management were built on the idea of making specific types of behavior undesirable. As most of the trainings' participants were from the low-income family, these women were taught to discard their own desires, aspirations, and/or needs as those are not the family's priority and are not considered as important. By doing such, 'women empowerment' aspect that WRDC tries to portray is tied around the family discourse which relies on women's individual responsibility to fulfil such the family needs, namely their husband's and children's. However, this is no so much like what Foucault's mode of 'individualization of the mode of social change' which emphasis on the aspect of 'empowerment' that means liberating responsabilization. In this context, Chinese *Benteng* women cannot be seen as just individual per se; but it is also where the discourse of 'women empowerment' that tied around the family discourse is operated in this community. This exception was made possible once neoliberal women empowerment model has instrumentalized the discourse of benevolently sounded "*social inclusion*" promoted by the "*Peduli Program*" to 'insert the excluded' into market-driven society by equipping them with technically teachable skills in order to make them productive beings.

9.4. "INCLUDING THE EXCLUDED" – DERADICALIZING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AS A TOOL OF GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILIZATION

It was one humid morning in Tangerang city, as I arrived in Kampung Wetan to attend one activity initiated by the Chinese *Benteng* women there. As usual, Ibu San Nio's house become the main basecamp where everyone gathered. That morning, around 8.30 a.m., five women were busy setting up tables, chairs and baby scales to host *posyandu* day. On that day, the health status of babies, *anak balita* (children of five years and below) and pregnant women would be monitored. Principally, the *posyandu* – a shortened term for *pos pelayanan terpadu* or integrated health post – is generally understood as 'community-based' public health facilities that relies its operation on voluntary work done by community members. The volunteers are mostly women, men are rarely subscribed themselves to be *posyandu* volunteer. Despite it is generally branded as a 'community-based' health service, its initiation followed by the implementation has a very 'top-down' nature as it reflects in its main approach and the technocratic operation. In the 1990s, Indonesia experienced massive expansion of *posyandu* across provinces to be implemented in every neighborhood with direct instruction from the top down to the lowest administrative unit. Since then, it was very common to find *posyandu* not only at the hamlet level but also local neighborhoods that conduct various activities related to babies, toddlers, and pregnant women. Activities in *posyandu* are carried out by the local cadres that appointed by the village head (in rural area) or the *lurah* (in the case of urban setting). These cadres are led by a coordinator which often perceived as the most reliable ones among them and are supervised by midwives that usually travel across area to check every implementation.

The Chinese *Benteng* Women in *Kampung Wetan* does not remember when was the last time that they had *posyandu* in their *kampung*. Previously, as Mbak Indah told me she even did not know that such *posyandu* was existed there. Since they have the *koperasi simpan pinjam*, their neighborhood started to have a *posyandu*; and obviously the core team of the *koperasi* 'automatically' become the cadres that responsible for all activity implementation in their *kampung*. Five women were formally inaugurated by the *Lurah* in January 2018 and included in the bureaucracy as community volunteers. Since that inauguration, *Kampung Wetan* now formally

have a *posyandu*, which they called *Posyandu Anggrek III*. Since they do not have a dedicated building for that, Ibu San Nio – with the generous permission from her husband – allows them to do the *posyandu* in her terrace. Therefore, every first week of the month, these five cadres gathered in Ibu San Nio's front yard and get ready for their regular tasks as per instruction given by the midwives. When I arrived there, Mbak Indah and Ibu Pin Lan were busy putting the table cloth to decorate the table and placed stacks of brochures that they received from the Health District Office. Besides the informational flyers, they also arranged healthy snacks for the children that come to their *posyandu*. According Ibu Eneng, a 55 years old woman that also lives around the neighborhood, Ibu Herlina is the one that always prepare the snack. That day, she prepared mung bean porridge for the children, in addition to biscuit bars that are provided by the District Health Office. Every month, the *posyandu* changes the supplementary food, like mung bean for this month or glutinous rice pudding for the previous month. *"It depends on what Ibu Herlina has prepared, because she is the one does that. One time, the posyandu didn't give anything, because she did not have time to prepare one. We, the cadres, don't really have time to prepare food."*

Officially, the *posyandu* activity starts at 8.30; but today, there were not many visitors that came and brought their children. Some cadres mumbled softly, wondering why there were no visitor at the early opening hour, *"I already informed the neighborhood ward yesterday that we will have posyandu today. I told him to tell others too, so they would come,"* informed Bu Pin Lan, showing to others that she already did her part in telling the neighbors. They were already tired waiting and some of them started to complain, especially when they had to wake up earlier to finish their chores before they can go to the *posyandu* activities. After nearly half an hour waiting, a group of people started to come; few women and their children appeared from a narrow alley across the street. These cadres asked why they did not come earlier, as the *posyandu* usually starts at 8 and in this month, they started really late. One woman responded and said that they preferred to come altogether, so they waited until everybody was ready and went out together to the *posyandu*. Unlike other *posyandu* that are already more established, the new *posyandu Anggrek III* only has limited activity to run, such as height measurement, weighting, supplementary food provision, and regular check-up for pregnant mothers.

Upon arrival to the location of *posyandu*, participants have to be registered by the cadres. This morning, Mbak Indah was the one that in-charge to register their basic databased before being weight by Ibu Eneng. The participants took turn in getting their children weighted and measured; and once the session finished, Mbak Indah recorded all the information in a sheet of paper that she had prepared. It is just a blank scrap paper that she teared away from a notebook. In a glance, I slightly heard that Ibu San Nio criticized her and asked why she used such scrap paper to register the *posyandu's* data; whereas Mbak Indah just mumbled, responded to her that she would transfer the information to other nicer piece of paper. Once the first batch has been measured and weighted, the cadres gave them the mung bean porridge and the biscuit bars. Apparently, the parents that brought their children to *posyandu* had to pay 'contribution' IDR 5,000 (around €0.30) for the food, which I was never aware before. The fact that each *posyandu* has their own mechanism in running their activities, this was the first case I witnessed that community has to pay for *posyandu*. According to Ibu Erna, a 50 years old housewife that act as treasurer, the money that they collect from the participants is managed by the cadres and used to finance the operation of the *posyandu*. Despite she said that the *posyandu* received government funding which is allocated under the *PKK* program (Family Empowerment and Welfare), but it is far than enough to finance the whole activity. She pointed out that usually Ibu Herlina uses her own money to make the supplementary food.

The *posyandu* session that day last for more than two hours. After there were no more participants that come, the cadres cleaned everything up, including giving away the remaining undistributed food among themselves. No longer after that, Ibu Nuriah came on a motorcycle with her husband on the steering wheel. She brought various gardening equipment and shouted to us that still gathered on the veranda, "*We are going to cultivate the vegetable, right? I have all the equipment here and my husband is here to help too*"; whereas Ibu Eneng and Ibu Erna have left as soon as the *posyandu* activities finish. Besides the *posyandu* activities, these women also plan to cultivate some vegetable from the nearby garden. More than a year ago, the cooperative borrows government-own dormant land that is not very spacious, perhaps less than 100 m² for their urban gardening project. The location was not far from Ibu San Nio's house, around 10 minutes walking or maybe less than 50 m towards to the direction of Cisadane riverbank. According to Ibu Tuti that

accompany these Chinese *Benteng* women for the past few years, this urban gardening project is one type of activities to promote inclusion between the women members of the *koperasi* and other community that live in the same area. Besides that, Ibu Tuti also mentioned that these women often complaint that the vegetable price continued to increase and one way to ease their financial burden was by promoting the urban gardening project.

Picture 15 – Vegetable Gardening Activity



The Chinese *Benteng* women of the saving and lending cooperative cultivated various vegetables which they planted in a dormant empty land

The vegetable garden is located next to a house that almost fallen apart, which belong to Ibu Darsima and Pak Cepi. They are the one that help Ibu Nuria taking care of the garden on daily basis. Almost every day, Ibu Darsima and Pak Cepi take turn to water the vegetable. Despite Ibu Nuriah is the one that responsible to manage the vegetable garden, but her house is too far from this location which restrict her to come to water them daily or to fertilize them on the regular basis. For convenience, she delegates the task to the couple and promise them that she will share some of the vegetable to them, including pay them a small incentive as a 'reward' for taking care of the garden. On that day, not only Bu Nuriah that come; but also, few other women of the *koperasi* that interested to get the vegetable. Once I have heard that Ibu Nuriah often complaint that there is no one that helped her to manage the garden. She would expect either Ibu Pin Lan or Ibu San Nio that could assist her to check on the garden once a while, since they live very near to the garden. Unfortunately, she was unable to rely on these ladies and instead she prefers to make a win-win deal with Pak Cepi and Ibu Darsima. That day, these

women cultivate cassava, yardlong bean, string green beans, groundnuts, and chili and sold among themselves. That day, they cultivated more than 12 kilograms of cassava, which the *koperasi* sold to these women for IDR 5,000 (€ 0.30) per kilogram. Not only the cassava root, but they also sold the leaves; in addition to a small quantity of yardlong bean and chili pepper. From those vegetables, the *koperasi* profited IDR 40,000 (less than € 3) which were registered as the income from urban gardening project. By the end of the year, the *koperasi* collected all the profit that they have made during that year, including income from the cake business and the dance group, and would be shared among its members. The 'elite' groups like the regular committee receive higher shared as they are considered as 'working' and involved in the management of the *koperasi*, as Ibu Herlina mentioned once that it should be like that, since the committee is the one that work the hardest to make the *koperasi* runs well.

It has been more than three years since the WRDC came to *Kampung Wetan* for the first time to bring a government project for the Chinese *Benteng* people. For some people, especially the women, that participate in the cooperative felt that it had changed the nature of the relationship between the *Kelurahan* bureaucrats with the commoners like them. Those women that socially active in the project even obtained other benefits that previously would not be available to them, for example to be appointed as *posyandu* cadre. Ibu Herlina especially, she described her relationship with the government bureaucrats is way more than she had expected. However, despite the *koperasi* 'formal' relationship with the *Kelurahan* Kembangan, but not everyone could benefit from such new relationship. Even though some women think that they are now felt 'closer' to the *Kelurahan* because of their high intensity in interacting with the government staff, but some members of the *koperasi* did not feel the same way as Ibu Herlina's experience. Such situation was very apparent in the case of Ibu Nuriah, where she often felt that actively participating in the *koperasi* does not really bring material benefit for her family. She expresses her desperation when she tried numerous times to get paved pathway for her neighborhood which she finally failed to get.

Ibu Nuriah is not Chinese *Benteng* people. She is a Javanese Muslim woman who has been living in Tangerang city for more than twenty years. She is originated from a small village in Central Java and migrated to Tangerang with her husband once they eloped. Back in her village, she and her husband came from a family of

paddy farmers and moved to Tangerang city to find a better living. Luckily her husband got a job as a driver for a high-rank banker of a state-own company. Back then, her husband's salary was quite good and she claimed that she was not poor, but not rich either. She said it was enough to send the children to school or to go to public health center when they need healthcare. She even told me that with the money that her husband made, their family could afford a small house in the city center. When her husband was laid off, they were thinking to return to their hometown; and beside that, quality of the water in that neighborhood was extremely bad as it mixed with mud and often stinks. Unfortunately, her children refused to leave Tangerang as they cannot leave school in the middle of academic year. Left with no option, her husband decided to sell the house and buy a cheaper house with better quality of water. While Ibu Nuria's husband was looking for another job, someone informed her that there was vacant land with a very low price located next to the Cisadane river. For that land, her husband paid IDR 5 million (roughly € 350) only for the land, which they should build their own house. Without bothering to have a certificate of land ownership, her family started to live there peacefully until the 2010 eviction incident.

One afternoon, I asked Ibu Nuriah if I can pay a visit to her house before going out together to a breakfasting event. Initially she kept saying that her house is very far and is not easy to reach. She was afraid that I might get lost. I told her that I would get a motor taxi to take me there which would be guided by GoogleMap, so she should not be worried. In the beginning, I was not aware that when Ibu Nuriah said about severe road condition to her house. I was thinking how bad could it be? What I see that this area is quite well-developed and equipped with adequate basic infrastructure facilities. Besides, I also heard from Pak Yahya – one government officer from *Kelurahan* Kembangan – that kept broaching about his work to ensure every area of the *Kelurahan* Kembangan have good infrastructure facilities. But, once the motor taxi started to enter the neighborhood where Ibu Nuriah and her family live, the driver kept asking me whether I was sure that the address is right. I followed the direction from Sinta – Ibu Nuriah's daughter in law – that I should find a Chinese cemetery and continue my way from there. The bamboo entry gate to Ibu Nuriah's neighborhood stands on the sideways of the busy main road, where numerous restaurants and stores started to get crowded in the early evening. The main road is bright enough, enlightened by neon

light and street lamps. On the contrary, as I passed through the gate, the light slowly darkens as the motor taxi continued to unfamiliar destination. The driver repeated his question again whether I was not mistaken with the address. He even said that despite he lives not far, he did not aware about the 'undeveloped' and secluded area like that. There is no asphalted road nor paving blocked path that lead the way to Ibu Nuria's settlement, it is covered with rather wet dirt in which often easily become mud once the heavy rainfall comes. Not seldom that Ibu Nuriah and her fellow neighbors experience frequent flood as the surface of Cisadane water rises during the monsoon season. The entry to the neighborhood was surrounded by wild bamboo trees and bushes. The source of light only comes from a small lightbulb that connected to twisted thin wire pulled from the main street's light pole. After ten minutes ride from the main entrance gate, I started to see some houses, build sparsely one to another in a spacious land. Majority of those houses are not made from brick, rather they are made from bamboo structure and bamboo weave or very thin plywood for the walls. Some houses have earthen rooftile and some have dry thatched roof or fiber roofing. The settlers used whatever they can found lying around to build their house. Some residents who have enough money bought the materials from the local suppliers. Often, they also went to the nearest factories to take abandoned materials like iron or glass in which they could use to construct their house.

According to Ibu Nuriah, housing settlement in that area is illegal as the land owned by the government. There are not many houses there, maybe about 20 houses that were built through the same process like what Ibu Nuriah and her family has gone through. *"There's land mafia here, you know! Up there, you see, there's fruit farm. The owner of that farm is the same person from whom we bought the land here. We don't know who. Don't know where the person lives,"* Ibu Nuriah explained to me as she pointed to the direction where the tangerine farm is. Once she thinks that because the land belongs to the state, the government might do something to pave roads for the residents if she asked for it. Because the infrastructure in her neighborhood was deteriorated, Ibu Nuriah has tried to report to the neighborhood ward so he could pass the people's request to the *Kelurahan*. Unfortunately, that was not as she expected. She also tried to raise this issue to Pak Yahya, whom she thought that could help in solving this issue. Her other neighbor also urged her to speak to someone from the *Kelurahan*, knowing she is a member of the *koperasi* and

Kelurahan staff might listen to her. Through various occasion, she kept asking to Pak Yahya when the muddy road in their neighborhood would be paved. As Ibu Nuriah would have expected before, Pak Yahya or the *Lurah* himself refused to give clear answer to her. Instead, they told her that the *Kelurahan* cannot do anything much, since that area belongs to the District Enterprise for water service. She added that even though she has tried to speak to the *Kelurahan*; it was backfired to her, especially when Pak Yahya blamed her and the other residence why they live there. "I was really disappointed when he said to me, 'If you know living there is illegal, why you still live there? Why don't you move from there and find better place?' It is easy for him to say that!" At last, Ibu Nuriah thinks that despite she is the member of *koperasi* and interact frequently with people from *Kelurahan*, they would not do much to improve the basic facilities in the neighborhood where Ibu Nuriah and her neighbor live.

What Ibu Nuriah experienced is not unique. There are also few other women that feel unheard and neglected by the *Kelurahan* office, even though they have been intensely interacting with the government on daily basis. Mariah also faced similar experience when she put forward community proposal to the *Kelurahan*. Mariah's current neighborhood located very close to the main waste landfill, which oftentimes irritate the residence that live there. Day by day, families that live there have to bear the disturbing smell caused by the pilling waste from the landfill. Not only the distinctive smell, but they also complaint about the water quality in that area. As a result, majority of the residence that are low-income families should also bear extra expenses to purchase clean water for their daily needs. When Mariah attended the community planning meeting in the *Kelurahan* office together with Ibu Herlina, she actually said something about how the landfill has badly affected the community that live in Rawakucing area. "I asked to the *Kelurahan* people if they can do something about us the live near Rawakucing. I told them that it stinks a lot, and it might bring germs because of the flies. The water also polluted and the color... Ugh, bad!" Mariah said that she already brought this issue to the government attention, but her complaints were simply ignored by the *Kelurahan*. According to her, during the meeting, they only care about other neighborhoods that are near by the *Kelurahan* office and not those neighborhoods that are near to the riverbanks area, i.e. the area where she lives. She is also very aware that infrastructure facilities project did by the *Kelurahan* only focus on the areas that

already have one. She thinks that the government is not interested to construct public facilities in the 'problematic' area, like the one that her mother lives in. Finally, she understands that despite being active member of the *koperasi* and often support the government's activities; but her voice and opinion was simply ignored, especially when she questions particular policies that do not favor the community of her neighborhood. Since then, Mariah thinks that it is pointless to raise critical concern, complaints, or needs to the government, as they might neglect her and left her alone to solve the problem.

Since 2014, the NGO-driven "*Peduli Program*" has actively engaged a number of 'excluded' community groups that experience certain disadvantage and identity-based ostracism which are theorized as the root causes of their "social exclusion". For five years or so, until this project just recently finished, it has attempted to capture wider public attention about unfamiliar discourse of "social exclusion" and the reversal policies to eradicate such problem. By actively marketizing the project's activities through popular media and new channel, participating NGOs involved in co-producing new understanding of "social inclusion" as benevolently-sounded activities where the 'excluded' groups felt welcome to participate. Such new understanding promoted by this type of narrative, therefore has led to a certain assumption that whatever activities attach with the 'inclusive' label would automatically reverse the state of 'exclusion' experienced by the project's target population. Through donor-funded project like "*Peduli Program*", the unfamiliarity of "social exclusion" versus "social inclusion" as new terminologies in Indonesia's social policy context, despite their conceptual vagueness, become increasingly popular along with their simplistic operationalization as they are constantly demonstrated by capitalizing the victimhood of those community that often perceived as 'problematic'. Moreover, through such reductionist extrapolation within a short-term project; both NGOs and target population were trapped into dichotomizing notion of "social exclusion" and "social inclusion" by using these terms one exclusive of the other.

The discussion about "social exclusion" and "social inclusion" remains elitist and stays at the project level. The evidences of "social inclusion" as the antidote of "social exclusion" were creatively shaped and massively disseminated through international conferences, festivals, and extravagant celebrations as success stories that illustrate evocative changes for everyone. Such narratives often superficially

portray selective narratives according to the project's main script, namely how the 'excluded' individuals and groups are 'fully' accepted by the community where they live and taken care of by the local authorities. Following the same blueprint, narratives about 'inclusive' society is gradually materialized through the crucial role of aspiring local champions that work together supporting the state-sponsored initiatives towards the common 'inclusion' goal. Such ideal depiction that focus on the soundly benign characteristics of 'inclusion' has marginalized other dissenting narratives like the ones that experience by some other women in their attempt to be critical towards the powerful authorities. This alternative representation is rarely appeared in the project master narrative, as they are often swept under the carpet and intentionally unreported as it might depict what the project avoids, namely power struggle, conflict, and resistance.

For a small local NGO like WRDC that relies their organizational sustenance by providing 'empowerment' and 'community organizing' service to the donors, project like "*Peduli Program*" could be very liberating. Operated through a chain of 'inclusive' activities guided by the project's theory of change and result framework, local NGOs that directly engage with the 'excluded' population have more flexibility to implement activities based on what they are familiar with. For instance, establishing *koperasi simpan pinjam* is the only way that WRDC approach their prospective target population. Through a particular perspective of how women should be included in the development, WRDC instrumentalized the establishment of local financial institution as community organizing strategy, in addition to bring some fun activities for urban poor women that become their principal target. Despite WRDC has been receiving funds from numerous donors, but the intervention strategy remains the same, including side activities that they replicated over and over again for various target groups. I once asked Ibu Tuti how her current engagement with the Chinese *Benteng* women in comparison with her other target population from other projects. Instantly, Ibu Tuti compared these women with other women groups that she facilitated in other projects, including the one with "*Peduli Program*" predecessor project. For her, it was rather difficult in the beginning when Ibu Tuti approached these women for the very first time, especially as vast majority of women in *Kampung Wetan* do not involve in any social groups that she would have thought as the main entry to women population, such as the PKK groups – government-engineered women's organization – or

posyandu. According to Ibu Tuti, at least it would have been easier to introduce an intervention for the urban poor women through an existing activity like *posyandu*. In her assessment, the Chinese Benteng women in *Kampung Wetan* was viewed as restrained in their domestic activities in the house that do not allow them to have activities outside the house. Besides, from her intensive approach to Pak Heri as the most reliable entry point to reach these women, it revealed that majority of underserved residence in *Kampung Wetan* often rely on external charity and donation which are far than sustainable. Ibu Tuti illustrated them as having too much leisure time that often bored them out due to lack of productive activities outside of their house. For that reason, economic empowerment for these women were as a perfect fit to educate them to be economically self-reliant and at the same time also visibilize them in the public domain. By stressing on these women's domestic role, 'empowerment' was something that WRDC would offer to liberate them from dependency that resulted from their economic confinement in domestic arena.

The Chinese *Benteng* people are one from many 'excluded' groups that targeted by "*Peduli*" "social inclusion" intervention. By explicitly targeting the Chinese *Benteng* women who are depicted as 'poor Chinese', including racialized commentary like 'Chinese but poor' and 'backward Chinese'; the neoliberal model of women empowerment is well suited to reproduce certain images of particular identities as well as gendered role of Chinese *Benteng* women in which portrayed as the ideal subject of this operation. Ibu Herlina often describes that participating in the *koperasi* activity means 'social' in which she refers as voluntarism by sacrificing her time and effort to engage in this activity. Not only Ibu Herlina, but most women that actively participate, especially the daily committee, often have to juggle between the day-to-day activities in their house and this 'voluntary' activities that does not bring direct benefit – in terms of monetary compensation – as the exchange for their effort and time. Sharma (2008) describes this voluntarism can be understood as governing those who are marginalized and excluded like the Chinese *Benteng* women by normalizing the idea of unremunerated community-based 'social' activities that commonly done by upper/middle class women and at the same time also permeates patriarchal view about highly gendered work. In her word, "*Expecting voluntary work from poor women who do not have any time to spare is a form of patriarchal exploitation that has been institutionalized and naturalized within the*

state's development framework" (p.57). In reading NGO-implemented project like "*Peduli Program*", Sharma has previously warned us that such neoliberal logic of government has depoliticized women empowerment into a kind of 'social' work that voluntary in nature where it reflects the reproductive gendered labour and receive lower remuneration or simply uncompensated.

Discourse on "social inclusion" generally dominated by the discussion about exposing certain disadvantaged groups that experience 'exclusion' from the society where they live. Therefore, before elaborating "social inclusion" further, Silver's (1994) framework about social exclusion's paradigm has been essential in guiding the contextual analysis. First of all, Silver has warned us that defining exclusion in reference to the opposite features might lead to their own problems. She points out that the relationship between 'exclusion' and what she described as 'integration' might seem to be zero-sum, in which she described in the monopoly paradigm where it is easily to exclude others due to greater power and or control that come from the authority (Touraine, 1992). Silver's sociological perspective sheds a light in which each of the paradigm – solidarity, specialization, and monopoly – underline how social relationship between the included and the excluded evolves based on distinctive theoretical reasoning and extremely varied across society. Here, Silver argues that from the 'top down' policy perspective "social exclusion" is presented as "problem" to be overcome by prescribing particular mechanism to specifically target such problematic population in which "social exclusion" is apparent. In various context, policies on "social inclusion" often overly simplified and limited to group activities that would promote involvement of the 'excluded' population by creating a mechanism in which might attract their interests. Through such oversimplification, the notion of "social inclusion" introduced by "*Peduli Program*" only emphasizes macro-sociological phenomena, namely Development through its variegated control mechanism including the language of 'empowerment' as one of its advance technologies, towards the direction of individual modernity (Silver, 1994). This can be quite a different understanding when the grassroots community articulates 'exclusion' as a form of crisis of tolerance and social solidarity. For such crisis, Silver (1994) suggests to look at micro-sociological process of assimilation, downward mobility, or social isolation that might affect 'exclusion' itself.

The decision to tap Chinese *Benteng* women into “*Peduli Program*” would serve double purpose for WRDC as implementing NGO. The first is to address the ‘inclusion’ aspect of the ‘excluded’ Chinese *Benteng* community and secondly is to address the ‘gender’ aspect by specifically targeting women as participants for this project. In modernity-oriented development that emphasis on the role of market as its primary solution, in fact women are included in a very disadvantageous way that centralizes on women’s productivity to overcome their ‘exclusion’. ‘Social inclusion’ activities introduced by WRDC in *Kampung Wetan* to include not only the Chinese *Benteng* women, but also those from other ethnic groups like Javanese, Sundanese, Betawian, and Bantenese, are based on the preconceived idea that women as individual category are efficient and rational economic actors that should be empowered in order to realize their own potential to contribute to economic growth which would help them to escape poverty. In this economically-sound intervention, exposing and familiarizing the Chinese *Benteng* women through empowerment technique in which WRDC is really good at, would lead to efficient allocation of resources. Based on WID popular approach, WRDC’s main argument to empower the Chinese *Benteng* women centralized on the idea of providing access to financial capital through the inauguration of women-managed microcredit institution that would support their income generation activities. Through this financial institution, the Chinese *Benteng* women were educated to realize their qualities as productive family earners, efficient family managers, and socially responsible community members that actively contributed to the modernization agenda and benefitted from the nation’s development.

The proponents of WID approach like WRDC, took the path of economic-growth development paradigm in operationalizing empowerment as technology to include women from an efficiency point of view. Project activities such as training in order to introduce a new set of skills, focus on cultivating women’s productive capacity as the main foundation of market-based solution to overcome ‘exclusion’ problem experienced by the Chinese *Benteng* women. Based on the new prescribed market-based solution through the newly inaugurated cooperative, their traditional gender identities and role are further problematized as inefficient that characterized as too much leisure time at home. By introducing such productive activities, WRDC promotes patriarchal empowerment model that glorifying women’s social position as both mother and wives, in addition as active

members of the community, thus constructing the notion of 'empowered women' in their society according to socially predetermined standards. With the same token, WRDC ignores the fact that many Chinese *Benteng* women face complicated internal situation that leads to gender asymmetry in which more progressive 'women empowerment' is unlikely to occur, when domination and oppression in a system that build under patriarchal control is profound. In Indonesian society in general, women that are constructed and controlled under patriarchal ideology are rarely question gender inequality, especially in a society where socio-cultural norms normalize women's subordination (Osmani, 1998). In Chinese *Benteng* community, especially those that lived with intergenerational poverty, these women had to juggle day and night between house chores and childcare as well as creatively strategizing their family cashflow to fit all the recurring expenses. Not seldom, some of them also experience physical and emotional abuse from their spouses, in which made them unsub consciously internalize such oppression (Rowlands, 1998) and think that it might be their destiny. For that reason, despite the benevolent intention of "social inclusion" operationalized through 'empowerment' language, activities that WRDC brought to these Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* only touch upon superficial 'power' which associated with their individual economic ability with very limited attempt to challenge the gender asymmetry in their society. As a result, the superficial activities would unlikely to change the women's perceived self-interest towards greater equality or to strive for collective strategic gender interests according to what Mayoux (1998) has proposed.

Chinese *Benteng* community is not the only case where cultural aspect of their community is problematized to serve the purpose of what bring a development project exists in their community. WRDC that represents itself as capable broker which bridges the Chinese *Benteng* community and the donor often participated in creating particular narrative that favor what the development project seeks for. Like in "*Peduli Program*", where uncontested concept of "social inclusion" deployed in an uncritical way, urban poor community like the Chinese *Benteng* people are not only represented as economically deprived, but also *culturally* problematic that rationalizes their distinctiveness with the other community that share similar economic features, including their peculiarity from broader category of Chinese Indonesian. Chinese *Benteng* people which often termed to generalize

all Indonesians of Chinese descent that natively born and raised in Tangerang area, both in rural and urban region, are depicted as singular and homogenous community that still hold to its true Chinese *culture* that brought by their ancestors. This is used as a particular point where it was problematized by the project through rapid assessment. Moreover, as their *cultural* attributes are problematized in respect to their economic deprivation, the “social inclusion” intervention participate in reproducing racialized representation about their poverty based on spatial concentration in the area where they live, *Kampung Wetan*. By naming the ‘excluded’ groups to them, the problem of Chinese *Benteng* people, especially the women that become the target of correction, their *cultural* distinctiveness is pointed out as one of principal causes of their ‘exclusion’, including the *Cokek* dance and casual gambling practice that WRDC found extremely disturbing. Therefore, the inauguration of community-managed financial institution would primarily serve to educate them to use their money wisely by introducing responsible saving behaviour and also to activate their intention to restore their *culture* which has been distorted.

For WRDC, working with specific groups like Chinese *Benteng* women was their first experience. Despite they have abundant experience facilitating urban poor women in forming saving and lending cooperative, but their ‘social inclusion’ project might need slightly different approach in targeting women from Chinese *Benteng* community. In comparison with other urban poor community that WRDC facilitates so far, the Chinese *Benteng* women are the community that WRDC understands the least, especially in terms of their sociocultural background that completely foreign to them. To differentiate what WRDC have done with the other community groups; for the “*Peduli Program*” that emphasizes ‘social inclusion’ as its main image, they decided to start off by proposing activities that might trigger ‘common’ interest from these women. Therefore, proposed activities with strong *cultural* aspect that could be explained by ‘social inclusion’ narrative was an ideal fit for this project. The decision to introduce *authentic* form of *Cokek* dance as one of the main activities for these Chinese *Benteng* women was actually inspired by an annual dance performance and workshop in 2014 that explore *Cokek* dance that has been neglected. In the workshop, a number of experts, dancers and choreographers presented their collaboration in reconstructing and recreating *Cokek* dance. This

workshop has shed light to WRDC that just started in elaborating the culture of Chinese Benteng which they were about to target for “*Peduli Program*”.

After learning and regularly performing *Cokek* dance, Ibu Pin Lan expressed how she is ‘no longer feel ashamed’ in learning *Cokek* dance. Through dance classes that she regularly attended; she finally understands that *authentic Cokek* dance is unlike what generally known. The narrative about distorted meaning of *authentic Cokek* dance was disseminated through verbal production from the *experts* to these Chinese *Benteng* women and introduced the *authentic* form which they should preserve from extinction. Led by Ibu Herlina; Ibu Pin Lan and some other women that learn this *Cokek* dance even fluently able to articulate the long-lost history of *Cokek* dance and its development until this dance was associated with women’s disgrace due to covert prostitution and drinking behavior that apparent in Chinese *Benteng*’s wedding parties. Currently, Ibu Pin Lan is helping Ibu Herlina to teach *Cokek* dance in several schools that agree to make the *Cokek* dance as their extra class activities. Through the dance *revitalization* activities, *authentic* image of the *Cokek* dance as majestic, holy, politeness, and sincerity were introduced to replace previously negative image as erotic and inappropriate dancing performance. These new meanings were added to the *revitalized* and *authentic* version of the *Cokek* dance that is recreated by a Betawian choreographers. With the new meaning and image, the *Cokek* dance was promoted as *authentic* community cultural heritage that should be preserved as part of the cultural diversity of Tangerang City. However, such new meanings given to the *Cokek* dance appears as patriarchal obsession in controlling women body through sanitizing the ‘erotic’ style, which interestingly is very common style that we might find in the local dance groups with their travelling musicians that regularly perform in wedding house. Therefore, through activities like cooperative inauguration and dance group, such ‘positive’ representation of ‘inclusion’ is portrayed against the contradictory image of ‘exclusion’ that serve as the core of neoliberal development model, especially through the idea of educating ‘participation’ as a desire to fulfil and promoting ‘inclusion’ as a way to remove barrier that prevent freedom of movement. However, such perception about ‘inclusion’ could also brought reverse consequences as Young (2002) warns that it could possibly maintain the status quo when the ‘excluded’ groups were merely incorporated into existing institution without challenging the hegemonic dominance. Furthermore, it could be

understood that such reductionist view of 'inclusion' might not bring radical changes towards a more reformative idea that also represented by 'empowerment', but simply identification technique to organize and to manage 'problematic' population through a neoliberal governmental policy.

The novelty of "social inclusion" as an appealing new concept in Indonesia's development landscape, unfortunately remains indifferent with previously more popular concept, i.e. neoliberal empowerment. Through the language of beneficiary targeting, "Peduli Program" has been able to marketize itself as a niche empowerment project that the 'excluded' people could also benefit from. For the Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan*, local activities promoted by WRDC reiterates social policies on self-empowerment of capacitated citizens and self-organizing, self-help, and self-regulated communities in a marketized relationship among actors in their community (Coombe and Weiss, 2015) and with the development brokers as well as the state apparatus. In addition to that, regular trainings and capacity building exercises that aim to improve their assertiveness and collaboration have strongly contributed to shape these women as neoliberal subject that empowered, self-responsible, and economically rational (Triantafillou and Nielsen, 2001) that are produced through processual sequences that adequately guarantee their 'freedom' to decide what rational thing to do. "Peduli" as "social inclusion" project that work through empowerment as its main technique and operated under the framework of neoliberal development follows what Lafrenz-Samuels (2010) elaborates as fostering "*internal modes of self-monitoring and self-discipline*" where "*hegemony of expert knowledge is masked by a discourse of cosmopolitanism which privileges a localized diversity that must be managed by incalculating the correct the correct habituations of local subjects in the ostensible objective of alleviating poverty*" (p.205-206). Through the *koperasi* set up by WRDC, the language of 'women empowerment' and 'participation' are simply instrumentalized as tool of correction against the problematic women as they identified earlier in the community assessment. Triantafillou & Nielsen (2001) further argue that 'empowerment' and 'participation' are not autonomous process, instead they are guided by series of practice in a field of political intervention through particular strategies, bodies of knowledge, interest and relation to power. Therefore, by using the language of 'empowerment' and 'participation' as the embodiment of "social inclusion" project, it does not "*ask the hard questions about the*

relationship between inclusion and the social division of gender, ethnicity, and class or the compatibility between social inclusion and global capitalism" (Levitas, 2003: 5) where women subordination and the process of othering remain unchallenged.

Training activities proposed by WRDC to educate the Chinese *Benteng* women were intended to deliver technique of subjectification that would solve the problem of 'exclusion'. In neoliberal discourse, empowerment is connected with individual rational choice, efficiency, investment, free market, and entrepreneurial-self that shape the foundation of the less-popular discourse of social inclusion project that implemented through the more-popular terms of women empowerment. However, such activities do not seem to reflect what Kabeer (1995) defines as empowerment that acquire self-identity, self-worth, and equality. Moreover, rather than focusing on conscientization of the Chinese *Benteng* women about their fundamental rights, WRDC emphasizes on technical and managerial aspects of their socially predetermined identity, namely as housewife, mother, and members of the society. Guided by neoliberal development framework, "social inclusion" project operated towards capitalistic order that diverted away from real 'empowerment', but instead enable further exploitation towards these women by inserting them into predatorial system. As a consequence, WRDC participated in replicating and co-producing new type of hegemony by introducing new practice of elitism that often exclude other project participants. By focusing on improving individual quality of the Chinese *Benteng* women through 'empowerment' operation to mold their behavior towards certain ends which Dean (2010) explains as "*in order to act freely, the subject must first be shaped, guided and molded into one capable of responsibility exercising that freedom through system of domination*" (p. 193). The above process of subjectification cannot be separated from what Ferguson (2010) describes as the 'art of government' where it is often adopted in the context of so-called developing countries that never experience a strong welfare state. Such countries, including Indonesia, are rather characterized by a weak state, with deep social segregation, clientelism and patronage politics where the practice of citizenship highly rely on informal institutions. The definition of weak state's problems then rationalizes the need of donor-driven interventions through various welfare projects under the framework of neoliberal governmentality which often resulted other type of exclusion or worsening divide between social classes.

Since the establishment of their *koperasi*, the Chinese Benteng women increasingly known as sociable groups and actively participate in almost every event sponsored by their local government. Some members of the *koperasi* thought that it must have been because of the WRDC-initiated trainings which they attended. These trainings generally focused on 'improving' the individual aspect of being selfless members of the community that highly aware to voluntarily contribute to their society; but at the same time also eliminate critical education type of activities that might risk patronage support from their local government. Conducted activities are far from radical 'women empowerment' understanding that supposed to promote collective grass-root effort among women to challenge various form of domination and oppression. Instead, activities are politically 'neutral' that focus on educating them about state's programs in which consistent with national gender ideology, namely state *Ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). Moreover, participants for such trainings are generally selected from a pool of women that socially active in attending the NGO-led events. Not seldom, those women that are invited also known to have more intimate relationship with the *Kelurahan* government or elite group of the *koperasi*. As a result, those women that do not have personal connection with the local power holder, are unable to benefit from the *koperasi* project. In fact, those women that are poorer and disadvantage are further excluded from the project, as they could not afford to maintain their visible presence in every activity hosted by the *koperasi* and prefer to slowly back off from attending activities. Despite is claimed as community-owned, but formally the *koperasi* has institutional affiliation with the *Kelurahan* as its official patron. Such 'patronage' relationship with the government entities has made these women become permissive with the government agenda and tend to be less critical towards their policies. This is very apparent, especially among the elite group that often 'included' by the government in their local projects to take part in 'feminine' activities such as in charge for the food, welcoming guests, and most frequently is performing the *Cokek* dance on stage. Consequently, such 'inclusion' in various formal and institutionalized aspects of the local community has generated an improved skill as capable brokers and agents in their community. Even though the Chinese *Benteng* women's *koperasi* has been constantly claimed as a successful platform for the 'excluded' women in *Kampung Wetan*, it remains exclusive in channeling various needs and interest of the unprivileged members of their society.

Despite it seems peacefully accepted by the community, the establishment of the *koperasi* viewed rather negatively from Pak Heri as someone who is viewed as one of important figure in the community. As previously mentioned in other chapters, Pak Heri once was a well-known figure due to his success in mobilizing the community to resist government eviction plan in 2010. Pak Heri's presence in the Chinese Benteng community become very important as the main entry way how WRDC was successful in empowering the local women by inaugurating *koperasi simpan pinjam*. According to Pak Heri, he is always very open to whoever that wanted to help their community, especially for the benefit of the women that he thinks need a bit of social activities. Initially he expressed his support when WRDC approached him and asked his blessing to educate the women about *koperasi*. Along with the *koperasi*'s skyrocketed new image, especially in the eyes of the government apparatus, Pak Heri's advices are no longer required. Gradually, nobody in the *koperasi* asked for his blessing nor his advice anymore which made him rather felt behind. He then regrets how the *koperasi*, backed up by WRDC, does not consider him anymore as community figure whose advice should be taken into consideration. The peak of the tension emerged when the *koperasi* was finally permitted to conduct the regular activities in *Kelurahan* office and he was extremely upset why the *koperasi* just went off without saying anything to him. Despite that, he still allows Bu San Nio – his wife – to continue with the *koperasi*; but he made a promise that since the *koperasi* and WRDC are being 'disrespectful' to him, Pak Heri does not want to involve with the *koperasi* anymore. On a separate occasion, he once told me that despite he was glad that now the Chinese *Benteng* women from *Kampung Wetan* are well-known, popular, and socially active in the community; but he also worried that the *koperasi* which came along with the project might trouble them further. His concern grows especially when his wife told that every year the *koperasi* should obtain more members due to the target that these women should fulfil, which means more money to manage also increasing the risk. Pak Heri says, "If WRDC wants to help empowering these women through the cooperative, why they should fulfil the target by getting new members for the cooperative? Each year there's new target. There are a lot of new faces in the cooperative that I don't even know personally. I would not be able to help them if there's credit problem." Moreover, despite WRDC claims that the Chinese *Benteng koperasi* is an inclusive platform, the NGO does not seem to invest in a robust structure that realized the inclusion itself. What

they have established and promoted was a superficial arena that is not necessarily respond to the needs of majority of women in *Kampung Wetan*. Such operation could be seen as a temporary intervention and only focus to achieve the project target. With the *koperasi*, the Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* have drastically transformed as government tool that actively socialize and communicate government policies, including important government political message. Their previous experience in organizing themselves – even though it was led by Pak Heri – was never discussed anymore, even some of them have no further interest to talk about that anymore. Despite these Chinese *Benteng* women once participated in a radical event in 2010, currently they tend to pursue more peaceful cooperation with the government under the name of “social inclusion” project.

In “*Peduli Program*”, gender strategy for inclusion is materialized as ahistorical, apolitical, and decontextualized that is operated and deployed simply as technical project that leave unequal power relation between sexes remain untouched. For instance, what Molyneux (1985) articulates as strategic and practical interest are simply understood in a reductionist way that focus on ‘needs’ rather than what most feminist strive for, which is the notion of right (Moser, 1993). Moreover, due to such simplification, what “*Peduli Program*” tries to tackle is more about getting the state ‘entitlement’ or ‘benefit’ rather than a more complex and political way of ‘rights’. Sharma (2008) once described that at first, empowerment seems to highlight women’s agency in self-development. The objective of such empowerment operation is to transform “*supposedly unproductive, ignorant, and passive subaltern women into responsabilized social actors and productive citizens.*” (p.56) By highlighting only on women’s productivity, WID logic of empowerment based on welfare-based ideology segregate women and work as two distinctive domains, in which aims to liberate women’s potential and emancipate societies. Regrettably, such empowerment model also regulates and disciplines the excluded and subaltern women in a framework that operates in a quite similar manner with the welfare orthodoxy. Focus on women ‘economic’ empowerment that emphasis on the market-based solution against their subordination and oppression is strongly promoted by WRDC across their empowerment activities. Under the new blanket terminology of “social inclusion”, this type of ‘women empowerment’ is not only reduced and simplified, but also constructed within neoclassical economic theory that develop particular desire that attached and attributed to dichotomous

categories of public and private sphere. Therefore, guided by such ideology, men are socially constructed as natural head of the family that are financially responsible as main breadwinner. This construction has made women are traditionally depicted as supplementary income earner and at the same time also domestically bound to perform economically unproductive work and reproductive role. This social construction is continuously reproduced by WRDC through capacity building activities for the 'unproductive' women with the objective to be a good financial manager for the family capitalizing on their 'responsible' spending behavior in comparison to their male counterpart.

In Indonesia, neoliberal development projects that specifically target economically disadvantage women use the deradicalized and depoliticized term of 'women empowerment' to maximize women's economic productivity while maintaining the role of *ibu* as the backbone of family morality. In various context across Indonesia, practical women's needs oftentimes are determined by the state that brings donors and bureaucrats together within the framework of national development planning. Moreover, in this planning process, practical needs of women are translated into the state's priorities in such a way to ensure their involvement in development. Therefore, to achieve such goals, the joint forces between state apparatus and donor entities, oftentimes also with the NGOs, determine what women's problems are to be solved through the predetermined prescription. From the way how WRDC has engaged the Chinese *Benteng* women to have their presence in public domain, including encouraging them to involve in state-sponsored social activities has showed how 'practical' women's needs are significantly more important and less problematic as they are unlikely to challenge existing structure and domination that constantly disadvantage women. Under "*Peduli Program*", 'practical' gender needs encompassed in a symbolical requirement to include women in project activity which reproduce socially determined gendered role without challenging such gender status quo. For many NGOs like WRDC that implement community development through 'women empowerment' approach, common activities to animate these women therefore centralized on the idea of building certain understanding and capacities according to the prevailing state gender ideology that imposed on them. As a result, women may consider particular 'needs' such as better health facilities for children and pregnant mothers or practical skills to earn additional income for their household

are the “pro-women” priority that showed “gender inclusivity” in development planning; as oppose to women ‘strategic’ interest such as critical education to challenge deep-seated gender subordination experienced by women. For instance, the idea of getting out from abusive relationship that experienced by many Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* is never put forward. Instead, such crisis is viewed from economic perspective that these women financially reliant to their partners which made them afraid to escape from such abuse. Other example also includes covert human trafficking in a form of commodifying women as mail-order bride for Chinese men in Taiwan or China. Rather than challenging such practice of mail-order bride, it become the source of community gossip and rapidly spread across different neighborhood which further stigmatized these women that involve in such transaction. As this case is pretty much covert among this community, no effort has been done to bring this to public attention, especially by these ‘empowered’ Chinese *Benteng* women of the *koperasi* as they often said that it does not affect them personally. Such criticism is very much reflect what Sholkamy argues (2010) that “*alleviating poverty and enabling women to make some income can better lives, but the enabling environment that confirms the right to work, to property, to safety, to voice, to sexuality, and to freedom is not created by sewing machine or micro-credit alone*” (p.257). Therefore, projects that aim to alleviate women’s poverty through social inclusion lens would requires paradigm shift that enable women to challenge family and household welfare regime that subordinating them and perpetuate stereotypes and gendered division of labor.

As I previously mention in the preceding chapters, Suryakusuma’s ‘state *ibuisim*’ (2011) became the main backbone of Indonesia’s formal gender ideology in which centralized around institutionalizing women’s *kodrat* – God given construction – that conform to the Western model of middle-class housewife role that altruistically serve their husband, family, community, and the state. The construction of important role that women bear for the longevity of the society is continuously maintain to set key foundation of ‘state family’ (Lev, 1996) which underlined women’s core domestic function that link both motherhood and wifehood as well as gendered citizenship all at once, following patriarchal order of the state (Sajed, 2016; Zajicek and Calasanti, 1998). Furthermore, by emphasizing on these desired qualities of being ideal women of Indonesian society, it further extends women’s responsibility that uphold family morality that may lead to the

great nation in which Brenner (1999) points out as the materialization of women's *kodrat* to maintain such vigilance.

The ascendancy of neoliberal development model has led many vulnerable households trap into vicious cycle of poverty. Widening gap due to economic hardship because of market-based public policies has made women to play dual functions, also as secondary breadwinner, due to insufficient earnings. Feminist scholars such as Gonzáles de la Rocha (2007) and Abu-Lughod (2009) view that neoliberal approach to development centralizes 'problems' of poverty because of lack of engagement to market as the only domain where individual freedom and rational responsibility are the solution to such 'problem'. Therefore, a shift towards deradicalized and depoliticized women empowerment serve the main purpose of maintaining women's *kodrat* within state *ibuism* as the formal gender ideology and at the same time delimiting critical contestation against any form of subordination that reproduced through neoliberal development policies. Reflecting from that, we can see that short term intervention like microfinance initiative promoted by WRDC as an appealing activity for Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Sewan* has paved inclusive avenue to "empower" them. Through the claimed 'inclusive cooperative', these women are expected to play crucial role as secondary breadwinner by engaging them in economic activity in a productive and responsible way as they have better access to financing. Consequently, this model perpetuates their marginalization and exclusion through voluntary disciplinary act to take responsibility of their poverty, rather than questioning unequal structure in the society as well as exploitative mechanism of capitalist market.

Depoliticization and deradicalization of women empowerment in neoliberal development context means educating women's desire to voluntarily be a discipline and responsible mother, wife, member of society, and citizen according to their God given construct – *kodrat*. It is important to constantly referring Indonesia's understanding of 'women empowerment' through the lens of prepared by the most reliable feminist conceptualization of state *Ibuism* that thoroughly explains gendered relationship between state as patriarchal social order and women as its subject of domination. Since Indonesia's New Order era up until now, women empowerment projects – engineered, sponsored, or endorsed by the state – continuously focus to cultivate particular conception of being 'woman' according to Indonesian society. Idealized figure of *Ibu* primarily as 'faithful wife' through

the articulation of 'dutiful and supportive companion' and secondarily as 'responsibly loving mother' has socially construct women to uphold their gendered virtue (Parker and Creese, 2016: 2). To obtain and maintain such honor and integrity, the notion of respectable Indonesian women is cultivated through marriage, most importantly the state legalized one, that paves their pathways to wifehood and motherhoods. In the context of Chinese *Benteng* women under the "Peduli Program" "social inclusion" project, primarily they are constructed through representation of socially undesirable behavior of an *ibu*, in which created the need to have this project to correct them according to the prescribe construction of 'good woman'. Therefore, socially inclusive 'women empowerment' is rather seen as corrective activity with therapeutic and 'just for fun' nature, rather than a radical strategy. This operation requires collaborative 'partnership' from not so radical women NGOs, like WRDC, that is less focus on pursuing reformist idea of gender equality. This is what Weiringa (2015) has criticized that the introduction of gender harmony emphasizes on mutual understanding between men and women without creating a conflict. For that, superficial 'women empowerment' activities that implemented by WRDC that emphasis on the idea of material self-reliance measured in financial terms is less likely to disrupt existing gender status quo that resulted from critical reflection about their constant struggle to transform their relation. Lastly, the establishment of *koperasi simpan pinjam* of Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* become the domain of governance where market-driven society, introduced by women NGO as their broker, backed up by patriarchal order of the state, has enabled the governmental operation towards the Chinese *Benteng* women by installing idealized behavior on how to be not only reliable, dutiful and obedient housewife as well as devoted, caring, and responsible mother; but also socially active member of Indonesian society by exhibiting high level of volunteerism and commitment to the state apolitical project. Therefore, this *koperasi* as women-managed financial institution is not only governmental operation, but also site of domination where gender order is created based on the ideology of state *Ibuism* which continuously maintained and reproduced under the patriarchal ideology of social inclusion.

9.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has followed the narratives of two women who participated in the cooperative established by WRDC under the framework of “social inclusion” project. Narrative of Ibu Herlina portrays success story where the life of excluded groups is radically changed towards as desired by the social inclusion project. Whereas the narrative of Ibu Mariah shows rather distinct effect of such participation in the same project. Through these two distinct narratives, I attempted to articulated how “social inclusion” through “women empowerment” has gradually increased its importance as cost effective instrument to alleviate poverty. Despite this concept was started from European origin, but as it travels across the globe, its application often conflates with other popular jargons in Development projects that are vastly promoted by international experts and donors that collaborate with local brokers like NGO for instance. Having said that, some scholars doubt whether “inclusion” would always mean positive for everyone; as oppose to critically question who would benefit the most from such “inclusion”. Therefore, due to lack of critical contestation against this “inclusion” utopian ideal, “inclusion” might only serve simply as a token, without really interrogating existing system.

Many have understood that “social inclusion” is the positive reverse of the negative connotation of “social exclusion”, which often implies that reducing “social exclusion” will automatically increase “social inclusion” at the very same population. Through a donor funded Development project, the novelty of “social inclusion” was capitalized as new and attractive buzzword by bringing assorted groups of disadvantage and undeserved population that categorized by their distinctive characteristic. Such limited elaboration and lack of critical contestation in employing this concept, it subtly reproduces discourse of “otherness” to active the narrative of “social exclusion” as the problem in which “social inclusion” comes as the logical solution. Development interventions like “*Peduli Program*” that explicitly employing “social inclusion” to overcome “social exclusion” often neglect broader macro level political and economic restructuring which influence they way how groups are being “included” or “excluded” and in what ways.

In this chapter, I pointed out that Development projects like “*Peduli Project*” is seen as governmental operation where Foucauldian conception of ‘technologies

of the self' underlines the intricate relationship between power and subjectivity that are rationally connected through intelligible procedures of problematization. The problematization then draws clear separation between what does it mean to be "excluded" and "included" in which such "exclusion" was to be overcome by deploying "inclusion" through installing a set of values and technical operation that attached with the predefined features of "inclusive society". Moreover, I also highlighted that Development intervention as governmental practices disposes specific kind of rationality through particular form of representation that is translated into interpretative model in which this technical operation would be reproduced and maintained. Lastly, not only the deployment of "social inclusion" discourse in programming Development interventions, but also ensuring that the desired effect of "women's empowerment" namely the ability to self-control and self-regulate themselves in which the freedom itself would function as instrument of panoptic surveillance under the utopian desire of neoliberal "inclusive society".

**X – FINAL REFLECTIONS
AND CONCLUDING
THOUGHTS**

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“If there is a single most important lesson for feminists to learn from the past decades of development, it is that the political will for taking on more politically controversial issues which address women’s strategic gender interest is contingent on women themselves organizing to demand and promote change” (Kabeer 1994)

10.1. INTRODUCTION

Within a few months after I completed my fieldwork; a local news portal wrote “*Kampung Tehyan will be Tourism Icon*”, promoting new initiative from Tangerang city government to beautify urban *kampung* as touristic destinations. The news is illustrated by a picture of an old man who plays a traditional musical instrument in front of an exhibition booth decorated with Chinese elements. He is Pak Goyong (popular call for Oen Sin Yang), the remaining *tehyan* classic musician alive who still attempt to revive the traditional *gambang kromong* music – a unique acculturation between Chinese and Betawi culture that developed within outskirts Jakarta – by handcrafting the *tehyan* instrument. The photograph was taken from 2018’s Archipelago’s Cultural Festival, hosted by Tangerang’s city government, where *Kelurahan Kembangan* participated as one of the exhibitors to promote their neighborhood area as a new tourist destination. In this exhibition, the native *kampung* of Chinese *Benteng*’s was represented as “exotic” and “culturally rich” destination that would attract a lot of visitors to come by, relying on the *ethnicized* exotic attributes like religious Chinese temples, people’s houses, and some cultural attractions such as the famous dragon dance and *Sipatmo* Dance. While reading that, I recalled my earlier discussion with Syahrul – a program manager of a national NGO that administer “*Peduli Program*” implementation – a few years ago, just before I started this research. At that time, we talked about gradually vanishing existence of Chinese *Benteng* people in Tangerang area that he called socially excluded community.

For Syahrul and NGOs' personnel alike, the notion of *social inclusion* that recently enter into Indonesia's development repertoire, appears as an attractive and versatile organizing concept to bring different kinds of *excluded* people (read: "problematic people") together under the umbrella of a single project that was designed as an intervention to accelerate government's poverty reduction agenda. PfGR, the NGO where Syahrul works, has been engaged with "Peduli Program" since its initial formation which were previously focused to *empower* a wide range of marginalized groups to improve their(own) socio-economic conditions under the flagship of PNPM *Peduli* project. As the pilot project terminated its operation under the management of the World Bank poverty reduction facility at the end of December 2014, the "Peduli project" was transitioned to The Asia Foundation as its managing partner. In the newly refined intervention, PfGR and its local NGO partners were mandated to select *particular* types of *excluded groups* whose lives were threatened and jeopardized by a wide range of shared "exclusion issues" that drive or perpetuate *social exclusion* of these groups. Moreover, community groups that rely their existence on natural resources, including indigenous people and forest-dependent village communities, were deliberately selected by these NGOs to justify the rationale of *social inclusion* intervention operated by "Peduli Program".

Out of my initial expectation, PfGR in fact channeled project funds to WRDC that is well known for their longstanding work in empowering urban poor women through microcredit provision approach which I considered as rather unusual partner's selection. In the PNPM *Peduli's* pilot project, which I was part of the technical secretariat team, I was quite familiar with the works of WRDC that focus on improving women's economic capacity as a source of their enhanced self-esteem, sense of independence, and ultimately felt empowered by being member of saving/lending cooperatives for women. In some project monitoring visits that I participated in, similar "women's empowerment" activities – such as snack making or handcrafting – were carried out on the basis of *problematizing* women's lack of productive capacity that often perpetuates their *powerlessness* which is identified by their *inability* to stand on their own feet and consequently become *economically dependent* to their husband. By *problematizing* women's lack of economic capacity, WRDC and some organizations alike that operate in this conceptual logic, focus on the 'women' as a category to be corrected through a set of activities that could boost their economic productivity. However, as generally Indonesian women are socially

constructed to be responsible of domestic *unproductive* affairs; women are demanded to prioritize their family over their *economically productive* matters. The worst thing is, such construction is not easy to be challenged especially by poor women to whom the women's empowerment idea should serve. Unfortunately, simplistic and narrow view of women's empowerment that is understood as an activity rather than as a holistic and systemic approach; "women's empowerment" activities conducted by WRDC that targeted mostly urban poor women instead brought the *economically productive* activities into the same arena where *unproductive* domestic affairs should not be neglected. At the end, such convergence gives the reason why women should be targeted by development project.

Initially, WRDC's involvement with "Peduli Program" was facilitated by another national NGO with whom they were part of the same consortium. For more than 2 years in the pilot project, WRDC worked with urban poor women in North Jakarta to form saving/lending cooperative as a mechanism to improve their socioeconomic condition. Moreover, to meet the project's features on "social exclusion" theme, WRDC chose to approach urban poor women that match with the targeting requirement that is *excluded group* as their target population. For that purpose, they selected Chinese *Benteng* women that lived in Tangerang City who are rarely 'touched' by development and worsen their poverty. To me, Syahrul admitted his initial surprise when he visited the Chinese *Benteng* people in WRDC's project location for the first time. For him, Chinese Indonesians bear *particular* socioeconomic characteristics and one of those is not considered as low-income groups that require government assistance. He said that it was never occurred to him to witness *poor* Chinese Indonesians that live in bad living conditions, if not because of the *social exclusion* dimension of their poverty. For me, what Syahrul just explained was not only a simple unawareness, but also a normalized ignorance in viewing and understanding complex issues of Chinese Indonesians in the course of nation-building trajectory from a binary framework of *exclusion* and *inclusion*. Furthermore, he bombarded me with collated 'facts from the field' which majority were collected by WRDC's field workers, that show how the Chinese *Benteng* people are deprived and excluded who should be rescued from their poverty by making them visible and reachable, so development could help them benefiting from projects like government assistance program. As prerequisite requirement to be the target population of "Peduli Program", their state of *exclusion* also justified

by WRDC through the incident of 2010 government-led eviction that triggered community's revolt in *Kampung Wetan*, along the Cisadane riverbank. The eviction was understood as an enforced removal from their "ancestral" land which indicated government's 'negligence towards their presence', in which should be immediately overcome through *social inclusion* intervention like "*Peduli Program*". As he walked me through the project activities that involve Chinese *Benteng* community, especially the women, vision of *social inclusion* started to crystalize as the project unravels the exoticism of Chinese *Benteng*'s tradition, practice, rituals, including artifacts that are viewed as exotic other that should be accepted as part of Indonesia's richness.

Artistic feature of the 'cultural dimension' of local communities is regularly capitalized as key projects' stream in searching for inclusive society under the empowerment rhetoric as governmental technique to execute development. This thinking was precisely what Syahrul told me about the blue print to ensure Chinese *Benteng* people's existence to be recognized, especially by the local government, by establishing cultural conservation area in *Kampung Wetan* to promote their *exotic* and almost *extinct* tradition. In his explanation, reflecting from the 2010 eviction, *Kampung Wetan* should be transformed into a site of cultural preservation so it would prevent similar incident reemerging. That time, I was not very sure that such vision might materialize as the NGO would like to happen; but unexpectedly, that plan luckily coincided with the government's poverty reduction agenda. This initiative utilized the idea of creating local tourism destination, combined with home-based income generation activities that basically commodifying their 'cultural' product to attract visitors. Under the guidance of Syahrul's team that was very skillful to approach and to negotiate with government bureaucrats, WRDC then started to develop certain path that oriented to the creation of cultural preservation site which would reduce the likelihood to evict Chinese *Benteng* community in the future. Afterall, such blueprint came together as designed exit strategy for the "*Peduli Program*" which means to graduate the Chinese *Benteng* community to be responsible for their own socioeconomic improvement without the project. This "sustainable" mode of survival relies on commodification of what they currently rediscover as *rich* and *exotic* culture through capitalizing their new productive skills, improved relationships and wider network facilitated by the technology of women's empowerment operated by local brokers like WRDC.

The creation of thematic the *kampung* project that was initiated by Tangerang's city government has indeed opened up opportunities for the *Kelurahan Kembangan* apparatus to showcase the Chinese *Benteng* people's exotic culture. Despite the idea of creating "Cultural *Kampung Tehyan*" does not imply to any legal recognition that would ideally protect the Chinese *Benteng* people of *Kampung Wetan* from further eviction, but it was the least that "Peduli Program" could contribute to the poverty alleviation agenda through what they understand as *social inclusion*. Within a year since the government exhibition fair, WRDC with some key women representatives from *Koperasi Pelita* voluntarily worked with the *Kelurahan*'s government to create thematic *kampung* by capitalizing their 'authentic' Chinese *Benteng* culture. Following the mayor's message to link economic activity with local tourism for poverty alleviation; late in 2018, *Kampung Wetan* was re-branded as *Kampung Budaya Tehyan*¹¹², abbreviated word from a combination of words, namely "Tertib" (compliance), "Eksotis" (exotic), "Hijau" (green), "Yakin" (confident), "Aman" (secure), and "Nyaman" (convenient). Prior to the launch, a beautification project was carried out in *Kampung Wetan* by the community and supervised by the local government apparatuses. They constructed a Chinese-alike gate, decorated the alley with red lanterns, and also painted long murals with various images that portray Chineseness attributes of this *kampung*. On the wall, they painted Chinese mythical features, including God and Goddess, dragon and other imaginary characters, caricatures of some well-known dishes, and a pair of girl and boy with slanted eyes dressed in Chinese costumes that barely associated with Chinese *Benteng* representation. To create a more "authentic" image, *Cokek Sipatmo* dance is officially performed as welcoming dance in front of the Confucian temple to greet visitors. Since the inauguration of *Kampung Tehyan* as *Cultural Village*, there are a lot of visitors such as local tourism enthusiasts, associations, or local celebrities and social media influencers came to their neighborhood for a few-hours excursion activities. From there, I learned how the local visitors were well received as distinguished guests by the *Kelurahan Kembangan* officers that publicly appear to represent Chinese *Benteng* people whose culture has been commodified

¹¹² *Tehyan* is the name of traditional musical instrument plays local style music. The production of this instrument is nearly extinct and among those artisans, one is the native of *Kampung Wetan* that still lives there.

under the rhetoric of *social inclusion* as a mean to improve their socioeconomic conditions that ultimately theorized to reduce poverty in that area. By showcasing the 'revived' *Cokek Sipatmo* dance that these women have learned in *Peduli* project, tour participants or visitors were exposed to an operation of cultural "authenticity" through staging Chinese *Benteng's* rituals and practices in an *iconic* and *exotic* spot like the temples.

As the evidence of *Koperasi Pelita's* success in building the image of empowered Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kelurahan Kembangan*, some of women activists were appointed by the *Lurah* as government-engineered volunteer groups of local tour guide. These women were mobilized to actively showcase their *exotic* culture in which some of them are usually not for public spectacle, for instance the plan to make Tomb Sweeping day (*Ceng Beng*) as a touristic attraction. Such commodification of cultural practice like Tomb Sweeping day which is associated with the concept of filial piety to the ancestors for many Chinese diaspora including the Chinese *Benteng* people and Chinese Indonesians in general, has been "promoted" by other districts' government, such as Bangka Belitung and Cirebon, as *exotic* cultural attraction to boost the number of tourists in their area. By mobilizing these Chinese *Benteng* women as active agent of culturally *exotic* tours, they are constructed as a governable subject of empowerment operation that capitalize their 'pride' as culturally exotic community which the government has finally 'acknowledged'.

In the creation of *Kampung Budaya Tehyan* as local tourism initiative, some women from the *Koperasi Pelita* were trained to play certain role to contribute to national development agenda. This is characterized by a dominant model of empowered and socially active women that selflessly engage in the community voluntarily for the betterment of the whole population. These women are guided by WRDC as their benevolent patron which shaped them into reliant change agent and community champion that actively mobilize themselves to support short-term agendas of the local government, including creating village tourism project or to be government's volunteers, while neglecting a more strategic gender interest that potentially could greatly benefit women's agenda in the long run. Obviously, when women's empowerment is viewed simply as activity rather than a comprehensive strategy; selected activities like dancing lesson or baking class are generally comprehended more like therapeutic fun-like activities to fill their

abundant time which are not thoroughly designed to solve their “exclusion” as previously diagnosed by WRDC in the first place. Furthermore, generic preconception about Chinese *Benteng* people in which require salvation, correction, and normalization that offered by development intervention like “*Peduli Program*”

Since *Kampung Budaya Tehyan* was inaugurated by the Lurah through festive celebration as a sign to mark their new identity, the name of *Kampung Wetan* was slowly faded away, gradually submerging its original name and its longstanding history of “no man’s land”. Through *social inclusion* rhetoric with initially intended to create tolerance and harmonious society; the Chinese *Benteng* women, under the name of *Koperasi Pelita* and supported by WRDC, mobilized themselves to volunteer in a government project to re-create “authentic” Chinese *Benteng* village in which seems no more than a beautification project. Financially backed up by “*Peduli Program*”, the *kampung*’s passageways was beautifully decorated with red lanterns that mark their Chineseness and at the same time also showcasing the image of accepting society among the presence of Chinese *Benteng* people as culturally ‘distinctive’ community. Not only gate with the Chinese style that mark the grand entrance to the *kampung* area, the painted murals are also promoted as *Instagram* photo spot. The effort to empower Chinese *Benteng* community through cultural tourism project focused on the material aesthetic aspects which centralizes around generic model of visual projection that is intelligibly designed by the programmer which might not be organic from the community themselves. Through visibilizing new ‘community star’ like Ibu Herlina and some other women from *Koperasi Pelita*: the government officials that technically supported by WRDC envisioned the *Kampung Budaya Tehyan* with its “*authenticity*” through highlighting various aspects of their Chineseness that are commodified in this tourism initiative.

Located in the most well-preserved area in *Kampung Wetan*, rather far from Cisadane riverbank where majority of poor and low income Chinese *Benteng* population lives, the rebranded *Kampung Budaya Tehyan* centralizes its core tourism activity around the oldest Confucian temple in this neighborhood that represent material symbol of their Chineseness among the native population. Stem from urban beautification project, the creation of thematic tourism destination exposes the life of some well-off groups of Chinese *Benteng* population while covering the poverty of the large majority of the local population that perhaps diverted from the image that the project tries to portray. Interestingly, the attempt to create

“authentic” Chinese *Benteng* village through exhaustive images of Chinese elements in the decorations, murals and façade, also performances appear as faux representation of this community. As I learned how they are very amalgamated community which produce a unique cultural blend of their own, such Chineseness that the project tries to portray were fabricated and manipulated in order to support the creation of the “authentic” Chinese *Benteng*’s *kampung* as tourism destination to boost poverty alleviation agenda. As a result, this representation instead silences their own nativeness that are enriched and shaped by complex hybridity between Chinese and native elements. Cultural and ethnic tourism in *Kampung Wetan* that was planned by the local government, supported by WRDC and implemented by the women from *Koperasi Pelita*, has depicted an image of culturally *exotic* and *foreign* that is represented under the rhetoric of harmonious and inclusive society. This was intended to attract visitors not only to the Chinese *Benteng* population, but most importantly to their *authenticity* and *exoticism*. Unlike the outdated and fetichized representation of Chinese *Benteng* people to attract pity by overexploiting their poverty; now, their ‘*authentic*’ culture was exoticized in the name of “preservation” through local tourism project that based on market-based policy reduction agenda. Through such project, the identity of Chinese *Benteng* people is determined through a process of negotiated collaboration between NGO, government apparatus, and elite group that groomed by an empowerment project who portray itself as authorized entity to represent Chinese *Benteng* culture in a selective manner.

Since many decades ago, Chinese *Benteng* people is always portrayed as “the exotic other” of Chinese Indonesia, whether due to their cultural uniqueness or their experience of poverty. In *Kampung Budaya Tehyan*, their lifestyle, cultural artefacts, private rituals and practices are showcased in a romanticized way as exotic cultural attraction. To some extends, such representation appears as a kind of living museum that display a romantic image of the “*authentic*” exotic culture as showcased by folk performances of *Cokek Sipatmo* dance with a fabricated historical narrative that is told repeatedly to the visitors. Furthermore, the process of exoticizing their stereotypes like ‘not all Chinese are rich’ is created and maintained to emphasize their misery and victimhood which repeatedly narrated that subjectify the Chinese *Benteng* people as the perfect target of *social inclusion* rhetoric that vaguely understood. Such empowerment model embraced by WRDC thus

promotes an enterprise culture where women is encouraged to marketize itself through a process called neoliberal empowerment in which ensures that “it concerns them at the very heart of themselves by making it rationally the condition of their active freedom” (Burchell, 1993: 276) which enable women to function as economic subject (*homo economicus*).

This thesis has shown various glimpses of how Chinese *Benteng* women’s lives under the representation that created by others to support the ‘benevolent’ intention of development to rescue, to empower then to include them in. The predetermined narrative on their poverty is continuously reproduced overtime in which creates the Chinese *Benteng* women as the ‘needy subject’ (Timmer, 2010) of development projects operationalized through deploying the discourse of “social inclusion” that is prescribed to overcome a “problem” that is particularly represented as *social exclusion*. The creation of ‘needy subject’ relies on problematic representation of Chinese *Benteng* women in which abuse and overuse particular stereotypes like ‘poor’, ‘unlike Chinese’, ‘*hitachi*’ (*hitam tapi Cina*¹¹³), ‘illiterate’, ‘lazy’, and other forms of derogatory representation that reproduce colonial narratives of outdated distinction based on skin color and physical features. This problematic representation ignores important discussion of unequal power relations, including access to political and economic resources deeply entrenched in a highly stratified society like Indonesia; the systemic exploitation that worsen class division and gender-based division of labor; and the obscurity of state-citizen relationship. Among the problematic representations, recurring narrative of their ‘victimhood’ of the state’s discriminatory policy under Suharto’s era is continuously used to determine the needs of ‘inclusion’ to liberate them from ‘exclusion’ due to their exotic ‘otherness’. In “*Peduli Program*”, framing the Chinese *Benteng* as ethnically “excluded” population and separates them with the rest of non-Chinese *Benteng* people in *Kampung Wetan* appears to simplify the complexity in their community. As the project implementing agency, it is rather obvious that WRDC neglected the fact that poverty in *Kampung Wetan* which also involve Chinese *Benteng* people is not simply a racial problem. By representing the Chinese *Benteng* people with such racial narrative, WRDC indirectly contributes in exoticizing Chinese *Benteng*’s poverty experience by normalizing their poverty

¹¹³ Black but Chinese

among the native population that deeply entrenched in longstanding history of patron-client type of society which reproduced throughout generations framed under the discourse of nation building trajectory. In this way, poverty experience of Chinese *Benteng* people is problematized through exoticization in order to activate their state of *exclusion* as needed by the project. Given the mandate to empower those who have been marginalized and excluded, the Chinese *Benteng* women and also other social groups that were targeted in the “*Peduli Program*”; the implementing local NGOs like WRDC should invest in creating the images of the “*exotic others*” and narratives of “*victimhood*” that justify the whole operation of development intervention to “*include*” them in.

Discourse of human development that introduced and promoted by international bodies, steered and engineered by northern wealthier states, is generally portrayed as a heroic process to educate the poor and the marginalized population through a technically designed intervention called “*capacity building*” and “*empowerment*” through which they would be educated to rescue and to pull themselves out of the poverty slope. Mosse (2005) has warned us that policy language generates mobilizing “*buzzwords*”, which in case is *social exclusion* as the supposed corresponding problem to address – whose vagueness and ambiguous meaning requires conceptual clarity to secure ideological differences so as to enable dialogue and facilitate compromise through various forms of agency and criteria of success within project system (p.230). The concept of *social inclusion* was introduced into welfarist policy formulation in 1970s French that emerged as a response to *social exclusion* problem that threatened European social fabric. As these concepts travel along with the movement of donor’s financial aid, they are often directly translated and locally adopted without any critical contestation according to their own particular local context. These concepts therefore become highly problematic when they are operationalized in a non-European postcolonial environment as a technical tool to solve particular “*problems*” in a binary manner.

Following particular thinking process of post-developmental scholar (Escobar, 1988, 1995; Esteva, 2010; Ferguson, 1990; Mosse, 2005; Sachs, 2010), this thesis attempts to argue that the notion of *social inclusion* that is adopted in Indonesia tends to overlook unequal power relation that cause and maintains *social exclusion* which is represented as a problem that *inclusion*-related project(s) should be responsible to solve. Instead, it is used to enforce homogenous interpretation of

its benevolent connotation and always positive meaning that attached to *social inclusion* by blaming on the *problematic* populations that are 'invisible' thus need intervention to make them "be seen". Therefore, by being seen by development, the excluded groups are expected to be able to benefit from the development itself. This thesis also views that the notion of *social inclusion* was introduced and is operated as a mechanism to govern those who are defined as the "problematic others" to engage in neoliberal development through being active participants in their society. Through simplistic dichotomous interpretation, *social inclusion* is created to facilitate the "problematic others" to be governed differently and to follow particular rule of the game prescribed by development programmers. Despite it seems that *social inclusion* would enable the "problematic others" to engage in development; but the end game was not necessarily for the betterment of the disadvantaged groups themselves. Besides that, it should also be read that *social inclusion* instead facilitates market-based development policy to work and to operate upon society inclusively in order to accumulate greater profit. This operation is perfectly illustrated by Chatib Basri, a well-known Indonesian economist in his interview in Geolive¹¹⁴, a digital media platform on the 13th of July 2019, who argued that "inclusion" is a compensation for those that unable to compete in the market system. He pointed out that *inclusion* policy often re-package as pro-poor welfare policies that are specifically targeted for those who "loose the battle". Basri's articulation draws me back to Silver's (1994) specialization paradigm that theorizes the notion of *social exclusion* caused by structural *barriers* which in turn prohibit some groups to *freely* mobilize themselves according to the market mechanism. This thesis argues that this particular conception of *social exclusion* centralizes its meaning on individual's capability to benefit from the existing system, in this case is development as the governing framework; rather than viewing development as a rather exclusionary mechanism based on certain criteria predetermine by interest-based market-oriented policies. For that reason, socially excluded groups that were selected to be part of Peduli project, first and the foremost, are those that fail to engage themselves in a "*benevolent*" system that organized by uncontested discourses like "basic service delivery", "poverty alleviation", "economic growth", or "women's empowerment".

¹¹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36Iyuz6NNrc>

My previous personal connection with this development project often conceals my critical gaze from questioning how structural mechanism on how development operates towards the marginalized population and the effect attached to it. Having said that, in the beginning of this process, I started to question whether Chinese *Benteng* women's participation in local development affairs is appropriate means for their struggle which leads to pathways in claiming their citizen's right. Interestingly, what I found throughout the fieldwork and analysis is that, through *social inclusion* project their participation is envisioned as an instrument to achieve greater goal of development, namely women's participation as productive contribution for the greater benefit for the population, which does not necessarily mean serve the strategic interest for women themselves. Moreover, emerging evidences indicate that genuine participation is coopted and manipulated into the apolitical ones which used as technical instruments of democratic decision-making (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Kothari, 2001; Rahnema, 2010; Williams, 2004). Along with the deradicalization and depoliticization of women's empowerment to conform the state's ideal notion of womanhood that derived simply from women's biological construct and its extension to care; development projects that uncritically focus solely on symbolic women's participation in decision-making arena tends to jeopardize broader feminist strategy on gender justice and equality agenda. Such projects, including the one that operated by WRDC with the financial support from PfGR under the PEDULI project scheme, rarely challenge the underlying reason how poor Chinese *Benteng* women are excluded and marginalized in the first place. Moreover, the project's avoidance to interrogate more complex issues of market-driven government policies that are imbued with racial sentiment and religious conservatism, often found to be the root causes of the Chinese *Benteng*'s poverty and their struggle to leave from such condition. Therefore, with such narrow view of women's participation, their symbolical participation in development is understood and simplified as a trajectory to fulfil citizen's rights.

The above narratives guided me back to close the loop of this research by returning to the research questions that I proposed in the beginning of this thesis. In this concluding chapter, I will address the main research question that ask how and to what extend the empowerment of Chinese *Benteng* women will increase their participation and activism in local development affairs as a mean to claim

their right as citizens. Despite initial claim showed that the Chinese *Benteng* women were seemed “empowered”, being included, and actively participated in various local activities; however, my experience during the fieldwork captured a different dynamic that I did not anticipate which resulted from such participation. By summarizing and reflecting back on the findings, this final part remains consistent in linking to the umbrella framework of Foucauldian governmentality analysis that has shaped the order and becomes the principal organizing thought of this research. To proceed, the following sections of this conclusion are structured based on the synthesis of the sub-research questions that aim to wrap up three main synthesis, namely the elaboration about representing *problem* in a particular way and designing technical solution in which Bacchi (2012b) argues as a mechanism to govern society by *problematization*; about subject making operation through deploying particular discourse of women’s empowerment for the Chinese *Benteng* women as the selected population to intervene; and lastly about certain effects that this operation might bring for the particular society that neoliberal development has imagined.

10.2. ABOUT REPRESENTING THE “PROBLEM” WITH A PARTICULAR SOLUTION

Available literature has generally depicted *social inclusion* as the positive reverse of *social exclusion* which generally presented as negative and problematic. Despite so, Gómez-Hernández (2018) argues that these two discourses born from the same question and reality in which are not necessarily contradict between one another, despite their complexity. Due to the persistent colonial thinking that dominates global narratives, the *inclusion/exclusion* duality remains prevalent through the dividing practices of visibilizing ones and invisibilizing the others, according to the predetermined norms defined by those who are in power. Unlike in the context of European society, from where these concepts were introduced, in various contexts of post-colonial nations, *inclusion* does not necessarily bring positive results as what the western industrialist society would expect in response to the notion of *exclusion*. Hickey and Du Toit (2007) explain that “adverse incorporation” is a form of *inclusion* that instead brings detrimental effect to certain communities and is strongly related with how power is organized in that particular

community. Moreover, existing literature that simply focuses on *exclusion/inclusion* duality has depoliticized the debate of unequal power relations and shifts the discussion away toward a simplified technical discussion that centralizes around the issues of compartmentalization of the poor and how to better administer them.

With the conceptual background of *social exclusion* that generally came from western industrialized society, Kabeer (2002) warns the danger of blindly adopting and directly employing this notion without further interrogation, as it tends to simply reveal the longstanding locally developed approach to social problems. Kabeer continues that *social exclusion* might simply promote a tendency to assess southern realities to a certain extent that they converge or divert from standard of the northern mode (p.2). Therefore, the use of *social exclusion* is contextual – not simply situational – in which it is strongly embedded with the political structures of and contestation in the specific community (Roy, 2014). For Roy, the operation of ‘basic market’ ideology is not only determined by power dynamics, but also class, gender, and caste that are complicatedly intertwined. Such processes create numerous possibilities and combinations of dominant power concentration, imbalance accumulation of assets, and unequal distribution of surplus that are fluid and continue to change – depending on its cultural context and period in history. This thesis attempts to argue that the discourse of *social exclusion* that used to classify the poor, is represented in such a way to problematize those who are unable to fulfill the criteria determined by the market as promoted by neoliberal development agenda. Therefore, to ensure that such categories of people conform with the predefined criteria, the discourse of *social inclusion* as policy language is introduced to reverse their state of *social exclusion* through capacity enhancement intervention that enable them to master the skill needed to meet the requirement.

The adoption of *social inclusion* as a remedy to cure *social exclusion* – a problem defined by the western industrialized society through their lenses – into the context of post-colonial society was contested by many scholars. Despite constant criticism towards *social exclusion* versus poverty and their relation with *social inclusion* in some post-colonial settings, there are insufficient contextualized theoretical debates about those concepts. Among the rare, Silver’s (1994) conceptualizations on distinct political paradigms that determine the nature of the problem and its corresponding socioeconomic policies shed some light about how majority of the western industrialized societies perceive *social exclusion* based on their particular

contexts. Silver notes that the concept of *social exclusion* is deeply embedded in European society, particularly the French, which threatens European notion of social solidarity – as in Silver’s term is “Solidarity Paradigm”. This made social integration as a more preferable concept than *social inclusion*. On the other hand, *social exclusion* is understood differently in the U.S. and Britain as the main proponent of liberalism – as Silver puts it under the “specialization paradigm” – which threatens freedom of movement that restricts full participation in market and society in order to benefit from the free exchanges. Therefore, *social inclusion* is a more prominent approach as it aims to remove barriers that prevents participation in the context of liberalism. Her third formulation is “monopoly paradigm” that reflects how the Marxist perspective views *social exclusion* as a problem. She suggests that the powerful and dominant groups have been able to maintain their favorable political and socioeconomic position through maneuvering themselves into a position to receive symbolic material ‘rents’ from the weaker groups. In this context, *social exclusion* works for the powerful and the dominant groups as it generates a reserve army of labor for them. With the same logic, *social exclusion* is then related to the genesis and re-production of poverty, where the analysis of power is much needed to understand the multidimensionality of these concepts. By incorporating such power analysis, it would enable more comprehensive understanding rather than just simple dichotomy of *exclusion/inclusion* and should start to focus more on the relation based on power dimension.

This section will resume and reflect on the findings around *social exclusion* experienced by Chinese *Benteng* women that are selected as target to be empowered in a *social inclusion* project. It traces various questions that ask how *social inclusion* is conceptualized at the discourse level as the solution to the “problem” of *social exclusion*, in the context of neoliberal development intervention in the formation of *Koperasi Pelita* that comprised of Chinese *Benteng* women in Tangerang. This thesis was guided by Foucauldian framework that enables me to work backward – started from a *social inclusion* project by looking back how it was shaped to respond to a certain yet vaguely understood “problem” of *social exclusion* that represented in the project’s main narrative. To do this, Li’s framework of *problematization* and *rendering technical solution* (2013) in development programming came very useful to understand how politics of development aid are strongly embedded in the

process of *problematization* to navigate the path to govern the targeted community. Moreover, following the process of *problematization*, the process of designing “Peduli Program” illustrated what Li defined as *rendering technical solution* that focus on the technical intervention on three main aspects, namely: (1) access to service delivery and social assistance; (2) fulfillment of human rights; and (3) policy on social inclusion. This thesis indicates that the concept of *social exclusion* introduced by “Peduli Program” is the result of continuous process of *problematization* that subsequently was conceptualized as a particular “problem” to which *social inclusion* as a predetermined solution had been prescribed to overcome. As a development intervention, “Peduli Program” approached the notion of *social inclusion* as predetermined state which interprets *social exclusion* as capacity failure and relationship deficits that required particular improvement in order to realize such idealized condition. In the “Peduli Program”, capacity failure and relationship deficit of the Chinese *Benteng* women in *Kampung Wetan* to engage in local development affairs were improved through various engagement schemes under *Koperasi Pelita* as the common organizing platform for women. Their capacity failure and relationship deficits were then theorized as significant barriers that prohibit them to fully participate in development scenario and eventually failed to gain various benefits offered by state-sponsored development initiatives. Through a particular way of representing *social exclusion* as capacity failure and relationship deficits, “Peduli Program” successfully established a warrant for policy intervention that aims to remove barriers that prevent freedom of exchange and mobility according to market-based mechanism under the flag of *social inclusion* as the new development buzzword.

Explanation in this section is basically drawn from Chapter 3 and 4 that focus on discursive construction of a particular representation of *social exclusion* as a “problem” to be addressed by *social inclusion* as appealing new policy language. Not only tracing the discursive construction of *social exclusion*, this section also points out what has been left unproblematic by such representation. Unlike poverty which considered as a more stable notion, *social exclusion* is a highly contested concept. In Indonesia, the use of *social exclusion* in the policy discourse is extremely unpopular; however, it increasingly gains attention along with the concept’s popularization through some donor-funded projects like “Peduli Program”. Due to lack of conceptual reference and theoretical debate on *social*

exclusion as development policy language; in turn, it tends to simplify the novelty about this concept and neglect diverse contexts where this concept operates. It is worth noting that the lack of diverse repertoire about *social exclusion* in Indonesia's development landscape leads to projectisation of aid under neoliberal 'empowerment' framework which encourages local communities to solve their own problem in a responsible way by self-diagnose their problem, decide the solution, and self-manage the implementation. Furthermore, the terminology of *social exclusion* in a project context is utilized as an extension to earlier vocabulary of marginalization that implies a condition where certain community groups in a particular society were pushed away or deliberately never been invited to engage in social activities and socially isolates them from local affairs.

Unfamiliarity with contextualized conceptual construction of *social exclusion* and its historical trajectory as a popular policy term in northern industrialized society, this has led to a 'lost-in-translation' jargonistic term that incomprehensibly adopted in a development project in Indonesia. The novelty of *social exclusion* was seen as an appealing notion, in comparison to poverty, and cannot be tackled alone with 'empowerment' which was argued as unable to reach some problematic population. As a consequence, in the project's logical framework, the unwanted 'problem' of *social exclusion* should be tackled by its 'reverse', which is *social inclusion*. Such binary thinking is exactly what O'Reilly (2005) has argued that "the fundamental problem is that the *analytically coherent* paradigms of social exclusion are predicated on the *moral* paradigms of social inclusion" (p.80). Under "Peduli Program" conception, the definition of *social exclusion* as worrying 'problem' illustrated by compartmentalizing the poor and categorizing them in such a way that represented as *problematic* people with a lack of ability to develop meaningful relationship with their surroundings. In "Peduli Program", the excluded people were identified from a pool of poor population by focusing on particular identity-based discriminatory incidents that they experienced repeatedly which conflate the analytical notion of *social exclusion* as policy language. Due to such narrow and project-based interpretation of *social exclusion*, alarming issues like exploitative economic structure that jeopardizes disadvantage groups or the corrupt and rent-seeking bureaucracy practice are simply neglected. Moreover, in "Peduli Program's" term *social inclusion* also became a static element attributed to individuals with "problematic" features that diverted from the standard norm and

practices in their society who oftentimes experienced serial of unfavorable incidents that negatively affected these communities. Uncritically understood concept of *social exclusion* generated by “Peduli Program” reminds us what Fischer (2008) has criticized about the tendencies to render *social exclusion* into a practice of identification that classify who are those exactly “the excluded” and under which condition. This then leads to static conceptualization of *social exclusion* that is contradictory with the processual nature of the concept itself.

Discursive analysis about the representation of *social exclusion* as ‘problem’ focuses only on partial and static elements of marginalization while neglecting more profound issues about structural injustice within the system. It often paid too much attention to various symptoms at the surface such as ‘exclusion’ from income support, or public service provision rather than critically interrogating unequal mechanism of welfare distribution that further marginalized the disadvantaged groups, like many beneficiaries of “Peduli Program”. This particular discourse of welfare (Béland, 2007; Hickey and Du Toit, 2007; Du Toit, 2004), combined with human rights perspective, is used to justify how *social inclusion* is operated under the project’s framework to overcome *social exclusion* that embodied multifaceted narratives which are moralizing, racializing, normalizing, classing and engendering that operated as pathologizing the ‘excluded groups’ defined by the project design. The analysis reveals two competing representations of *social exclusion* emerged from the discursive construction about how it came into existence as a ‘problem’ to which *social inclusion* should respond to. First of all, “Peduli Program’s” representation about *social exclusion* focuses on the ‘problematic’ subjects that failed to benefit from presupposed ‘benevolent’ nature of government-led development initiatives due to lack of capacities to build meaningful relationship with the society where they live. As this representation emphasizes on the aspect of victimhood of the targeted *excluded* communities, it is quite often that they are depicted as agency-less and without ability to resist or to challenge the dominant system. In addition, this construction of victimhood to portray rather static understanding of *social exclusion* has framed the project’s various ‘problematic’ groups as powerless which create the assumption that they should be rescued by the *social inclusion* project-made discourse through its apolitical representation. The problematic relationship that underlines “Peduli Program’s” representation about *social exclusion* illustrated through a collection of

similar experienced faced by individuals or groups that were grouped through project mechanism of designing, monitoring and evaluation. In the project narrative, *social inclusion* is determined by the “broader community” as the main parameter of *inclusivity* by homogenizing the experience of being included as always good and positive. Therefore, underlined by the majority view of the “broader community” that problematizing relationship between the ‘problematic’ people and the rest, “*Peduli Program’s*” representation of *social exclusion* appears as moralizing narrative that normalizes “the broader community” and pathologizes those ‘problematic’ ones. Secondly, representation from international agencies, namely the UN and The World Bank, showed a different interpretation to *social exclusion*. Narratives created by these international institutions evolve around efficiency discourse of development that depict *social exclusion* as barriers that risk economic growth which should be eliminated. In this representation, *social exclusion* is explicitly linked to poverty because it is seen as diminishing human capital, therefore limiting the opportunity for growth. Because *social exclusion* is viewed as disruption to linear progress toward maturity, *social inclusion* policies are prescribed to reduce such disruption and eventually smoothen the growth process. Besides that, *social exclusion* is perceived as opportunity loss because of excluding certain groups from accessing the job market.

In “*Peduli Program*”, representation of *social exclusion* is illustrated by series of incidents that commonly experienced by majority of the project’s beneficiaries that include discrimination, stigmatization, geographical isolation, negative stereotype and prejudice, and violent attacks due to personal attributes. However, rather than focus on structural issue that perpetuate *social exclusion*, “*Peduli Program*” focused more on individual incidents at a personal level which were technically solved by a series of sporadic activities for the beneficiaries that required temporary solution. Because of the short-term nature of the project, equipped with specific measurable targets for a certain duration of time, the translation of *social inclusion* as the proposed solution has been predetermined to solve *social exclusion* represented as individual problems that are homogenized and collectivized. The discursive analysis in Chapter 3 and 4 about how *social exclusion* is represented as a problem helps to understand that being “included” in Indonesian society means access to basic entitlement as citizens which also include economic livelihood and community life. This means that being accepted (read:

included) in Indonesian society is opening up access to citizenship. Thus, *social inclusion* understood by “Peduli Program” is a very important step as the manifestation of state-citizens relationship that is realized through obtaining community acceptance. Unlike most western industrialized states where citizens have direct relationship with the state, Indonesian citizenship is mediated (Berenschot et al., 2018; Berenschot and van Klinken, 2018; Ito, 2017) through a brokering process between individual citizens and local mediators that generally hold important positions in local powerplay. Reliance on the local brokers which gradually developed into patron-client relationships that illustrate how *social exclusion* of some groups would simply cut the access to basic entitlement of being citizen. Berenschot & van Klinken (2018) wrote that brokerage citizenship requires some kind of local patron that operates and navigates such relationships. Therefore, the operation of “Peduli Program” resulted in forming networks that attach to existing patron or perhaps creating a new type of agent to brokerage citizenship for those who are marginalized. In the context of Chinese *Benteng* people that oftentimes faced problems when processing their administrative document, the arrival of “Peduli Program” facilitated by WDRC was a breath of fresh air for them. Before this project, Chinese *Benteng* people were not attached to any form of local power structure, therefore they were ‘excluded’ from the brokerage process that informally define citizenship. Because of that, the project entrance to this community was started by connecting people to form network that eventually local brokers who facilitate the access to citizenship. Consequently, along with their improved network which facilitate them to navigate complicated bureaucracy process, it can be said that “Peduli Program” through the *Koperasi* was relatively successfully in establishing new brokerage system in *Kampung Wetan* by making some Chinese *Benteng* women as local agents that capable to obtain what previously determined according to the project design.

The representation of *social exclusion* portrayed by “Peduli Program” was created by employing normative language and popular terminology used in the development sector. Research findings and regular monitoring reports were full with jargonistic terminologies that amplify grounded evidence about the state of *exclusion* faced by majority of the project beneficiaries. Such representation employed popular language in “Development” repertoires through a process of problematization that normalizes some and pathologizes others. Unfortunately, in

this representation, Indonesia's highly stratified and hierarchical society is left untouched. Definition of *social exclusion* presented by "Peduli Program" can be seen as a reductionist which was formulated based on the pre-selected groups with whom the NGOs would like to work with. Despite it was intended to be bottom up by incorporating the needs of the targeted communities, but the planning process in "Peduli Program" was pretty much top-down as it was designed based on a predetermined technical solution to solve the particular representation of a "problem". Moreover, this particular representation of *social exclusion* presented in the project has left a number of critical issues uninterrupted, such as a corrupt and racist bureaucratic system, patriarchal and feudal view of society, and exploitative system are left unaddressed. Not only that, the discussion about unequal power relations is also absent in the problem representation that championed by international development agencies. In a highly stratified societies like Indonesia, unconformity from the vast majority often interrupt existing power structures which potentially lead to *exclusion* or marginalization. This local structure thus worsened by the nature of market-driven development projects, backed up by neoliberal policies, have severely exploited those who are weaker is also left uninterrogated.

10.3. ABOUT "WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT" THAT CREATES PARTICULAR SUBJECT

This part of the conclusion will explore on what we have learned about empowerment as technology of subjectification based on Foucauldian governmentality framework. It aims to contribute in responding to the main research question around an extent to which women's empowerment associates with improved participation in local development affairs. Findings from this research has showed that *social inclusion* as an approach to poverty alleviation emerged as predefined solution to shape Chinese *Benteng* women as neoliberal subject through the establishment of *Koperasi Pelita*. Here, the formation of *Koperasi Pelita* was attributed to the intensive facilitation work performed by WRDC as the implementing NGO that was part of the "Peduli Program". In many donor-funded development projects, NGOs' technical skills and their far reach ability are often seen as important aspects in substituting the government function to deliver service

to difficult-to-reach community. Functioned as “development broker” (Lewis and Mosse, 2006a), WRDC came to *Kampung Wetan* where poor Chinese *Benteng* community live under the project scheme to realize social inclusion for those who have been excluded. After months of intensive approach to this community, WRDC team developed a series of activities not only for the Chinese *Benteng* women, but also for other women from different ethnic groups that live in *Kampung Wetan*. The project activities were planned and formulated based on a situational diagnostic exercise during the initial approach which theorized what kind of *exclusion* that underlines their poverty. Moreover, to design suitable activities for this community, WRDC as the active agent of the project deployed a particular narrative of *social exclusion*, namely “victimhood” as shared characteristic of the project beneficiaries. Through the narrative of victimhood, the identity of Chinese *Benteng* women first of all is represented as victim of Suharto’s dictatorial regime and second of all as victim of patriarchal society which confines women solely the in domestic arena thus curb their participation in public affairs. Such representation requires what “*Peduli Program*” conceptualized as *social inclusion* intervention through empowering these women so they became active participants in local development affairs in their community. From this process, the creation of victimhood identity emerged as an important step to articulate collective sense of being excluded which further to be worked on by implementing NGO to reverse the identity of victims to be active agent of inclusion.

NGO’s involvement as development broker in “*Peduli Program*” has been the intrinsic feature of neoliberal development machinery that enables its smooth operation. As neoliberal tool, NGOs often play an intermediary role in governing resources in various donor-sponsored projects to tap into particular target populations for development intervention. In the case of “*Peduli Program*”, network of NGO partners was encouraged to establish and to navigate relationship with local stakeholders in the area where they operate that include government, local communities and their respected figures, as well as private sector in order to bring about desired “change” according to the project design. Moreover, as a *social inclusion* project, engaging local government was seen as the first critical step that generally illustrated with the language of “partnering with government”. In the real implementation, this vague phrase was translated as providing ideas or inputs about activities for the local communities or even directly executing planned

projects under the auspice of the corresponding government officers. By forming such 'partnership', NGO's mastery in the so-called bottom up "empowerment" technique appears as an appealing vehicle, particularly for the government, to mobilize local communities to engage in state-sponsored project; rather than to promote grass-root demand for the betterment of the communities. Besides that, this kind of arrangement is also framed as building "synergy" that harmonizes with a strong "partnership" network among key stakeholders. Nevertheless, it is important to note that such "partnership" maintains unequal power relation that conceals critical positions towards the government.

Strong focus on poverty reduction and socioeconomic improvement for the population that are underserved by government service and welfare programs has shaped the understanding of social inclusion in Indonesia as a notion that promotes inclusivity in short-term development projects. Since the focus is explicitly on poverty reduction as opposed to establish a more complex and nuanced understanding of social inclusion that advocated by some scholars; NGO was shaped into technical thinking, driven by outcome-based result matrix, to create separate activity projects specifically for the targeted 'excluded' population with the intention to practically insert them into the broader existing scheme of social welfare projects. Through "*Peduli Program*" that focus on realizing *social inclusion* through the mechanism of insertion, Chinese *Benteng* women were technically rendered as 'problematic population' to be corrected by emphasizing their lack of compatibility with the broader society which shapes their victimhood that underline their exclusion. Because of that, activities designed for the Chinese *Benteng* women were designed to improve their physical presence and visibility in public domain which might contribute in reducing their domestic isolation and eventually lead to their compatibility with the community.

The establishment of *Koperasi Pelita* as the materialization of women's empowerment reflects what Cruikshank (1999) defines as 'technologies of citizenship' which skillfully arrange how the Chinese *Benteng* women are taught to perceive and to understand themselves through social lens. By joining *Koperasi Pelita*, these women are constituted as neoliberal subject with particular characteristics such as 'productive', 'social', 'active' and 'worthwhile' members of their society. In this women's empowerment operation, they were maintained to subscribe to a particular gender role by concentrating the *koperasi's* activities

through extending women's domestic responsibility to the public arena, for instance by regularly participate in monthly government-engineered *posyandu* sessions and other events that display more 'feminine' duties. Not only that, in this kind of women's empowerment principally defines women as weak economic unit which should be empowered through increasing their contribution to the household income and eventually would improve the chance to escape poverty slope. Moreover, in Foucauldian thinking, the argument about women's involvement in development through the formation of *Koperasi Pelita* could be understood through the analysis of power that interprets women's body as productive and docile (Foucault, 1991) that brings profitable gain for their family, their society, and most importantly serving national development agenda. Therefore, by depoliticizing women's empowerment, it simply instrumentalizes this alternative approach which is transformed as technology to guarantee women's contribution to run development machinery. In addition to that, by depoliticizing empowerment language as neoliberal vehicle, it subjectifies the Chinese *Benteng* women according to certain norms and ethics that contribute in "building of responsible communities, prepared to invest in themselves" (Miller, P.; Rose, 2008: 90).

The formation of *Koperasi Pelita* as promoted by WRDC under the narrative of empowering marginalized women is best explained through Foucauldian governmental operation. Here, Foucault (1988c) emphasized that 'technologies of the self' connects control and authority which represent conservative form of power on one side; and conscience, identity and self-knowledge as subjectivity on the other side (Cruikshank, 1999: 21). The presence of WRDC's field workers that regularly facilitate the Chinese *Benteng* women in this empowerment journey indicates what Miller and Rose (1990) define as 'technique of the self' which involve self-regulating capacities of 'normalized' subjects through the power of expertise. This kind of women's empowerment therefore operates as a mechanism through which WRDC "sought to shape, normalize and instrumentalize the conduct, through decision and aspiration of others to achieve the objective they consider desirable" (Miller and Rose, 1990: 8). As a consequence, activities initiated and promoted by *Koperasi Pelita* with the support from WRDC materialize an operation of self-responsibilization on personal wellbeing that would bring self-transformation towards maximization of personal endeavor (Hache, 2007). Thus,

in this women's empowerment intervention, power is directed towards the maximization of their self-consciousness and voluntary participation in projects for the benefit of the whole population.

WRDC's approach to women's empowerment employs a modernization framework that tend to undermine transformative elements of a more radical model. It operates based on Women in Development (WID) framework that views development's failure to improve and to positively change women because of an economic structure that limits their participation (Moser, 1989: 1818; Tinker, 1990: 23–30). As it is believed that women's contribution in development were undervalued due to their lack of participation, the establishment of *Koperasi Pelita* intended to create 'opportunities' to attach women's participation which presumably generate more equality and benefit for women. Therefore, the attractive language of women's participation that framed within economic terms has further promoted policies specifically for women to engage not only in productive work, but also actively contribute towards pursuing development objectives as determined in the national agenda. To increase women's contribution to development, bottom-up strategies have been promoted as effective instrument in improving efficiency and cost effectiveness to enhance development delivery, especially in the context of poverty, polarization, and exclusion (Craig and Mayo, 1995). Subsequently, the creation of *Koperasi Pelita* does not only de-radicalize feminist language of struggle to overcome gender inequality; but also, instrumentalizes this dominant model of women's empowerment to facilitate their integration into existing 'undisturbed' structures (Baden, S.; Oxaal, 1997; Rowlands, 1997). This hegemonic model continues to centralize its intervention on economic aspects of individual through activities promoted by *Koperasi Pelita* by inserting women into realities shaped by dominant socio-economic structure without an attempt to challenge existing unequal gender relations. Because it was not intended to challenge gender status quo that shapes gender role in Indonesian society, many of *Koperasi's* activities instead made Chinese *Benteng* women to fulfill the ascribed conservative gender role rather than a more progressive one. In other word, the qualities of being responsible mother and dutiful wife as the collective imagination are idealized by both WRDC and internalized by these Chinese *Benteng* women themselves, following the prevailing gender ideology that is constructed through activities that normalize and maintain such conservative role.

The language of women's empowerment has become ubiquitous development buzzword and diluted in its meaning as it widely accepted non-binding goals that diverse group can support without subscribing to any specific feminist principles (Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Moore, 2001). Feminist scholars have been long argued that empowerment framework has instrumentalized feminist language to legitimate neoliberal policy goals by transforming radical framework into a curtailed instrument of empowerment solely as economic participation. Calkin (2014) calls this as 'empowerability' in which is defined as specific characteristic that construct women's 'inborn qualities' as a process of learning and acquiring skills in which developed along neoliberal mode of development that require a series of 'activation'. Through the formation of *Koperasi Pelita*, WRDC performed 'activation' process to these Chinese *Benteng* women through different initiatives that would construct particular qualities necessary to uphold State *Ibuism* ideology (Suryakusuma, 2011), namely dutiful wife, responsible mother, and contributing member of Indonesian society. Moreover, following this ideology, the narrative of women's empowerment employed here is capitalized based on particular kinds of neoliberal women in which would be able to embrace 'empowerability' assumption. Then, it can be concluded that empowered women, especially in the context of Chinese *Benteng* women of *Kampung Wetan*, is a socially constructed based on the notion of femininity and productivity according to official construction of State *Ibuism* that maintain their domestication in both public and private sphere along with their productive participation in market-based society as "women's contribution" to national development.

The mainstreaming of "women's empowerment" as key instrument to alleviate poverty by multilateral development agencies has been widely criticized. Biewener & Bacqué (2015) for instance highlighted that power has been taken out from empowerment equation which contributed to mainstream this alternative vision and has depoliticized its approach according to the principle of market-driven neoliberal policies. In a depoliticized way, 'power to' which implies to women's agency has been constructed as ability to make rational choice to profit from opportunities or resources to enhance one's wellbeing in a competitive environment. Batliwala (2010) points out that the instrumentalization of "empowerment" has become buzzword and magic bullet for poverty alleviation,

rather than interrogating complex dynamic of social process. Conversely, by converting political and social problems into “market-term”, “women’s empowerment” becomes an attractive tool of neoliberal development intervention that deradicalized this notion and focuses on individual participation, self-interested action, rational, and responsible of themselves.

Neoliberal development projects that specifically target economically disadvantaged women uses deradicalized and depoliticized term of ‘women’s empowerment’ to maximize women’s economic productivity while maintaining the role of *Ibu* as the backbone of family morality and at the same time uphold the state’s ideology. In various context across Indonesia, women’s practical needs are generally determined by the state that brings donors and bureaucrats together under national development planning framework. Moreover, in this planning process, women’s practical needs are translated into state’s priorities in such a way to ensure their involvement in development. From the way how WRDC has engaged Chinese *Benteng* women to have their presence in public domain, including encouraged them to involve as volunteer in state-sponsored social activities, this has showed how ‘practical’ women’s needs are significantly more important and less problematic since they are unlikely to challenge existing structure that dominates and disadvantage women. Furthermore, in *Koperasi Pelita*, ‘practical’ gender needs encompassed in a symbolical requirement to include women in project activities that reproduce socially determined gendered role without challenging gender status quo. For NGOs, like WRDC that implements community development projects through this particular representation of ‘women empowerment’, activities for the women are those that are constructed on the idea of building certain understanding and capacities according to the official gender construct that is imposed on them. Consequently, women may consider particular ‘needs’ such as better health facilities for children and pregnant mothers or practical skills to earn additional income for their household are “pro-women” priority that showed “gender inclusivity” in development planning; as opposed to women ‘strategic’ interest like critical education to challenge deep-seated gender subordination and injustice. Despite the project activities appears to be “empowering” through including the disadvantaged women; but in reality, such activities limitedly focus on setting up economic activities by setting up home businesses in order to supply the shortage of family income (Batliwala, 2010) and

do not really focus to challenge systemic patriarchal domination that oppresses women in the first place. Therefore, projects that aim to alleviate poverty through empowering women would require paradigm shift that enable them to challenge family and household welfare regime that subordinating them and perpetuate stereotypes and gendered divisions of labour.

In “*Peduli Program*”, *social inclusion* is understood as better lens on how to approach alleviate poverty agenda for the marginalized communities that barely engage with development. As government-endorsed project, NGOs were included to contribute in ensuring such agenda by tasking them to work with disadvantaged target groups, of which included the Chinese *Benteng* community in *Kampung Wetan*, Tangerang City. Furthermore, to appeal the Chinese *Benteng* women to participate in the project, a *Koperasi* was established as community organizing tool which would empower them according to the prescribed project plan. From Foucauldian governmentality perspective this formation can be interpreted as ‘mode of governing’ which refers as conducting people’s behaviour in such a way that they do what they think is desirable. Chapter 6 and 7 of this thesis has explained how the *koperasi* operated through educating desire, configuring habits and conducting their behavior so the Chinese *Benteng* women follow their self-interest based on official construction of womanhood in Indonesia. Not seldom that activities initiated by the *koperasi* supported by WRDC disactivate critical consciousness that would challenge existing gender status quo which maintains their subordination, oppression and disadvantage. In a form of all-women saving/lending *Koperasi*, *social inclusion* is operated through rendering technical solution – which structurally complicated matters are reduced into a technical and solvable matters – makes subject possible to be governed. Li’s (2014) definition on rendering technical which means “the practice through which experts define a problem and circumscribe its boundaries in such a way that social forces can be managed, and technical solution applied” (p.2) explains that rendering technical indicates certain aspects which were excluded by the expert when they perform the participatory poverty assessment in the beginning of the project. Such excluded aspects are related to the processes that impoverished people at the first place that represented as the individual conduct of the poor that justify their poverty.

The Chinese *Benteng* women were rendered in such a way so they can be governed through *social inclusion* that might help themselves out of poverty.

Because *social inclusion* is a technically rendered solution that was prepared by “*Peduli Program*” through a wide range of planning process, *social exclusion* is represented as a particular ‘problem’ to which this predetermined available solution should respond to. Consequently, through the *social inclusion* project, those Chinese *Benteng* women do not engage in their local development affairs as critically conscious participants that strategically pursue feminist agenda for gender equality; but they are constructed as neoliberal subject through a series of subjectification that uphold official gender ideology in which their participation in such affairs have extended the notion of feminine duties to public sphere. By participating in activities conducted by *Koperasi Pelita*, these women were visibilized and exposed to the local social environment as they are increasingly involved in the community. Besides that, the presence of this *koperasi* also facilitated the Chinese *Benteng* women to ‘rediscover’ their ‘authentic’ culture by learning newly interpreted local dance that gives new meaning to their identity. Moreover, this new reidentification flourishes along with the process of capacitation which constructs these women as potential assets to their community that imbued with the popular language of women’s empowerment as effective device to create autonomous subject that capable to seek solution of their individual problem. In the *koperasi*, these women were educated and trained to build mutual trust and help among members; despite in reality, the ideal depiction of self-help women’s group was not materialized as planned. However, unanticipated effect of this subjectification often leads to the emerge of local brokers from the same group of women that frequently extract small profit when operationalizing the idea of ‘self-help’.

Mentored by WRDC in “*Peduli Program*”, the creation of *Koperasi Pelita* provides enabling environment that serves as ‘inclusive’ platform for Chinese *Benteng* women to be part of local power configuration. Through the *koperasi*, these women were also encouraged to build stronger relationship with the local government and consequently they are gradually treated as representative ‘agent’ of their local government. This mutually benefiting relationship started to emerge when these women were able to represent good image of their community which often perceived as the government’s success in, especially through the dance performance that increase their popularity. Since then, as a result of their intensive effort to visibilize themselves, *Koperasi Pelita* is seen by the local government as

trusted representatives to bring about women's empowerment proposal, mostly income generating activities, to the public decision-making forum. Moreover, while reflecting about these findings, it brought me to Sharma's (2008) questions about what kind of subjects are being produced by the governmentalization of women's empowerment technology operated by "*Peduli Program*" that increase 'expected' relationship between the marginalized women and government. Will it produce politically critical individuals who are conscious about unequal structure that disadvantages them in the first place or also regulated and disciplined subjects that serve depoliticize idea of empowerment? Therefore, the goal of *social inclusion* for these Chinese *Benteng* women to local development affairs in their community is achieved through fully expose them as responsible subject with desires towards upholding Indonesia's gender ideology of State *Ibuism* that diffuse within dominant framework of neoliberal development.

What has been done by "*Peduli Project*" is consistent with what Taylor (1996) (1996) had suggested (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2007) that poverty alleviation project which was framed with unfamiliar discourse of *social inclusion* operated within neoliberal development model. Taylor suggests that this neoliberal model requires citizen to accept the reformed identity of the state as facilitators of social and individual betterment, not as key agent. In this context, project like "*Peduli Program*" has created Chinese *Benteng* women as facilitator in their own community to disseminate the idea of *social inclusion*. Batliwala and Dhanaraj (2007) also argue that the neoliberal development model demands the twin identity of citizen and individual at the same time, with the character of 'active' and 'socially responsible' individuals who are in charge of their own destiny. They added that it perfectly illustrates that mandatory women character in neoliberal rules prescribe them to "improve your household's economic condition, participate in local community development (if you have the time), help build and run local (apolitical) institution like the self-help group; by then, you should have no political or physical energy left to challenge this paradigm" (p.11). Moreover, with the economic advancement and poverty alleviation as the backdrop of neoliberal development mode, the myth of women as the most effective anti-poverty agents and the massive creation of women's self-help groups functions as a form of deradicalizing feminist empowerment strategy while at the same time also depoliticized collective activism that does not threaten existing power structure.

10.4. ABOUT THE EFFECT FOR THE SOCIETY DUE TO THE DOMINANT MODE OF “WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT”

In this part, I will respond to questions about the implication that *social inclusion* as operationalization of neoliberal governance may bring to the society. It is worth to reflect that despite “Peduli Program” insisted in employing *social inclusion* as its main approach to accelerate poverty reduction, the relation between poverty alleviation effort and *social inclusion* was never really been clearly articulated. During the project’s initial conception, *social inclusion* approach and understanding employed by “Peduli Program” was articulated as directly related to the national strategy for development which generally aims to support poverty reduction. Technically departed from the pilot model that strongly relies on participatory process to engage local communities to participate in local level decision making process, the concept of *social inclusion* as embraced by the project was expected to fill the gaps to where community empowerment alone is unable to handle. In particular, it was believed that *social inclusion* would be able to attract and eventually to involve those particular segments in the society that somehow being left out from development process. Therefore, with this logic, *if* community empowerment were inclusive enough, which means that the excluded groups were also contribute to the process of development; they would also be able to enjoy the benefit of ‘development’.

For years, the national development strategies focus on poverty alleviation agenda as one of its main priorities. As stipulated in the 2015-2019 National Development Plan, the focus on poverty reduction were to be addressed by improving the fulfillment of basic services that include ‘commitment’ to create effective policies for inclusive development, where the poor and marginalized population would benefit from economic growth. By aligning with government priorities under the attempt to accelerate poverty alleviation, “Peduli Program” sat nicely within these consorted effort by offering *social inclusion* as a new discourse that could contribute to realize the goal of inclusive development. Furthermore, to introduce this unfamiliar notion, *social inclusion* was introduced through more popular concepts such as gender equality and disability issue which are among many themes that eventually were addressed by “Peduli Project” as a development intervention. Besides that, not only the strategic relevance to the national

development plant, the presence of “*Peduli Program*” as a government-endorsed project on *social inclusion* also shares same aspiration with five out of the President’s nine priorities (*‘Nawa Cita’*), namely “Returning the state to its task of protecting all citizens and providing a safe environment” (#1); “Developing clean, effective, trusted and democratic governance” (#2); “Development of peripheral areas” (#3); “Improve quality of life” (#5); and “Strengthening the spirit of ‘unity in diversity’ and social reform” (#9). Besides these five priorities in which the project would contribute to and inseparable from the national development strategy, the project’s relevance to Australia’s strategic priorities and development priorities as its donor has gave “*Peduli Program’s*” presence a strong justification. As one of Indonesia’s main development partners, Australia’s assistance has contributed to a great deal in accelerating Indonesia’s productivity by enhancing its competitiveness through, among others, are poverty reduction and inclusive growth which become key priorities.

In this thesis, *social inclusion* is understood as a governmental operation, which is not performed in a vacuum. Unfortunately, it has unanticipated gendered implication which occurred as counter-effect of the *social inclusion* practices that it aims to promote. The use of all-women run financial institution as “women empowerment” platform is operated based on the idea of “feminization of poverty” coined by Diana Pearce in 1978, that focus on correcting the women as separate unit in the society. This correction occurs in the form of interventions that capitalize women’s “inborn” qualities as well as their gendered function in the society as the main pillar of poverty alleviation strategy. In the context of *Koperasi Pelita* that centralizes its empowerment operation primarily to the Chinese *Benteng* women, it derived from the technical logic of femininizing and at the same time also exoticizing poverty experience of this community. Furthermore, by only targeting women as the sole beneficiaries of a development project, it is often desirable for many implementing agencies to instrumentalize the language of “women’s empowerment” to satisfy the “gender mainstreaming” agenda. Nevertheless, practice of the engineered *social inclusion* as a desirable approach to solve *exclusion* ‘problem’, which attributed to the Chinese *Benteng* women’s poverty experience, has unintended consequences that potentially reproduce different mode of exclusion, as sporadically outlined in chapter 6 and 7 of this thesis. Such outcome has been predicted by Jackson (1999) that argue *inclusion* can also produce

exclusion which would occur in a situation when the excluded groups successfully achieved inclusion on the basis of excluding groups even weaker than themselves (p.135). In this scenario *social inclusion*, that was used as a technical tool, has been frequently made into practice by constructing an identity of the excluded others (2014) which has been consistently operated throughout the course of the project through fetishization of their poverty based on the common racial stereotypes of this community. Through such identity construction, various project activities also have exoticized their cultural attribute in the name of 'preservation' which was oriented to support poverty alleviation idea.

Activities to empower Chinese *Benteng* women under *social inclusion* scheme through the establishment of *Koperasi Pelita* has subscribed to a particular socially constructed notion that defines women's position and role in Indonesian society. Here, the construction of important role that women bear for the longevity of the society is determined by their position in forming the key foundation of what Bourchier (2014) calls as "family state". In this formation, gendered division of labour that emphasis domestic function around reproductive and care is fundamental to sustain the "family state" which is built around the notion of motherhood and wifehood as the main criteria of gendered citizenship (Blackburn, 1999). According to Martyn (2005) gendered citizenship often instrumentalized women's identity as mother because "*Motherhood has been a basis for excluding women from full and equal citizenship, while simultaneously being central to the concepts of women's duties to the state and nation*" (p.25) and also other desired qualities of idealized womanhood as determined by the society to extend their responsibility to serve the state through sustaining family morality as the smallest unit in Indonesian society. These desired qualities are based on women's *kodrat* which Wieringa (2003) describe as religiously-inspired code of conduct based on women's intrinsic 'nature' that prescribe "[...] that they should be meek, passive, obedient to the male members of the family, sexually shy and modest, self-sacrificing and nurturing. To this end, their main vacation was wifehood and motherhood" (p.75). Furthermore, *Ibu* as collective identity of Indonesian women which according to Djajadiningrat, means mother and also refers to all women who are married or are of child bearing age, is expected to maintain status symbol and uphold high morality of their family. As *Ibu*, women play extremely crucial role in dealing with household management, responsible for physical and emotional needs of family

members, which include nurturing and socializing their children according to certain degree of respect and politeness (Sullivan, 1991: 86). Therefore, through series of activities promoted by *Koperasi Pelita* from the very beginning has attempted to correct certain attributes of the Chinese *Benteng* women that do not compatible with the idea of an *Ibu*. Such attributes that are projected as the main correction target are those what WRDC determines as negative stereotypes which tend to be derogatory such as “bumpkin”, “unwilling to mingle with the rest”, “egoistic”, “tend to be exclusive”, “lazy”, and “gambling addict”. Therefore, these negative attributes were to be eliminated through the vague understanding of *social inclusion* as a western industrialized-driven concept in combination with the “empowerment” activities through intensive and consistent process of awareness raising and capacity building that would made these Chinese *Benteng* women as an accomplished subject of governmental operation.

In many internationally-funded development projects, *social inclusion*, together with *empowerment*, become necessary twin-track technologies that are crucially important within a governmental operation. At a discourse level, *social inclusion* as neoliberal policy aims to facilitate the functionality of market operation by ensuring exchanges and promoting the population to be ‘entrepreneur of themselves’ (Miller and Rose, 1990). In the context of *Koperasi Pelita*’s establishment under the framework of “*Peduli Program*”, *social exclusion* is conceptualized as “problem” to be address based on available solution, namely *social inclusion*. However, at the same time the notion of *social exclusion* is highly criticized as ambiguous concept also redundant to the existing approach, namely poverty that is understood as capability failure (Sen, 2000). Often the use of *exclusion* also serves as simply language twist which might lead to further exploitation by ‘including’ the excluded groups in a particular scheme which enables a certain type of commodification that benefits small elites and jeopardize the rest (Byrne, 1999). In his paper, Fischer comments that “[...] *social exclusion discourse can imply that the solution to exclusion is to intensify inclusion, whereas exclusion might actually arise due to the manner by which people are included*” (2008: 12). In the same note, he further questions how adopting *social inclusion* as desired policy objective in a corrupt and exploitative society, a kind of global capitalistic society we live in today. Furthermore, his criticism leads to an important reflection that the process of exclusion is not independent from inclusion and vice versa; which should be

analyzed together with modes of incorporation or social integration. Therefore, Fischer asserts that it thus becomes important to reconceptualize *social exclusion* as institutional, structural and agentic process of obstruction – not merely poverty – where the process of disadvantage can occur across a social hierarchy from any social position, rather than just concentrating on the state of deprivation that occurred at the bottom of social pyramid.

Common perception about women's empowerment, especially the one that focuses on providing access to credit like WRDC has been extremely popular across context. In that setting, the creation of women's self-help group is particularly crucial as collective accountability mechanism as effective tool to discipline the group's members to settle outstanding loan through various methods. Such creation, according to some studies, has led to a positive change on creating employment, also increasing individual and household income (Borbora and Mahanta, 2001; Gangaiah et al., 2006; Pitt and Khandker, 1998) which made them less dependent on their husband and increases women's bargaining power in the family (Hulme and Mosley, 1996; Malhotra and Schuler, 2005). Despite so, it was not always the case. The 'feminization of poverty' that underlines WRDC's work with these Chinese *Benteng* women theorized on the lack of access to financing for these women as they are the one that responsible for managing family's income and also obtaining the supplementary through various means, including get government's welfare support and manage extra economic activities. By capitalizing on women's gendered housework, such empowerment effort was implemented through microcredit facilitation that aims to engage them in income generating activity, increasing mobility, boosting their confidence which eventually would improve their overall status. As a consequence, it creates an illusion that microcredit provision and network creation will help them out of poverty and women's empowerment that is understood as series of activities, including weekly saving and lending sessions or meeting with bureaucrats, will realize *social inclusion* among those who are underserved and disadvantaged.

As a governmental operation, women's empowerment under such inclusive cooperative project confirms what Sharma (2008) has found. For Sharma, the logic and dynamics of neoliberal governmentality operates through various kinds of social subjects to pursue habits of self-regulating. However, unlike what Sharma has found, the establishment of *Koperasi Pelita* does not focus on collective

empowerment. It instead selects particular kinds of women in which empowerment technologies would work upon, namely those women that comply with the official construction of Indonesian womanhood. Furthermore, the “empowered” Chinese *Benteng* women as the subject of this governmental operation internalize the existing gender construction according to the patriarchal order of the state and society. Nevertheless, other women that previously was intensely involved in the project, gradually are being pushed away due to their non-conformity with the official construction.

In WRDC’s social inclusion *koperasi*’s project, rather than focus on navigating women platform to strive for more inclusive decision-making process for better policies, this project instead orients the marginalized beneficiaries to support existing government initiatives which turned them as government’s volunteer. Furthermore, it is often the case that bureaucrats tag donor-funded projects are ready-made vehicles to implement government agenda with the objective of demonstrating their commitment to grassroot participation with gender lens. For that reason, local bureaucrats frequently instrumentalize donor-funded projects like *Koperasi Pelita* in a tokenizing manner to create an image of gender-sensitive approach by including the Chinese *Benteng* women that have been trained and educated through project implemented by WRDC as the NGO partner. Consequently, under such “women’s empowerment” flag, the state aims to arm the excluded population like Chinese *Benteng* women to function as good members of the society, but at the same time allowing them to juggle with their domestic role without public support, as the society prescribes. Through this, the “empowered women” are to be integrated with formal local political process that eventually might deradicalized them and potentially disempowering. Not only that, “empowerment” in many Indonesian contexts is often understood simply as series of activities where women are educated to increase their sense of productivity – particularly in the area of income generating, mainly to supplement main source of household income which husband’s earning is the primary. Thus “empowerment” is seldom understood as a holistic strategy, especially to achieve strategic gender interest to ensure women’s agency that means “power to”. Cornwall et.al (2007) argues that “empowerment” has been reduced from a complex process of self-realization, self-articulation and mobilization to demand change, to a simple act of transformation bestowed by a transfer of money and or information (p.7).

Therefore, the successful women's empowerment project should be able to encourage women to also question how oppression and subjugation are produced and maintained through existing system based on patriarchal domination.

10.5. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

"Development" nowadays is no longer viewed as economic growth perse, but also aim to create an environment where the community or individual to seek beneficial changes for and by themselves. In this self-technology of "empowerment", the poor and disadvantage are normalized to constitute themselves as active and responsible subject in pursuing their individual betterment and at the same time ensuring the wellbeing of the community where they live. Participation and empowerment which also known as popular development buzzwords are not autonomous processes that existed in vacuum. Through these operations, guided practices are taking place in a particular domain of invention comprised by an intricate combination between particular strategies, production of knowledge that intertwined with complex relations of power. Therefore, in the current model of development, target beneficiaries are educated, trained and finally 'obliged' to participate not only in planning process but also in implementation in their own areas which makes them in charge of their own betterment. Triantafilou & Miller (2001) describe this as will to participation that shows how participatory technologies work through normalization rather than disciplinary type of coercion. Through such technologies of participation and empowerment, beneficiaries of development projects are subjectifying themselves through self-capacitation as active and responsible citizens.

In the current regime of development that frequently centralized its thinking based on industrialized model of society, *social inclusion* could be viewed as a trap rather than a mechanism to ensure fair and just distributive welfare in order to equally benefit various interest groups. Thus, when we talk about *social inclusion* policies, the result might not necessarily fair to those underserved and disadvantaged population whom such policies specifically targeted to. It is also could be the case that exacerbation of *social exclusion* by overly emphasis on particular characteristic that attribute to their poverty to which those policies aim to remedy. Apart from creating alternative way of development that is the core

work of Escobar (2020), I would take a more normative approach by suggesting to take different turn. Therefore, rather than talking about *social inclusion* which merely appear as superficial alteration to the core problem in various society; it should concentrate on questioning dominant development paradigm that created particular effect to different groups. It might be wise to think about alternative way on doing development in a different way, not just doing development inclusively.

During my engagement in some development projects that filled with unfamiliar jargons for majority of Indonesian society, *social exclusion/inclusion* is often viewed simply as managerial problem-solving mechanism to alter structurally embedded problems caused by normalized social constructed alongside the nation's historical trajectory. For some, *exclusion/inclusion* rhetoric rarely triggers development practitioners to critically question who would benefit the most from the *social inclusion* that development strives to pursue; it rather focuses on *social inclusion* as desirable static condition that is assumed as universally benevolent for everyone. Rothstein (2002) once argue that *social exclusion* analysis relies on separation of those who are labeled as excluded from the rest of the society that tend to become moralizing or normalizing those groups. Moreover, what often absent from the discussion is that *social inclusion* might not always serve the interest of the excluded, marginalized and disadvantaged population. Particularly because the dominant discourse of *social inclusion* presented with the lens of the "benevolent majority" or the "powerful segment of the population", often silences hegemonic oppression and power asymmetry that is fluid, transversal and always with exception. In addition to that, the dominant interpretation of *social inclusion* always needs the "peaceful cooperation" of the presupposed *excluded* group in order to minimize the potential of resistance and struggle.

Literature on *social inclusion*, especially those that are project report written by international organization seldom locate power asymmetry in their contextualization, which in turn rarely captures unspoken intention to hegemonize and to impose particular values towards the weaker groups, involuntarily. This reminds me of what Hickey, Sen and Bukenya (2014) had suggested that it is important to go beyond the notion of *inclusion* as uniformly "good thing" – without expanding our analytical frame in a critical manner and beyond its static literal definition. Cameron (2006) describes that due to an inadequate understanding of

what is meant by (social) *inclusion*, the attention has been focused on the problems and deficit of the *excluded* population (p.397). He further asserts that *social inclusion* is most commonly defined as *whatever* is not *socially excluded*, in which data about *social inclusion* instead points into the direction against in which *exclusion* is measured and conceptualized. It is a misconception that a good deal of critical thinking on poverty analysis has sought to problematize (Hickey and Du Toit, 2007; Mosse, 2011), just like what O'Reilly (2005) says that "the fundamental problem is that the *analytically coherent* paradigm of social inclusion." (p.80).

Definition about 'them' – the excluded people – could be varied across context. One could define them as "trash of the society" – like Indonesian society calls them which frequently repeated not only in daily conversation, but also enter the domain of public speech by politicians and bureaucrats – "problematic people", or "useless" people called by the more privilege countrymen as dangerous risk that damaging Indonesian society. Such discourse clearly segregates two opposing segments of the society that labels people as "deserving" versus "undeserving". The meaning that "*Peduli Program*" brought into the discourse of Indonesia's development landscape constructs the "excluder" category based on series of misery that underlines the victimhood of the "excluded" people. Based on such narrow and simplistic construction, *social exclusion* is equated as rejection in which *social inclusion* is the new meaning of acceptance. As the main concept on European social policy that based on certain understanding on how such society operates as well as how individuals self-positioning themselves in relation to the society; the notion of solidarity underlines integration as the principal vehicle to solve the problem caused by *social exclusion*.

The notion of *social inclusion* presented in this thesis emerged as a series of critical reflection on how development machinery works in societies like Indonesia. The understanding of *social inclusion* as a governmental operation is analogized as a preparation stage for those who are marginalized, disadvantaged, and underserved to be able to participate in full market mechanism; which means to be competitive enough in a market driven society. In another word, if it were a staged play, *social inclusion* operates as a rehearsal before the main show. It could also be seen as "protection" for those who are unable to compete in a full market mechanism. Therefore, in this interpretation, *social inclusion* is seen as a temporary mechanism to prepare those population that unable to compete in the market

mechanism that is necessarily *excluding* those who do not fit with such system. Despite its *inclusionary* language, *social inclusion* might not work the same for everyone. *Social inclusion* often seen as a continuous process with a specific endgame, namely participation of the poor, marginalized and excluded in an existing mechanism, namely market driven one, with little intention to challenge such dominating scheme. Consequently, the end goal of their participation is not only benefitted from such *inclusive* system, but also shape them to productively contribute to run the very same market system with less possibility to counter such domination.

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