

The Night Market as A Contra Hegemony of Seller Against The Power of Capitalism and The Government

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Abstract— In the midst of the "onslaught" of online store developments, there are still many Indonesians who still rely on traditional markets to meet their daily needs, one of which is the night market. Although it is always connoted as a public market and entertainment market, the economic transactions that occur at the night market are not inferior to other markets. The existence of the night market, besides bringing blessings to the poor, has also become a form of resistance to capitalist power which has been collaborating with the government to regulate prices, types of goods, distribution channels and official locations of trade. The model of selling the night market tends to be traditional and is dominated by products with "sloping" prices as if trying to fight the formal trade flow that is controlled by large capitalists and the government. The proliferation of the night market in the corners of the city, show contra hegemony of seller againsts capitalist domination which always collaborates with the government.

Keywords—Night Market, Capitalism, Government, and Contra Hegemony

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of internet technology has a tremendous impact on the lives of Indonesian people. Mastery of internet technology provides convenience to all people for every area of Indonesian human life. One thing that stands out in the use of internet technology is the development of online buying and selling that has begun to shift the habit of shopping to markets or supermarkets. There are countless numbers of online stores and online transaction service providers in cyberspace. All built to make it easy and provide the convenience of shopping.

Even many conventional stores and supermarkets are then "migrated" to the digital platform to "catch" buyers whose buying behavior also began to "migrate" to digital platforms. At present it is very rare or almost no conventional store that does not have its digital platform.

But interestingly, amidst the "onslaught" of online store developments, there are still many Indonesians who still rely on traditional markets to meet their daily needs. Many of the Indonesian still use direct buying and selling transactions. Even in some corners of the capital, there are still many traditional markets that are growing very rapidly. One of them is the night market. Although it is always connoted as a public market and entertainment market, the economic

transactions that occur at the night market are not inferior to other traditional markets.

The existence of this night market for the community can be likened to longing but hate. For some people (especially the middle to lower class), the existence of the night market provides practical solutions for their consumption needs especially because of the sloping price. The night market becomes an entertainment market for those who present a variety of inexpensive needs and at the same time provide the arena of entertainment they need. But at the same time, it also presents a new problem because it often creates congestion and social problems such as crime and often presents clashes with local residents, especially related to levies and illegal levies. The prices of goods traded are cheap, but the quality is often not good and easily damaged. Toys that are mocked are also very far from comfortable conditions and the security level is low.

Apart from the controversy, the night market managed to attract the attention of the community and revive the economic life of the community. Almost every night market is crowded with visitors. Even some of the traders have got regular customers who are loyal to visit and shop. Without command, they come by themselves to the location of the selling stalls every time the market starts.

The existence of the night market and its development cannot be seen in an empty space. The night market is closely related to the economic and political conditions that occur in the community. The market development of the community is inseparable from the "longing" of the community for the existence of expensive famous brands, affordable prices of goods, and the fulfillment of community needs for various household needs. In fact, those needs will be difficult to fulfill when relying on other formal-traditional markets.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This article is a report of qualitative research that explores the contra hegemony of sellers against the power of capitalism through night market in Indonesia. The research examines how night market sellers try to do contra hegemony by using the phenomenology of Marleau-Ponty method and theory of hegemony.

A. *The Phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty*

In contrast to Edmund Husserl who developed epistemological phenomenology, Merleau-Ponty is more ontologic in which humans are seen as objects that understand everything to arrive at the existentialist expectations of the living, not the existentialists described. Merleau Ponty criticizes phenomenology, which merely examines how objects appear into the structure of consciousness. He emphasizes more on how the object perceptually develops along with the development of experience. Ponty argues that developing perceptual experiences are the basis of all knowledge [1].

He makes the idea of the body a starting point for seeing human existence in the world. The directness of all life and self, including the physical body, shows the existence of a "sense" of the world [2]. In contrast to the scientific approach which has the assumption of dualism of subject-object (representation paradigms), the phenomena of the experience of "sense" reflect the intimate interaction between body and reality (synergic paradigms). Perception is a synergy, where the body with all existing realities are interrelated so as to form "a fundamental phenomenon of living perception" [3].

The developing perceptual experience accumulates the consciousness and mind of the human being so that in the end it will construct its body. Then all knowledge, science and including trust, are based on a world that is absorbed by humans. Starting from the process of absorption of this empirical reality, then a perception is formed [4]. In other words, in a human being, between mind and body is an inseparable unity.

Because the phenomenon of consciousness is closely related to the eye and mind, there are limitations to the horizon in the human perspective on reality. To overcome this, humans need to see phenomena from various sides or points of view. Thus the whole side of the phenomenon can be observed perfectly so that it gets clearer and more real perceptions and images.

However, perception is not always true because there are no assumptions and notions of perception that are universal, because there are only perceptions that humans experience in life that develop through experience [4]. So Merleau Ponty emphasized the importance of life experience so that the thoughts absorbed from experience increased [1]. In other words, consciousness can be understood as a perceptual construct which is prepared on the basis of phenomenological investigation through the process of absorbing.

Own perception according to Horowitz is an assumption that appears after making observations in the surrounding environment or seeing a situation that occurs to get information about something [5]. Everything around humans has the opportunity to instruct perception. But often things that are around many are not realized, eliminated or even misinterpreted. Though perceptions are not only formed by physical stimulation but can also be formed by non-physical stimuli related to the environment or individual circumstances concerned (for example: stereotypes and prejudices)

B. *Hegemony Theory*

Antonio Gramsci uses the concept of hegemony to accelerate the socialist revolution in order to destroy the order and system of capitalism [6]. In the beginning, Gramsci used this term as a neutral concept, not good or bad. That is, he uses the concept of hegemony in the framework of the reality of class struggle in a society order.

Gramsci identifies hegemony as a form of control of the intellectual life of society through cultural means [7]. Even so, sometimes hegemony is carried out by including political forces that are carried out by force. James Joll clearly explains that the hegemony of a political class means that the class succeeded in persuading other social classes to accept the cultural, political and moral values of the class [8]. Therefore hegemony is more related to efforts to achieve political power through inter-class consensus rather than through violence. Even in a successful hegemony, coercive power is no longer needed by the ruling class.

Gramsci realized the importance of the role of culture in socialist revolution, but always lacked attention in the analysis of orthodox Marxism (previously) which was too blinded by the "superstructure" framework. This framework as referred to by Magnis Suseno holds the ridiculousness of economic understanding, where changes in the basis of economic structure determine changes in the level of the superstructure of politics, ideology and culture [9]. The socialist revolution is considered to depend one hundred percent on the development of the capitalistic economy. The Gramsci in this context actually follows what Lenin had said that without revolutionary determination, all economic developments by themselves will never produce any revolution. Therefore Lenin saw the need for the presence of a revolutionary party in the treasury of Marxist thought [9]. And through this party leadership Lenin has proven that the socialist revolution can be carried out in Russia.

In contrast to Lenin's view, Gramsci argued that parties alone were not enough to move the revolution in his country, Italy, and generally in the West. Because in the West civil society is so strong and complex that it is not only controlled by the bourgeoisie but also they support and guarantee its position.

The strength of the bourgeoisie has covered all areas of people's lives: economic, social, political, cultural, religious, and so on. The unity of the power of the bourgeoisie in this society forms a "historical block", namely a constellation in which all the dimensions of life of the social classes in this society are united and support each other under the hegemony of a class, the bourgeoisie. This seems to be the reason why the socialist revolution did not actually occur.

The bourgeoisie class managed to control the classes below it through hegemony so that the economic crisis did not directly give birth to a revolution, because exactly the economic crisis did not at the same time bring about a crisis of value in society. The bourgeoisie as the holder of historical block hegemony is not only in power in the economic field with the support of state threatening power, but because all societies consider the situation of power to be reasonable, bourgeois hegemony is reasonable and understandable. It strengthened by existence of intellectual organic that support the hegemonial position of the class through intellectual-philosophical reflection [9].

C. Night Market

The night market is not only known in Indonesia, but also known abroad. In English, the night market is called the night market or often called a street market that starts its activities at night. The difference with Paasar during the day, goods that are traded are lighter. Most of them are food and snacks sellers who sell their goods.

Literally, the word night market refers to markets that open at night. The word "night" in the night market shows that the process of buying and selling is done at night and where the market takes place in an open place (always moving locations). Unlike the market in general, the night market in addition to selling a variety of merchandise, but also presents various types of performances and games on a small scale, such as rotary comedy, fishing ponds, mini bulldozers, and others.

The night market is widely known in Indonesian society. Even since the days of the Mataram kingdom, the term night market has been used. At least, it was recorded that since ascending the throne in 1916, Adipati Mangkunegoro VI, permitted the organization of night markets around Surakarta every year for a week [10]. Various merchandise are traded and various shows are presented in the night market arena.

In the city of Yogyakarta and Surakarta palace itself, there is one night market that is traditionally held throughout the week every year, the Sekaten night market. This Sekaten is an entertainment event and at the same time buying and selling transactions around the palace (alun-alun) to celebrate the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. While in the Dutch East Indies, the annual night market on a large scale was held at Gambir Market (now Medan Merdeka). This night market is the forerunner of the Jakarta Fair.

In its development, the night market was not only done in Java, but also in various regions in the country. The implementation time is no longer once a year, but once a week. Even in Jakarta, a number of night markets are held every night, the locations are different or take turns. While the organizers are no longer the monopoly of the government (kingdom), but also commonly carried out by certain groups of people who are interested in the existence of the night market.

Market itself according to Kottler and Armstrong is a set of actual buyers and the potential of a product or service [11]. So the market is a physical place where buyers and sellers gather to exchange their goods and services. While the size of the market itself will depend heavily on the number of people involved and showing their needs and ability in exchange.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Togetherness of Night Market Sellers

Being a seller at the night market is actually not a life choice dreamed of by the sellers themselves. Generally they become sellers at the night market because there really is no other choice. Previously, there were some of them who worked in other sectors of life, such as labor convection, motorcycle taxi drivers, security, etc. There are also those who have traded in the formal market in general, namely the Regional Market. But because the rental costs are quite high and the competition is very high, they only last not too long

and have to give back their stalls to the Regional Market management.

The high cost of renting in the Regional Market is indeed a separate issue for sellers, especially those with capital as it is. So the existence of the night market, which is not expensive, is a solution for small capital sellers. Agus (clothing seller) For example, he managed to get enough profit to support his family because even though the sales were not too much, but because the rental was not expensive, he still got enough profit difference.

"Biaya sewa lahan jauh lah dari lapak di Pasar Daerah. Paling kita hanya kena iuran sampah Rp 2.000 per hari, listrik Rp 10.000 per hari dan lapak Rp 50rb per bulan."

Agus – The clothes seller

Even some land owners are very "understanding" to sellers if the weather conditions are not good so visitors are quiet. They sometimes do not require full payment of land rent. This condition is very different from the conditions in the Regional Market. The rental fee for shanties must be deposited upfront regardless of the profits that the sellers get. Even though the rental costs are incurred by sellers in several Regional Markets which annually reach millions or even tens of millions of rupiah.

In each night market group is usually coordinated by a coordinator who is in charge of taking care of all the needs of the traders, starting from land, licensing, electricity and coordination with security guards. These coordinators are responsible for the overall organization of the night market. Because they are always on the move for a week, the coordinator must ensure land readiness to conduct the night market, especially the licensing aspects, starting from the RT/RW to the security forces. The sellers believe in the coordinator because usually the agreement includes the matter of costs that must be borne by the sellers discussed openly.

Given that they are usually a group, competition between sellers does not usually occur. They feel they have the same fate as people who are pioneering business so they don't kill each other.

"Tidak ada persaingan lah.. kita kan satu rombongan, satu komunitas... malahan kita sering bekerja sama misalnya ada yang ngga bawa peralatan apa ya kita saling meminjam..."

Suti – The clothes seller

This condition makes them feel comfortable and able to build good communication among fellow sellers. The feeling of being in the same boat made them feel the need to survive. Besides that, the existence of fellow sellers who mutually support makes them reluctant to die their profession to trade in the night market. They feel they are getting new relatives in the night market community.

"Kita bekerja di malam hari dengan saudara-saudara baru di komunitas ini... kita saling membantu. Siangnya kita tetap bisa berkumpul dengan keluarga kita masing-masing."

Suti - The clothes seller

Their limitations in terms of capital did not stop them from trading. Their inability to access the formal market, encourages them to enter into the non-formal market, namely the night market that provides various facilities and accessibility to merchandise. Often for fellow sellers in the night market to share a cheap and profitable distribution network of goods.

Togetherness and shared feelings make them feel sharing experiences and living conditions that are more or less the same. Feeling as a small group of people who do not have the ability to access the formal market, they expect the government to give attention to them or at least let them trade as usual.

They feel that the existence of those who are not specifically regulated by the government, both the state and the regional government, is enough to help them survive. They can escape the entanglement of market management chains that are filled with lots of official and illegal levies in the formal market. They also feel that they can be flexible in managing their merchandise and are free from the disruption of groups or individuals who seek profits from their businesses in the formal market.

“ Di pasar malam enak mas... tidak banyak didatangi oknum-oknum tidak bertanggungjawab yang main tarik uang seenaknya. Sudah ada koordinator dan RT-RW yang tangenin itu. Kita tinggal terima beres aja...”
Pariman - The toy seller

B. Perception and Stereotype of The Night Market

The Night Market is always synonymous with traffic jams because usually the organization of the night market is always held on the roadside or vacant land that is not far from the crowds of the past so that it can attract the attention of buyers. Not even a few who use half the body of the road for merchandise stalls. Even so, the community in general does not mind it. They see it as part of the dynamics of society and at the same time as part of entertainment for the community because there are not a few night markets that also hold a game arena for children.

For the sellers themselves, it is understandable that many perceive the negative existence of the night market. In general, they have an awareness that their existence is quite disturbing traffic but they hope the community understands the condition because basically there are some people who are helped also by their existence.

“Tahu sih kalau membuat macet lalu lintas... tetapi masyarakat paham kok kalau mereka juga terbantu dengan kami berjualan... kan ngga harus ke pasar jauh-jauh. Semoga masyarakat memahami kondisi kami lah...”
Tarno - The clothes seller

This stereotype cannot be avoided because indeed the night market is always synonymous with congestion. Where there is a night market where a traffic jam occurs. This is inevitable because both buyers and traders sometimes do not care that they are on the road. Even so, there are also a number of night market groups who choose to hold their wares not on the streets, but in areas of vacant land not far from the highway.

The night market is also inseparable from “KW” items and low prices. Merchandise traded on the night market is never expensive because indeed the buyers are not rich. On average they come from the lower middle class who do not have excessive wealth and money economically. So shopping at the night market is a realistic choice for them.

The items that are traded must be in accordance with the characteristics of the buyers. They like cheap and various models. Traders do not doubt the characteristics of this buyer. They are actually happy with the buyers at the night market who tend to trust the prices set by the seller. Even though there is a bargaining process, usually buyers at the night market are not like buyers in ordinary markets who bid up to the lowest price. In general, buyers at the night market are aware that sellers at the night market do not offer prices that are too high.

“Para pembeinya sih nawar seperti pada pasar biasanya... tetapi ngga kebangetan nawarnya... jadi ya tahu sam tahu lah... klo kami pedagang ya harus dapat untung...”
Pariman - The toys seller

C. Discussion: Life's Struggle In The Flow of Contra Hegemony

The existence of a night market that provides a separate space for the community to carry out its economic functions, is inseparable from the fact that the economic life of today's society is too controlled by the capitalists. Transactions, selling prices, quality of goods, and types of goods in circulation are determined by the capitalists. The capitalist controls the entire process of production, distribution and consumption of a product.

The existence of the night market in addition to bringing blessings to the lower community, also became a form of resistance to capitalist power which collaborated with the government to regulate prices, types of goods, and official locations of trade. The model of selling the night market tends to be traditional and is dominated by products with "sloping" prices as if trying to fight the formal trade flow that is controlled by large capitalists and the government.

Through the gaps in production and distribution, many sellers get goods at low prices and are sold back to the public. The rules that often entangle traders and official and unofficial levies from various parties including the government are very detrimental to traders and very draining of profits. Also distribution channels that tend to be dominated by large sellers make small sellers unable to compete and lose business opportunities. These problems also make many sellers choose to sell at the night market with minimal rules and levies. They are also far from unhealthy games in the distribution path.

Indirectly, researchers see, that the existence of the night market is actually not just a matter of buying and selling goods, but rather a form of resistance from lower class market players who try to "fight" capitalist hegemony which always collaborates with the government in managing the formal market. They realized that it would be difficult if they competed openly with other capital traders, so the night market sellers tried to build a community of fellow small traders selling their wares independently and taking advantage of the loosening of the existing rules of the game.

IV. CONCLUSION

The existence of a night market cannot be seen as just an ordinary phenomenon. The night market is not just about the issue of buying and selling goods between mere sellers and buyers. More than that, in the night market there are actors (traders) who directly feel the spirit and emotion as a result of the domination and hegemony of the capitalists who collaborate with the government (region).

The experience and awareness they found in conducting trade activities constructed their perceptions of large investors and the government as the party that took advantage and never existed and cared for them the small people. In the end, this perception led to a form of resistance from lower class market players who tried to "fight" capitalist hegemony which always collaborated with the government in managing the formal market. Realizing that it would be difficult to compete openly with other capital traders, they built a community of fellow night market small traders and played outside the available formal system.

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