

Marginalized “door-to-door” Streetmusicians

A Case Study of Street Musician in Surabaya

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Abstract— Social change is more visible in urban areas. The city is identical to luxury, industry, crowds, job opportunities and places of fate. That is why many productive working age groups are urbanizing to the city to bet their fortune. The phenomenon of the city as the destination of urbanization hit all the big cities. The real impact of urbanization is the emergence of various social problems in Surabaya, such as many homeless people, beggars, and various crimes. Some people who have ordinary skills in music try to be street musicians to earn a living. The number of street musicians in Surabaya has increased nowadays about hundreds. How the life and existence of street musicians who marginalized in the society are very interesting to be studied and explored, so it can reveal factors that led to the shifting culture of singing in Javanese society, the background of a person choosing a profession as street musicians, and the description of forms of art activities done by the street musicians.

Keywords—Marginalization; profession; street musician
Introduction.

I. INTRODUCTION

The influence of globalization in all sectors of today’s life causes rapid changes and raises many socio-cultural problems in society. Changes that occur in society include social values, social norms, organizations behaviors, the composition of social institutions, layers in society, power and authority, social interaction, etc.

Social changes as a globalization influence are more visible in the urban area. The city is identical to luxury, industry, crowds, job opportunities, and place of fate. That is why many productive working age groups are urbanizing to the city to bet their fortunes. The phenomenon of the city as the destination of urbanization hit all the big cities. The impact of that phenomenon emerges various social problems such as many homeless people, beggars, various crimes, etc. Some people who have ordinary skills in music try to be street musicians to earn a living.

The number of street musicians in Surabaya has increased nowadays about hundreds. It can be observed with a variety of sound, age, and education. Starting from toddler to advanced, from fals to seriosa, from uneducated to be educated participate. In the development of a complex era, the culture of sing (ngamen) for some people grows into an opportunity to earn a living temporarily. It can even be said that singing (mengamen) is a universal profession.

Singing (mengamen) vary in terms of place and shape. Viewed from the aspect of place, there are singing (mengamen) in public transportations, in cafes or restaurants, and “door to door”. While from the aspect of art, it also offers some variations when it is associated with the place of singing (mengamen). The existence of these street musicians is interesting to be studied and used as a research subject. Interesting issues related to singing (mengamen) from “door to door” will be revealed, namely (1) factors that led to the shifting of singing (mengamen) culture in Javanese society; (2) background of a person choosing “door to door” street musician as his profession; (3) a description of artistic forms performed by the “door to door” street musicians.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A literary review has been conducted by several experts related to the presence of street musicians, especially in Java. Written data in the form of sculpture on the lower layer of Borobudur, Karmawibangga, there are carved of free-reed mouth organ (double bamboo inflatable instrument), scraping stick (rake stick), and a slit-drum (keprak)[1]. These three objects are the evidence of street musician traditions in the seventh century in Java.

Islam arrived in Java in the fifteenth century [2]. The sufi merchants from various places came to trade. Islamic centers and the information about it can be found in pesantren that approves the existence of music and dance. That is why at the beginning of the introduction to Islamic tradition, wayang,

dance, and gamelan are not impressed. Besides, a number of wali as the main figure in spreading Islam functioning pesantren as a center of Islamic education and traditional musician to share information about Islam. In order to keep in touch with people around pesantren especially in Central Java and East Java, there are some music or art groups performed: kentrung, genjringan, dalang/ wayang Jemblung, etc.

Various wars happened for 300 years after the fallen of Majapahit empire have probably changed the Javanese people in seeing music and street drama from ritual nature to profane traits. A special thing about singing (mengamen) has happened when Panembahan Senopati was about to trap the local ruler, Ki Ageng Mangir, who defected the king's law. To conquer Ki Ageng Mangir, the king used his daughter Retna Pambayun to mbarang/ ngamen with her entourage on purpose in order to make Ki Ageng Mangir had an eye for the king's daughter and married her. After succeeding the plan, the half-enemy son-in-law was killed when he had to honor the king by bowing. Here, mbarang/ ngamen is used to show the king's power. It has become political means and media.

The liberalization of trade by the Dutch East Indies government in the second half of nineteenth century [3] led to the existence of several plantages and sugar factory in Java has open the eyes of society to the meaning of money. This led to the emergence of a travelling troupe of folk dramas that lived from the offering of the audiences. The word mbarang also means walking from one place to another, down the street to perform a show by a group to get some offerings from the audiences.

The next time, the entourage of street musicians is more rampant during the paceklik (famine) in the central agricultural area. The period of paceklik (famine) is the period of unneeded labor due to the waiting time for the harvest. It lasts about 1.5 to 2 months. A group of people who has the ability in traditional arts leave their villages for singing (mengamen). Sometimes they get to the city to perform their music. The next singing (mengamen) is done by young people who do not want to work and do not have a certain skill. They equip themselves with simple instruments such as guitar, harmonica, and kendang. Since the monetary crisis, around 1998, the street musician's life has become increasingly severe. This time is the time of resurrection of the number of street musicians who do not meet the expectation in art.

The number of today's street musician around us, actually hide various motives. Some of them do it to find their own identities, some of them do it for fun, and the rest do it to make a living. Some reasons or motives underlying a person to be street musicians, they are (1) unemployment, (2) no skills, (3) lazy, (4) idealist, (5) side job, (6) frustration due to broken home or broken heart, (7) hobbies, and (8) coercion. Based on the analysis of the street musician's motive, there are two main reasons, namely being forced and being unforced. Even singing (mengamen) becomes one of the most favorite professions for people who do not have a steady job. The street musicians do not have to sing all the time but sometimes they can only play the musical instruments or draw the offerings from the listeners.

The "door to door" street musicians in Surabaya are not tied to organizations such as the street musicians in public transportations. In fact, there are some street musicians who claim to be alumni of "Sanggar Alang-Alang" organization or "Kelompok Penyanyi Jalanan (KPJ)". According to them, singing (mengamen) "door to door" is freer because they can do it wherever they like. However, in trespassing certain areas there are unwritten rules if there are street musicians in the same place, who come afterwards have to move to other places. The "door to door" street musicians are dominated by street musicians who are not creative, passive, and only need people compassion, money. Singing (mengamen) can be done by anyone who dares to show off.

Unlike street musicians in public transportations, the "door to door" street musicians are not familiar with the term "screen" that means singing (mengamen) or "sailing", go out of home for a particular purpose. To achieve that goal must be pursued by method and good intentions. This is what makes singing (mengamen) as a profession. It is not only about looking for money but also entertaining the people. This group typically sets revenue targets.

The "door to door" street musician mostly have a good management of the results they collected. The results are not used for spree but for better use. Some of these street musicians have rice fields in their villages for life insurance in their old days. For street musicians who do it for fun will not increase their skills. They do not want to study harder to pursue their lives. They get some money to meet their needs only. If the money has run out, then they go out to sing (mengamen) again. The results of their works are used for fun like drinking alcohol.

III. METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach through field research. The subjects were the street musicians in Surabaya who worked "door to door" alone and together in a group.

The data collection techniques used were documentation, observation, interview and questionnaire. To analyze the data, the researcher was used content analysis and descriptive analysis.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. *Factors causing the shifted of cultural value in street musician's life.*

Various kinds of art grow in hereditary repeatedly with binding patterns. Edi Sedyawati [4] mentioned the growth of art, "being a tradition in society's life". As a tradition, the variety of art is processed based on the taste of its society, it is also done by the street musicians. In its development, the street musician's life also experienced a development, shift, both in terms of technique, ethical and aesthetic sense, the art form performed, as well as the philosophical view of singing (mengamen) itself. In the art of singing (mengamen) contains the values associated with the owner's life view.

The function of art as a means of expression of human feelings also has a certain social function in harmony with the needs of society. These two kinds of art functions are

described by Humardani as two basic functions, namely primary function and secondary function (S. D. Humardani, 1983:5). The primary function is related to the means of living, while the secondary function is related to the social interest of the society. It can be concluded that art has eight social functions, they are (1) means of pleasure, (2) relaxed entertainment, (3) self-actualization or self-assessment, (4) integrative, (5) therapy or healing, (6) education, (7) restoration of order, and (8) symbolic means containing magical powers[5].

To explore the shift of cultural values in the street musician's life cannot be separated from the concepts of cultural value system. Koentjaraningrat [6] explained that a cultural value system consists of conceptions that live in the minds of most citizens, about the things they should consider as valuable in life. Therefore, a cultural value system usually serves as the ultimate guideline. Another concrete of human systems such as special rules, laws, and norms, are all also guided by the cultural value system.

The cultural value system of society is dynamic and changes over time as the socio-cultural structure of its supporting society changes. The change of cultural value system in Javanese society, for instance. It is closely related to the influences of western cultural influences which are more dominant than the Javanese culture itself. Values will direct to one's behavior and judgement. Cultural resistance can also be explained by the uneven development phenomenon caused by outside cultural penetration [7]. Cultural resistance gives rise to the cultural dualism of a society, that is, a foreign culture that influences the urban elite and indigenous cultures. In that conditions, the indigenous culture is increasingly urged and resulted in the cultural interiorization and cultural alienation that causes the conflict-filled transition. These conflicts arise because of the unpreparedness of society in accepting cultural or social influences that experience shock culture.

Principally, in street musician's life, there has been a shift in cultural value. It starts with the change of level of people's thinking concepts that set their choices as a street musician. Based on those concepts, it can help to determine various factors that emerge the shift value. There are several factors that cause a person or a group of people to choose street musician as profession, namely (a) economic factors, due to the limited skills and competencies that are not in accordance with the demands of job vacancies, someone is unconsciously being forced to take a shortcut to earn a living by choosing street musician as his profession. (b) life-necessity factor that causes a change in society's mindset.

B. Background of someone choosing a street musician as his profession

One of the central motives to pursue street musician's life is the economic motive. The data collected indicates that the demand of someone working as a street musician to sustain the family economy (62.79%), the working failure (26.74%), and lack of skills and competencies (10.47%). They consider that being a street musician is able to earn enough money to sustain the necessity of life.

Relating to the time of street musician spent is very surprising. That is because 45.0% of street musicians have been pursuing this profession for more than 5 years, 32.5% of street musicians spent their time for 1-5 years, and 22.5% of them spent it less than a year. This indicates that most of the street musicians have had long hours in pursuing this profession. The number of new street musicians who spent their time to singing (mengamen) less than a year shows that in today's globalization era being "door to door" street musician becomes one of the choices to earn a living. There are several possibilities for them to survive longer in street musician's life, namely (1) promising earnings, (2) insufficiency of a certain skill, (3) fast in earning money, (4) fun, and (5) free working hours.

The street musicians status shows that most of them claim to sing (mengamen) as a main job (43.69%), as a side job (31.07%), and as a hobby (25.24%). From the data, it can be seen that the "door to door" street musicians in Surabaya take it as their main professions.

Most of "door to door" street musicians in Surabaya who can earn between Rp 10,000 to Rp 50,000 is 63.64%. 31.82% earn less than Rp 10,000 and 4.55% earn above Rp 50,000. If we associated it with the previous explanation, besides the street musicians' persistence in searching for a new place, the improvement of sound and playing a musical instrument quality plays an important role in increasing their income.

In carrying out the activities, the "door to door" street musicians who choose to sing (mengamen) from village to village is 58.70% and they who choose to sing (mengamen) in their neighborhood is 41.30%. Based on the above data, it can be concluded in relation to the Habermas's idea of the public space, a group of street musicians who marginalized include the type of authentic public space. The background of someone choosing a street musician as his profession is grouped into 3, namely (1) street musicians as a conscious profession, (2) street musicians as a side profession, and (3) street musicians as a compulsion and deliberate profession.

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C. Forms of "door to door" street musicians' activities in Surabaya

In contrast to the art activities offered by a group of street musicians in public transportations, the activities of "door to door" street musicians offers various activities, they are

- (1) Singing with singing (Mengamen dengan menyanyi)
- (2) Singing with karaoke (Mengamen dengan karaoke)
- (3) Singing with Jaranan dance (Mengamen dengan menari jaranan)

- (4) Singing with mbarang siter and mbarang kentrung (Mengamen dengan mbarang siter dan mbarang kentrung)
- (5) Singing with ledhek kethek (Mengamen dengan mbarang ledhek kethek)

The forms of art activities performed by members of "door to door" street musicians are influenced by some factors, namely age, gender, skill, instruments, and the way singing (mengamen) is performed. In terms of age, "door to door" street musicians are among teenagers and adults. The musical instruments they used are guitars. This group of youth street musicians not only sing (mengamen) the songs from cassette but also the typical songs created by the street musicians.

In terms of gender, the "door to door" street musicians are 95% male and the rest are female. Female street musicians who join this mbarang siter group become *sindhèn* (singer). If it is seen based on the musical instruments mastery, male street musicians have more control over those musical instruments than female street musicians. The female street musicians tend to use rudimentary musical instruments. For those who can afford to buy atape recorder, they will use it for singing (mengamen) with karaoke.

Based on the questionnaire filled by the street musicians related to the musical instruments used for singing (mengamen) shows that 88.67% of street musicians use guitars, 11.33% use other musical instruments such as *ecek-ecek*, *kendang*, *gong*, *\bambung*, *saron*, *siter* (mbarangsiter group), and the teen groups usually use *ukulele*, *jimbe*, *harmonica*.

The way they singing (mengamen) shows that 40.45% of street musicians are singing (mengamen) in person, 24.72% are singing in a group, and 34.83% are singing in person and in a group.

The street musicians are not only singing the songs of famous singers but also singing their own created songs. The rhythm of the music they sing is not tied to a single genre of music but varies according to the song lyrics they imitate, it can be pop, *dangdut*, *campursari*, *keroncong*, jazz, even rock and roll. While the song lyrics they create is not tied to one music genre, but it follows their imaginations, creations, life experiences, and musical instruments. Generally, the song they create depicts the problems of socio-political, economic inequality and other life issues in society.

V. CONCLUSION

Singing (mengamen) is one of chosen profession of society. Factors that cause the shift of cultural value system of singing (mengamen) in Javanese society are the factors of thought

concept that change the existence of singing (mengamen) from sacred to profane. When profane qualities develop, economic factors become the strongest factor cause the shift up to now.

Someone who chooses to be a street musician is highly motivated by the economic demands in order to survive and able to fill his stomach. Besides, the strong competition in job vacancies, lack of skill and competence to fill the job opportunities, and lack of job opportunities due to the crisis also trigger someone to choose to be a street musician as his alternative profession. The people view in being a street musician is a simple and light work that can make a lot of money also contributes to the factor why many people choose to be a street musician. Therefore, the street musician profession is grouped into three based on the concept of "public space" Haberman, namely (1) street musician as a conscious profession, (2) street musician as an alternative profession, and (3) street musician as a compulsion or deliberate profession.

In contrast to the group of street musician on public transportation, the art form of street musician who performs "door to door" is vary, there are mbarang siteran/ mbarang kentrung, *ledhek kethek*, *jaranan karaoke*, and common karaoke. In the street musician's life in Surabaya, there are various forms of art which include music instruments that are used, song lyrics that are created and sung while performed, and various themes of song lyrics that are chosen. Social criticism dominates the songs of street musicians besides the other themes such as social themes, education, love and divinity.

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