



Understanding Tattoos from the Indonesian Underground Music Scene of the Surabaya Region

HANDOKO, Cons. Tri

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Understanding Tattoos from the Indonesian Underground Music
Scene of the Surabaya Region

CONS. TRI HANDOKO

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of Sheffield
Hallam University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In the Cultural Communication and Computing Research Institute (C3RI)

November 2019

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Rosalia Surya Budi and my son, Sava Narendra Maheswara.

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Abstract

This study analyses the functions and meanings of tattoos in the specific social and cultural context of the underground musicians and fans in urban East Java.

The research methodology is based on qualitative data and uses ethnographic and social science methods. The ethnographic component comes from participation in music events, gatherings and visits to the target community in their homes and public places. The focus is on the analysis of the visual data in their particular contexts and draws from detailed knowledge of literature pertaining to existing international research about tattoos from a variety of perspectives. In particular, the individual explanatory narratives are considered to account for the icons, symbols and typography patterns, to understand the broader vocabularies of tattoos that are followed in the subculture of underground music in Indonesia.

This research revealed that tattoos and tattooing practices among Java-based underground music subcultures were mostly still based on mutual co-operation, as shown by how some of the underground musicians and fans became the volunteer media of tattooing practices for their fellow tattoo apprentices. This kind of activity seems to strengthen their social interactions. From an analogical perspective, we can see the body as the site where they create those relationships. I call this phenomenon the *social body event*, a celebration of togetherness and unity, flowing dynamically in the form of the production of tattoos. Other findings were that tattoos also became a projection of their spiritual journeys, personal identity, as well as the group identity, in cases where there was a shift in the meaning of tattoos over time. The local preferences of tattoos and the tattooing process also involve local spiritual conceptions, such as the tattoo positioning on the body representing good or evil. Also, some subjects acquired tattoos after experiencing dreams. This phenomenon shows that some youngsters still believe that dreams can convey a supernatural message or a sign of a particular event in their life. Tattoo and tattooing practices in the underground music scene reflect the vigorous bond between inside and outside the self, the music scene, and the wider range of society. It is also clear how global tattoos can influence, in terms of tattoo styles and motifs. This research adds to the existing body of research and knowledge of both subcultures and body art in the Indonesian context.

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Glossary of Terms

Word	Description
<i>Anak Underground</i>	A name used to identify musicians, activists and fans of underground music subculture.
<i>Gaul</i>	Stylish, up to date.
<i>Kejawen</i>	The Javanese's spiritual knowledge, a way of life and thinking, nature and tradition.
<i>Jablay</i>	Abbreviation of <i>jarang dibelai</i> or rarely being touched. Often used to define a person who lacks physical affection; usually with a negative connotation as used in the word <i>prostitute</i> .
<i>Jancuk</i>	A swear word used to express anger, but in certain situations can have positive meanings as well, such as a way to call a close friend or as an expression of astonishment.
<i>Kepala Batu</i>	Stubborn, naughty.
<i>Masberto</i>	The acronym of <i>Masyarakat Bertato</i> or the tattooed society which was popularised by <i>Marjinal</i> , a Metal music band. The term <i>Masberto</i> then became a kind of designation for tattooed people.
<i>Nge-lem</i>	Activity of inhaling glue fumes in order to get drunk.
<i>Olah Bathin</i>	Activity to train the mind, feelings, senses and self-awareness through a series of fasting, meditation and praying.
<i>Pecel Lele</i>	Deep fried catfish served with chili sauce, coupled with a variety of vegetables consisting of basil, cabbage, cucumber, and beans. <i>Pecel Lele</i> is a relatively cheap street food which is commonly found in Central Java and East Java.
<i>Petrus</i>	An abbreviation for <i>Penembakan Misterius</i> . The attempt of the government to eradicate criminals in the provinces of Yogyakarta and Central Java through the use of armed officers without an official identity in 1983–1984. They kidnapped and killed their victims and put their bodies in

Word	Description
	public places.
<i>Praja Cihna</i>	The symbol of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, which consists of elements of Javanese script 'Ha' and 'Ba,' an abbreviation of Hamengku Buwono which means protecting the earth. The crown refers to government leaders. Two eagle's wings on the left and right depict the majesty and authority of the palace. The lotus flower symbolises the wisdom and power of the principle. The vines symbolise the glory of the culture of the nation. The gold colour in Praja Cihna is a symbol of nobleness, while the red colour in the middle means bravery.
<i>Sambal</i>	A common type of chili sauce in Indonesia. Usually made of chili, shrimp, garlic, salt, and sugar, crushed together.
<i>Tukang Gores</i>	Street tattooist; unskilful tattooist.
<i>Wangsit</i>	A word defining inspiration, guidance, command or supernatural whisper in the Javanese' Kejawen.
<i>Waskita</i>	A high level of seeing and feeling a supernatural sign.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Research

A tattoo is a permanent painting on the body's skin. The technique is applied by inserting ink, dyes and pigments into the dermis layer of the skin. In general, making a permanent image on the human's skin is done in two ways. The first is tattooing and the second is known as body scarification, which is done by scratching the skin's surface with sharp objects to create injury which will produce a bulge when the wound is healed. Another method that also refers to scarification involves branding or making a permanent mark on the skin by stamping the skin with heated metal. It was Captain James Cook who first used the term Westerners pronounce as 'tattoo' based his description of the Polynesian technique of *tattaw* on his voyage to the Pacific in the 18th century (Miller, 1997). Krakow (1994) and DeMello (2000) suggest that it came from the Tahiti or Samoa and Tonga word *tatau*, which means 'to mark something' or the Dutch expression *doe het tap toe*, which is associated with the closing of a post that starts with the beating of a drum (Krakow, 1994). The sound of the beat is the same as a small hammer tap in the traditional tattooing practice (tapping) in some local cultures in Samoa, Japan, Burma, Thailand and Indonesia.

My interest in tattoos among underground musicians and fans began when I saw a university student who had a *punk* typeface tattoo on his fingers. This tattoo got my attention and encouraged me to understand the underground scene and the existence of tattoos in this group. Martin-Iverson (2011) described the nature and attitude of the *anak underground* (underground kids) as *slengean* (grungy), *brutal* (aggressive) and vulgar, with their untidy appearance, for example dyed and spiked hair, tattoos and piercings. For most people, this kind of appearance is often associated with disorderly youth. Hence, tattoos and tattooing are not accepted among conservative citizens as they are associated with delinquency or felony, especially if the tattooing is related to religious doctrine. The rejection of tattooing, to some degree, is because of the negative stigma attached to tattoos as the result of conditions created by the political system and the media. In some cases tattoos are linked to criminality. For example, in 1983–1984, there was a mysterious shooting or *Petrus* (an abbreviation for

Penembakan Misterius), in which the majority of the victims who were tattooed were murdered by military officers dressed in civilian clothes in some areas of Indonesia (Olong, 2006; Marianto and Barry, 2000; Siegel, 1998). This appears to be a more extreme response to tattoos as perceived markers of criminality than examples in other parts of the world.

The reappearance of tattoos took place in the early 1990s among the ‘underground music’ scene (Olong, 2006; Hegarty, 2017). The presence of several world bands and tattooed musicians who appeared on television in the era of MTV made young people begin to realise the existence of tattoos as a part of lifestyle and fashion, even rebellion (Olong, 2006). Since then, tattoos have been popular not only among the national celebrities in Indonesia but also within the upper-middle class in several major cities in Indonesia (Hegarty, 2017). One trend is the re-invention of local/traditional motif tattoos that are modified using modern machines in a studio. This recent tattooing practice is called the *Kustom Tato* (Hegarty, *ibid.*). Thus perceptions of tattooing practices and tattoos have undergone a shift within the last two decades in Indonesia. In general, tattooing has moved from being a relatively abstruse topic associated with deviancy and non-mainstream groups to an aspect of popular culture. Yet, in spite of its importance and linkage to various types of consumption, tattooing has not been adequately or recently investigated especially among the underground community (Hegarty, 2017) although their social worlds overlap with the wider community outside the scene. Thus, this research may fill a gap in exploring the production of tattoos and tattooing in the underground scene and how the transnational tattoo culture influences the scene and its tattoo productions.

1.2. The significance of the research

To my knowledge, there have only been a few researchers aware of or interested in conducting research in the field of tattoos associated with music or other performing arts. The famous legend of blues and rock, Janis Joplin, was claimed to be the first musician with tattoos. She got her tattoos in the 1970s, however, it was only in 2003 with research exploring tattoos among those in Straightedge in Canada, that this was published in an international journal. The Straightedge is a subculture of hardcore punk whose adherents refrain from alcohol consumption, recreational drugs and/or promiscuous sexual relationships as a reaction against the excesses of punk subculture in the contemporary era (Atkinson, 2003).

Their tattoos are symbols of declaration as well as promoting an identity of purifying their bodies from 'bad acts' in the past. This is why some Straightedgers started to have tattoos when they were sure they were showing 'good' life principles that opposed alcohol, drugs, and free sex. In studies relating to punk, some scholars mentioned tattoos as one of the characteristics of punk members but, to some extent, the tattoos were not their focus of interest. Wallach (2008) and Martin-Iverson (2011) were conducting research related to punk and hardcore communities in Jakarta and Bandung (Indonesia).

In 2005, Rolling Stone published a book titled *Tattoo Nation: Portraits of Celebrity Body Art* discussed popular culture icons such as musicians and celebrities. Although lacking an adequate amount of deep structural analysis, this book provides interesting data that can be used in exploring the world of highly visible and potentially influential tattooing among entertainers. According to Wohlrab et al. (2007), in modern Western literature research about motivations for getting tattoos and body piercings, there are ten main functions of tattoos, namely beauty, art, and fashion; individuality; personal narrative; physical endurance; group affiliations and commitment; resistance; spirituality and cultural tradition; addiction; sexual motivation; and no specific reason. In addition, tattoos are also a signifier of disaffiliation with mainstream society (DeMello, 2000) and a protection for the wearer, as shown in my Masters level research on tattoos among convicts in the city of Yogyakarta-Indonesia, where tattoos in prison are used for self-protection, especially for those who have clean/light skin, from being a victim of sexual abuse from other fellow inmates (Handoko, 2007). In the context of underground musicians and fans, I aim to investigate if tattoos may be meaningful and functional in other ways by exploring the tattoo owners' perceptions before and after getting the tattoos and how it is associated with self-concept and identity. This is my focus of interest as the results will give a better understanding of why people in communities such as the underground scenes in Surabaya and Sidoarjo choose to mark their bodies with tattoos.

According to Oksanen and Turtiainen (2005), sociologists of the body have started to view tattoos as a form of *self-expression* and *body politics*, leading to a new positive perspective on understanding the *meanings* of tattooing acts and tattoos. However, they argue that in giving an interpretation of a tattoo one may get into the subjective realm, depending on who interprets it, if the body has entered the core of the social sphere. This proposition leads to the argument that tattoos' meanings are sometimes constructed through the social process. Fruh and Thomas (2012) analysed whether tattoos can contain both a person's personal and social

identity, as people acquire tattoos as a way of sublimating their individuality to further integrate their identity into a social group (alongside tattoos connecting to personal identity). Fisher (2002) found that as a form of personal identity, tattoos are also body decoration or can be associated with exhibitionism and an individual's style or personal image (for example, to look masculine or stand out among others). As explained by Doss and Hubbard (2009), people who show off their tattoos may think that the tattoos will impress others or make them assume ideas behind the tattoos. It can be concluded that tattoos, according to Fruh and Thomas (2012), Doss and Hubbard (2009) and Fisher (2002), have a connection to self-identity. Mead (in Romanienko, 2011, p.2) added that "The self is not something we discover, but rather is a conscious, malleable, authentic creation."

Furthermore, tattoos can be associated with costume or clothing and self-aesthetic expression. Goffman (in Nichols and Foster, 2005, p. 2) regarded it as "the presentation of self in everyday life" or as Elizabeth Wilson (in Anderson, 2005, p. 68) states, clothing has symbolic, communicative and aesthetic roles:

"In all societies the body is 'dressed' and, everywhere, dress and adornment play symbolic, communicative and aesthetic roles. The dress is always 'unspeakably meaningful.' The earliest forms of 'clothing' seem to have been adornments, such as body painting, ornaments, scarifications (scarring), tattooing, masks and often constricting neck and waistbands. Many of these deformed, reformed or otherwise modified the body."

In the purpose of communicating identity, a tattoo can also be "a badge of individual identity" (Negrin, 2008), such as the insignias of "Anarchy" that are found on clothes, jackets, graffiti, and sometimes tattoos. The symbols can be signs of an individual's political views, with particular stories behind the creations (concepts) and meanings. In Vannini and Waskul's *Body and Performance*, this is called a 'body of repertoire' (2006). In the 1970s, the subcultures (hippies, punk, skinhead, metal, etc.) moved into signs of a cultural movement and representation of cultural identity in terms of communicating their differences and group identity through their style of clothing, accessories, tattoos and so forth. Hebdige's (1979) study about punk is one of the references often used to understand subculture and the moment when punk was created. Hebdige sees this phenomenon as a form of symbolic resistance, counter-cultural struggle, and the creation of space-autonomous culture. However, in the punk scene itself, Hebdige notes that not all punk members understand why they wear such attributes, especially after the first generation of punk (1979). This shows that in different

periods, situations, locations and social life, different perspectives on the meaning of the subculture may occur. The terms of identity and their meaning become more fluid and transfigured through time, and with changing social and political agendas, as stated by Gilroy (in Barker, 2002, p. 75): "Identities in motion rather than absolutes of nature or culture; routes rather than roots: that is, a 'changing same' that involves creolized, syncretized, hybridized and chronically impure cultural forms." Furthermore, identities will take one or more values that appear in the process of social, political and cultural transformation because of globalisation. Local identity combined with external values is known as a 'cultural mixture'. This local-global identity indicates a hybridisation process. As noted in the writings of Ken Booth (Pieterse, 2009, p.73) "Identity patterns are becoming more complex, as people assert local loyalties but want to share in the global values and lifestyles". Globalisation which blurs the boundaries of space and time makes society increasingly become a part of global diversity so that people can feel the cultural hybridisation and have 'multiple identities'. This then brings society to a 'global melange'.

1.3. Research questions

1. What are the factors that shape the motivation of underground musicians and fans in Surabaya and Sidoarjo to have tattoos?

The answers to this question are based on narratives about when, how and why they get tattooed.

2. What are the functions of tattoos in their subcultural context, and to what extent are these tattoos inspired by the transnational tattoo culture?

The aim is to develop a notion of the key functions and purposes of this form of body adornment and to understand the symbolic vocabularies of this subculture. The contrasts, conflicts and exceptions of these vocabularies will be explored, both within the target group and in the broader local context, such as the global influences affecting the decision to acquire such symbols.

1.4. Scope of the investigation

This study analyses the function and meaning of tattoos or visual materials in a specific social and cultural context in order to understand why underground musicians and fans have tattoos

and to what extent their tattoos have functions related to the lives of the *anak underground* (underground kids) as individuals, musicians and fans. It will also look at how the visuality and materiality of these tattoos can be interpreted.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Tattoos and globalisation

Globalisation itself is a cultural process that tends to unite regions in the world in social, cultural, economic and political aspects. The era of globalisation of tattoos can be dated from the first explorations of the West to a new world. Another term which has been used to explain the meeting between Westerners and the Pacific communities who had traditional practices of tattooing is transculturalisation (Herlihy, 2012). Some said that it began on 16 August 1768 while James Cook and his crew, during their 3-year voyage, visited many islands in the Pacific Ocean and met Oceanic and Polynesian peoples who covered their bodies with permanent motifs (Gilbert, 2000). Although Captain Cook's journal records some tattoos it does not mean that he was the first Westerner who discovered tattoos in the Pacific. Herlihy (2012) reveals that, according to history, there were other voyagers who had visited the Pacific. One of them was a Dutch expedition on 13 June 1722, which arrived at the easternmost part of the Samoan archipelago. "The Dutch noted the dense forest covering the slopes, and the 'painting' that covered the 'Indians [...] from the thighs downward to the legs.'" (Sharp (ed.), in Tcherkézoff, 2008, p. 16). However the detailed descriptions in Captain Cook's journals about tattoo practices in the Tahiti community have been beneficial to the tattoos' historical references. Both men and women marked their bodies with what in their language is called *tattow*. This was done by tapping a black pigment under their skin. Women generally had simple Z-shaped motifs on each joint of the fingers and toes, likewise with men.¹ Although these local people were seen as primitive, many of the sailors that interacted with them began to have tattoos placed on their bodies (Camphausen, 1997). The way that these seafarers were interested and engaged in the tattooing activity, can be seen in perspective as a permanent souvenir of their voyage as well as evidence of their encounters with the people of the Pacific. The adoption of the tattooing practices shows the heterogeneous nature of the cross-cultural exchanges that were taking place. This practice can be found further in Gilbert (2000) and Lodder (2013) who explained that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the religious pilgrimage to the Holy Lands was also marked by the

¹ James Cook, *Captain Cook's Journal During The First Voyage Round The World* (H.M Bark Endeavour: A Literal Transcription of The Original MSS, 1768-71), 93.

adoption of the Holy Land's religious symbols on the bodies of the European pilgrims. Devotional symbols such as crosses, Christograms, and images of Christ were tattooed on their bodies. The influence of globalisation made tattoos become increasingly known and later they became popular in various groups of society, such as in Great Britain. One of the examples is Edward VII, who was the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Emperor of India, who was tattooed in Jerusalem in 1862. Back to the time of Captain James Cook in 1774, he brought home a Maori native named Omai who later made tattoos a unique attraction to the public in London. People tried to find out more about tattoos and Omai did some tattoos for people in London. Through his two-year presence, tattoos became popular in London and Omai gained recognition as a London resident (Olong, 2006). Major General Horatio Robley, at the time of his expedition to New Zealand, witnessed a battle between Maori Gate Pa and Te Ranga tribes. He found many tattoos on the bodies of the soldiers of the two tribes. Later, he became interested in tattoos and collected some Maori tattoo instruments and which are currently stored in the British Museum London. It seems that the early encounter with the people of the Pacific has had a lasting impact on Western maritime culture. How the trades and global networks formed some centuries ago through the maritime culture had an impact on the development of tattooing practice can be seen from what Lodder (2013) described as the "heyday of professional tattooing in Britain" in which tattoo studios in London, around the 1880s and 1890s also provided Japanese iconic symbols such as dragons, snakes, and orientalist demons.

Lodder (2013) observes that wealthy people also became interested in this permanent marking practice. To show their status, they invited the original tattoo master from Japan to travel back to Britain or America to have 'authentic tattoos'. Olong (2006) notes that traditional motifs became popular among Londoners. One of the figures who adopted the Maori tattoo is John Rutherford. In 1827, he showed some tattoo equipment and also his body full of tattoos on the arms, knees and back. He also tattooed his face with Maori motifs. In addition to Rutherford who tried to become famous with tattoos, there was also Miss Carry, a theatre performer in London who exhibited tattoos as part of her performance. According to Ritter (in Lodder, 2013), the popularity of tattoos in London was closely linked to George Burchett of Brighton, East Sussex in about 1872. Since the age of 18 he had been tattooed on both forearms and then practised his tattooing skills on fellow sailors aboard ship and in Jerusalem during his desertion from the Navy and opened a studio in London around 1896. The expedition of Burchett to several countries made him able to adapt both local tattoo

motifs and thematic tattoos as desired by his clients. According to Lodder (2013), in the nineteenth century and later, the signification of tattoos was developed into the practice of putting personal references and professions on tattoos. Permanent markings such as the sun soon became popular among the seafarers.

2.2 Tattooing as aesthetic practices

Since the practice of tattooing is a kind of presentation of the self, it needs to be discussed from the sociological perspective that tattooing practice is seen as a performance through which the tattoos and the owners are an embodied form of art. According to Walzer and Sanjurjo (2016, p.71): “The ways in which we cover our bodies are, at the same time, ways of exhibiting it.” Yet, once tattooing and tattoos are described as aesthetic practices, it leads to bias due to opposing opinions because of the differences in people’s backgrounds, belief systems and individual tastes. In the past, tattoos were perceived more negatively, as stated by Cole (2003, p. 276): “Tattooing has been associated with criminals, prostitutes, the mentally ill and typical ‘working class’ men such as sailors”. This has happened since the nineteenth century in Italy and France (Caplan, 2000; Angel, 2013). However, in the present time, particularly in some areas in Indonesia for example, tattooed people still experience the same stigmatisation (Handoko, 2010; Olong, 2006). In terms of this aesthetics debate, the remarkable point is that the aesthetics of bodies and tattoos in some aspects relate to the individual’s perceptions and personal assessment of taste. On the other hand, it is measured by conventions. This problem is explained by Lodder (2010, p. 261): “Body art has always suffered from the same types of whims, fashions and blandness of taste that afflicts all other forms of artistic production, and the novel and the exciting have always been marginalised by the conventional and the staid.”

The way that aesthetic values have been manifest through tattoo tattoos can also be seen in Indonesian tattoos, which mostly honour Western styles and techniques as the references, such as Western demons being viewed as more aesthetic than the local ones (Handoko, 2007) or fatefully, Indonesian people had the idea of encouraging themselves to learn Indonesian traditional tattooing techniques after having experienced living abroad.² It cannot be denied

² One of the cases is Durga Sipatiti, a prominent Indonesian traditional tattooist, who studied tattoo art under the guidance of Sua Sulu'ape of Freewind's tribal tattoo master, at the Black Wave Tattoo studio in Los Angeles.

that, in this globalising world, tattoos have also been influenced by the dominant ideologies (Western). As Marti (2007, p.1) explains:

“Tattooing and body modification, in general, have to be also considered in relation to the issue of intangible heritage. There are many cultures of the world which had a rich tradition in tattooing and because of direct or indirect Western influence they have lost this tradition or it is in the process of extinction. More and more, the body does not reflect any more particular worldviews of particular cultures or societies but uninformed attitudes coming from dominant paradigms.”

In the last few decades, awareness has emerged to improve the motifs and techniques of tattoos from the past that have been adapted to the present situation. This started with tattoo artists in the West who saw the past as a part of the present and future. Hence, in terms of aesthetic aspects, there is a repetition of forms with possible meanings that have undergone a shift. The choice of presenting objects that were once popular in the past, with a new ‘touch’, is analysed by McCabbe (1997, p.16):

“Classic images – eagle, snake, anchor, heart are deceptive in their directness and their simplicity. Hidden behind the designs are years of technical and artistic experimentation that combined to create a successful style....the practice moves along, constantly reinventing itself as it digests ever-changing cultural influences.”

Likewise, the search for identity, style, technique, charms, and specific functions of traditional body decorations that have long been buried or have experienced a setback have been revived through the reconstruction of techniques, rituals, enthusiasm and reproduction of tools. The kind of style known as ‘modern primitive’ was invented in the mid-1970s by Fakir Musafar (Lodder, 2010). Thus talking about the aesthetics of tattoos is the same as talking about the aesthetics of art in general, where there are repetitions of forms, motifs and so on. Nowadays, as in the Western tattoo culture, in Indonesia, as observed by Hegarty (2017), there has been a growing trend of local motif tattoos that are modified, mimicked and transformed into a more contemporary style using modern tattoo machines. It is called the *Kustom Tato*. In this condition, tattoos are transformed from high culture to pop culture, where tattoo users do not need to perform certain rituals or pass a certain age to get a tattoo, from the spiritual-traditional dimension to profane. An example of this is the *Bunga Terung* (eggplant flower) Dayak tattoo symbol which in the Dayak community was a symbol of social status, and required anyone who wanted it to go through a series of ritual processes and use traditional tattoo tools. At present, in modern society, these tattoos can be easily obtained

by tattoo artists in the studios without the ritual processes. From the perspective of pop culture, tattoos can be interpreted as a vehicle that moves from originality towards commercialisation and ideological resistance, and which is in a continuous dialogue with the times and innovation. The youth regard traditional tattoos as easier to obtain, fresher, not sacred and not complicated.

Like *Kustom Tato* in Indonesia, which is currently on trend, in the 1980s in the West such styles also emerged. This was revealed by Lodder (2010) who said that Don Ed Hardy made a tattoo in the form of a heavy tribal blackwork style, overlapped with a large, brightly coloured purple snake. In general, people assume that this tattoo is an example of a traditional tattoo revival, but in Lodder's opinion it is not true because: "This tattoo, is certainly not 'authentically' tribal in any sense, but something innovative and exciting, drawing upon the aesthetics of heavy blackwork tattooing in tribal contexts in order to create something resolutely new" (p. 104). Thus it is not appropriate to claim that the use of traditional tattoo techniques and motifs means that they should automatically be regarded as aesthetic products of local cultural heritage. It is just bricolage, imitation of the style.

Hegarty (2017) and Olong (2006) consider that tattoos in Indonesian urban areas at present have been considered a pop culture reference because they can be reproduced en masse. The role of the global media industry is crucial in this. The media is one of the pillars of the creation of mass culture. Storey (in Olong, 2006) reveals that tattoos developed along with the development of pop culture in America, affecting culture in countries around the world, including Indonesia. Globalisation through the media has spread awareness of tattooing practices (Martí, 2007).

In the 1990s Indonesia experienced *demam MTV* (MTV fervour). Indonesian youth found it easier to see their idols and some of them were tattooed. Some of these tattoos inspired young people to have them on their bodies, just like the stars. Also in this era, some Indonesian models, actors or actresses who had tattoos appeared on the screens, magazines and advertisements. Mimicking the actions of others who are considered to represent themselves is known as bricolage. This term was proposed by Levi Strauss (Olong, 2006). In this case, the youth experience the process of discovering new meaning through the re-contextualisation of objects that have certain symbolic meanings, which are then reinterpreted in relation to other objects and new contexts. Olong (2006) gives an example of the

flamboyant Teddy Boy-style that was popular in the 1970s as a bricolage from the classy dress style of the late 1940s. This is also apparent in Ska music fans who wear boots and short-haircuts, which is a bricolage of the hard work spirit and working-class masculinity. In this case, Indonesian youths use tattoos as an imitation of their idols who they see in the mass media. They are called ‘bricoleurs’, which means adapting the tattoo style but in the context of their local culture, such as giving new touches to the object or tattoo according to their needs and/or demands of their local social environment in Indonesia.

The visual aesthetic of ‘underground music’ can be represented in many forms of their fashion attributes and tattoos. Prilly (2013) in her observation concluded that each genre had different historical backgrounds which also affected specific fashion styles in each genre. She gave an example of Punk music which was born in England, as a counter-form of the monarchic system, that according to the Punk activists and fans, had hegemonised the life of the British people. As many sources point out, Punk ideology then spread throughout the world, absorbed and then also adapted to local culture. In America, it was transformed into Hardcore music which, according to Prilly (ibid.), had a mission as a counter-culture against fascism, racism, discrimination, and political and economic policy. Similarly, with Thrash and Black Metal music, Thrash Metal music is a form of anger towards Western social systems, as well as a form of psychological therapy for all individuals who will never fit into the social system whereas Black Metal music erupted because of discrimination among people in Norway and Sweden. According to Prilly (2013), this discrimination occurred in a social system issued by Christian-style policies. This situation shaped the local metal musical concept, bringing up variants such as Death Metal, Black Metal and Gothic Metal. They adopted and adapted metal music with Scandinavian traditional culture as a way to counter social discrimination. Through the themes of Satanism which were then represented alongside the destruction of Christian religious symbols in their musical performances, they tried to depict a form of resistance. In Sidoarjo, as told by Narendra (2015), local Black Metal practised supernatural powers (*klenik*) as a means to contact the ancestors of the Land of Java. They claimed that the ancestors, the kings of Ancient Javanese, from the pre-Majapahit and Hindu Mataram period conveyed messages to the younger Javanese generation to be prepared for a future of facing natural or humanitarian disasters.

Narendra (2015) says that messages from the past could also be interpreted as a reminder to take a look back at the cultural heritage that had been forgotten by Javan society along with

the development of modernisation. Interestingly, this practice of mysticism is not only aimed at communicating with the ancestors, as Narendra observed that the mythology and the stories of ancient Javanese culture transformed into a typical medium of Black Metal Music. In the whole process of the musical production of Javanese Black Metal in Sidoarjo, representations of *ilmu kebathinan* (mysticism) were used, such as Javanese rituals such as *tirakat*³ and the pilgrimage to the various relics and temples (Candi) in Java Island. This syncretism has been in Indonesia since the Hinduism and Buddhism era in the 7th-15th centuries (Sucitra, 2015).

All the differences that exist in metal music genres also gave birth to differences in their aesthetic appearances. Each has its own characteristics. Poynor (2016) gives an example of the Punk and Hardcore music scene in their graphic design techniques which used to include collage, cartoon drawings, hand-lettering, rub-down lettering, ransom-note lettering, stencils, rubber-stamping, and black and white Xerox copying, as well as silkscreen and offset litho, whereas for Death Metal and Grind Core, the artworks used more sadism in themes such as murder and mutilation (Prilly, 2013). Black Metal music also has its own aesthetic characteristic, using symbols of Satanism in the form of scary images. Schaap and Berkers (2014) explored Black Metal's aesthetic, which was identical with dark nuances, as seen in the use of black colour as well as bloody or horrific graphics and medieval aesthetics. It is common to see the band logos as headlines in the posters, and the other product materials commonly use unreadable fonts. In the Black Metal culture, symbols of the occult and/or paganism such as runes, swastikas, inverted crosses and pentagrams are common along with the 'black lettering' (Gothic letters). In their stage performances, according to Schaap and Berkers (2014), dark imaging always appears, such as the dramatic 'corpse paint' make-up.

Concerning these Metal aesthetic styles, tattoos within the *anak underground* are represented, as explained previously, to contain anger, resistance, violence and dark imaging. For example, *anak Punk* most commonly uses the symbol of *Anarchy*, and brass knuckles are popular among the Hardcore as its persuasive power imaging. Occult symbols are well-liked among other *anak underground* such as Thrash Metal, Death Metal, and other metal music genres. The tattoos in the underground community are influenced by the nature of that which

³ Fasting or *tirakat* for the Javanese has been a part of their life, even before Islam came to Java Island. *Tirakat* has a variety of goals such as getting a fortune, avoidance of distress, and other goodness in life. Even at a higher level, *tirakat* can also be meant to gain supernatural powers.

the metal music culture brings. In the wider context, the visual structures formed in the genres of underground music styles that conceive their own specific visual identity enrich the world's aesthetic repertoire.

2.3. Tattoos as individual self-expression and community identity

In the popular culture era, tattoos are brought into the slices between body morality, body aesthetics, and body identity to body solidarity. They are often related to negative connotations and yet are now becoming more acceptable in the mainstream culture (Olong, 2006). Since around 1980, tattoo researchers have addressed this change in tattoo culture through many issues, for example Sanders and Vail (1989)⁴ and Rubin (1988)⁵ explored tattoos based on art parameters which are determined institutionally and in comparison with ancient and Eastern body modification practices. Through the parameters, tattoos assimilate into mainstream culture. Hewitt (1997)⁶ suggests that in terms of social psychology, tattooing practice has been seen as a social expression or artistic venture. Celebrities such as Ozzy Osbourne, Eminem, Melissa Etheridge, Busta Rhymes, Drew Barrymore, and other pop culture symbols appear in Ritz's *Tattoo Nation: Portraits of Celebrity Body Art* (2005). It shows that tattoos are no longer seen only as a form of resistance, but also as a consumption practice. In this perspective, tattoos have been reconstructed from their negative associations to legitimating middle-class ideologies (see DeMello, 2000). Atkinson (2003) explains that, since the beginning of the 1990s, tattooing has emerged as a popular body project, which has developed from marginalised subculture symbols and identity associated with deviant or marginal groups (see DeMello, 2000; Pitts, 1999; Sanders and Vail, 1989), to be actively used by people from different social and economic classes for expressing their status and ideas. The fundamental dialectical process of society, namely externalisation, objectification and internalisation (Berger, in Olong, 2006), has played a role in this process.

At the externalisation stage, tattoos and tattooing practice are seen as a way to express or release anxiety and other personal or social problems among the youths. Strohecker (2011) calls this a *coping resource* which means a tattoo could help the tattoo bearers cope with their negative feelings, such as the loss of loved ones, being shunned by the community, or other psychological suffering. The pain that occurs in the process of tattooing is seen to lift the pain

⁴ In "Customizing the Body: The Art and Culture of Tattooing".

⁵ in "Marks of Civilization: Artistic Transformations of the Human Body."

⁶ "in Mutilating the Body: Identity in Blood and Ink."

in their hearts and minds, reducing worries and fears. It could be suggested that tattooing is a healing process in anger/stress management. At this level, the tattoo is also a way to rediscover the lost world of spirituality. Tattoo and tattooing are a kind of path to enlightenment.

The next process is known as objectification. At this stage, tattooed people try to adapt to the culture of the surrounding community, which can be different. Not infrequently, this creates a kind of friction with this community. These tattooed young people try to survive with these choices but still consider the reality that is happening around them. In this situation, tattoos enter the process of internalisation which is a process of absorption and adoption of values. At this stage, if there is a kind of external pressure that prevents young people from tattooing, they will see this as a potential effort to limit their self-expression. Obviously, in this situation, they resist (Olong, 2006). This form of resistance is a natural thing because generally young people have an ambivalent existence that places them in the paradoxical values of the culture. They are forced to oppose the orthodox generation of their parents and the more dominant culture (Olong, 2006; Levine, 2003).

Tattoos, piercings, musical genres, dressing, and certain language styles are considered as efforts to emulate and win cultural spaces that dominate young people. In some respects, the externalisation, objectification and internalisation perspectives can be employed in tattoo research to analyse the dialectical process of tattoos and tattooing within society. In conclusion, according to Olong (2006), Swami (2013), Atkinson (2003) and Levine (2003) perspectives on tattooing practices relating to a 'counter-culture' can be seen as a form of resistance and political protest, as well as the freedom to choose to be different. In terms of the process of adding or changing body parts using tattoos, this is a process of symbolism or semiotic reading in various perspectives which influences the way of thinking and behaving of individuals and communities. In this sense, tattoos are increasingly popularised by a willingness to establish a stronger identity and self-image (Armstrong et al., 2002), as well as affirmation of control over oneself and independence (Kang and Jones, 2007), self-reflection and the relationship between tattoos and constructions of the self (Armstrong et al., 2002; Mun et al., 2012; Swami, 2011). In the broader view, body modification practices are acts of changing physical appearance (Kosut, 2015). The process is carried out to build an attractive appearance, present personal selfhood and show one's identity. Also, according to Shilling (2003), people become involved in various 'body projects' for the benefit of the health and beauty of the body (imaging). Furthermore, Lemma (2010), in his research found that people

tried to undergo body modification to be accepted by others. This event is the result of interaction with other people. Self-appearance amid other people, in some respects, raises the feeling of whether he/she feels less acceptable, or more easily accepted. This factor may encourage people to undergo body modifications.

Similar things were also found by Atkinson (2003), that physical appearance is a way to get recognition, admiration and involvement in the groups. By doing body modification, a person is expecting to be more acceptable in every social interaction. From this perspective, the desire to be accepted is passed on to cognition, which makes the body modification a symbol of self-awareness and a decision. According to Kelso (2016), tattooing is also a significant sign of identity within gangs. The FBI estimate that 1.4 million gang members are criminally active in the US and Puerto Rico. Kelso notes:

“Gangs can be categorized based on their ethnic affiliation, their structure, or their membership. Gangs use unique hand signs and symbols, colors, clothing and tattoos, and other associated trade-marks to form a sense of identity within their individual groups. Though these identifiers may undergo revisions over time, the one constant seems to be the reliance on tattoos to establish gang identity.” (Kelso, 2016, p. 1)

Kelso says that, according to previous research, in many cultures tattoos are used as cultural symbols. This happens as well to many gangs that incorporate tattoos into their primary identifiers. The most popular types of tattoos of gang members are the area code tattoos to denote where the gang is located, teardrop tattoos and dot tattoos. Area code tattoos, for example are the numbers 817 (Fort Worth) or 213 (Los Angeles). More details about teardrop tattoos and symbols are explained by Kelso:

“The open and closed teardrops and also ‘half’ teardrop which is only half-filled in with ink to symbolize the fact that someone close to the wearer was killed and the wearer then killed the assailant. The dot tattoo meaning also varies from ‘Mi Vida Loca (my crazy life)’ to the symbol of a gang known as Los Vatos Loco. If connected, the dots form a triangle, originally the three dots were associated with Hispanic gang members but no longer have such monopoly over it. Tattoo meanings sometimes vary with the region also. Some Latino gangs sport tattoos on their foreheads, a prominent display of their gang affiliation and loyalty. As another form of identifier and communication, gangs also use graffiti which may include the gang’s name, a member’s nickname, a declaration of loyalty, threats against rival gangs or a description of criminal acts in which the gang has been involved.” (Kelso, 2016, pp. 1-2).

Kosut (2015) states that many social scientists have tried to explore the reason why tattoos are growing in popularity in the West nowadays. The answers are diverse, including that tattoos are becoming more socially acceptable in society, tattoos are effective tools to describe personality, they display social membership as well politics, and tattoos are effective at the micro and macro social level.

Doss and Hubbard (2009) found that tattoos had a degree of communication value. The rationale is that tattoos can convey messages to others such as what and who the characters of the tattoo wearers were. According to the research results, the tattoo bearers felt that the tattoos could show a specific message, for example, a person who wears a tattoo of the American flag felt he could be identified by others as a spirited patriotic person. Another example was a tattoo of a surfboard by which the wearer felt others would identify him as a person who likes surfing or seashore activities. To achieve the goal of communicating their identity and life story, they need to make sure that other people can recognise the tattoos. Therefore, the position of the tattoos determines whether messages can be read or seen by others. In the wider perspective, there is a political motive here, whereby the tattoo wearers intentionally have the motive of getting people's attention through their tattoos. For example, by placing the tattoos on the open areas of their bodies, the tattooed people hope their tattoos are seen or read, and the meaning can be interpreted by others. Doss and Hubbard (2009) add that, on the other hand, some people try to hide their tattoos as the tattoos for them are a means of personal reflection or inner dialogue.

In the cultural context, according to Kosut (2015), tattoos may be seen and experienced positively, but some people seem to underestimate tattoos, seeing them not as body modifications but as body mutilation. The previous term 'modification' indicates someone involved in reasoned self-modification or bodywork to a certain extent, while the term 'mutilation' shows a related behaviour with physical and mental illness and suffering. According to Pitts (2003), marking the body, both by tattoo and scarification, was assumed by others as a dangerous message of the individual's self, which related to his/her mental health, such as personality disorders, depression, or other psychological problems. On the other hand, for people who do not have mental illness, their body modification tends to be considered as a sign of psychological disorders, such as inclining to self-harm. Wohlrab, et. al (2007), however, found something contrary to the Pitts findings. They found that subjects with tattoos were considered healthier and physically more attractive than those without. This

is because general modifications are believed to increase attractiveness, and attractiveness reflects the quality of the partner. Increasing physical attraction through body modification, such as tattoos, is evident in a wide range of cultures and lately has become popular among Western people.

Swami (2012) explores the *self-image* and *self-concept* among the tattooed and non-tattooed individuals in *Personality Differences Between Tattooed and Non-Tattooed Individuals*. It is an interesting piece of research because it also explains how tattoos become a medium for someone to project his/her identity. Swami (2012) notes that in previous research about tattooing in the Western world, it was found that the main motivation for being tattooed was that people wanted to look different and unique in their appearance. Based on this case, Swami explored the extent of the relationship between the tattoos and the person's *self-concept*. In terms of the need for uniqueness, tattooed persons had a greater need than non-tattooed people. From the need for 'uniqueness' point of view, the tattoo is closely related to self-identity as "Tattoos are now used as a means of *self-expression* or construction of identity. Specifically, in societies in which the body is commodified increasingly ..." (Swami, 2012, p. 110). So it can be concluded that tattoos have influence on the physical aspect/appearance as well as being a means of personal identity.

In the context of contemporary culture, personal identity is related to personal narrative, which describes individual experiences, and which seems more complex than at 'first sight'. It lies in the everyday experience of personal stories. Personal narratives avoid too much intervention of "Formal structure, mass media or large-scale institutions and industries" (Finnegan, 1997, p. 67). Finnegan adds that personal narratives in general are linked to the question "*Who am I?*", whose answer relates to the identity of *the self*. This is why in the methodology of the research (Chapter 3) I explore tattoos through the subjects' personal narratives. Pitts (2003) adds that a tattoo as a means of communicating *the self* or personal narratives can be classified as a body project. In this concept the body is 'a space of self-expression' and it is part of 'self-identity'. Giddens (in Pitts, 2003) also describes how, in a body project, the body is "integral to the construction of a self," and the body is the centre of the self-narration and a way of communicating one's identity to others. From this perspective, tattoos as another form of body modification can be conceived as the "process of expression and reception" of meaning, or a "form of self-determination" in the context of contemporary life (Pitts, 2003). Sweetman (1999) says that the pain arising from body art activities, such as

tattooing, fulfils a sense of accomplishment and reflexivity. It means the pain is a way to gain self-satisfaction and a sense of self-identity. Interestingly, the concept of 'body projects' "appear to be productions of the self, but they are historically located in time and place and provide messages that can be read-only within a social system of organization and meaning" (Pitts, 2003, p. 31). This is in line with my research as it helps to understand the meaning of tattoos in the specific local community. However, there is a possibility of the practice of bricolage in which individual symbols may be borrowed from global visual vocabularies, but the collective set of images may be much more individualistic and bound to local culture, traditio, and beliefs.

It seems that body modification is a means of constructing personal identity. Atkinson (2003) proposed that it is necessary to question when and why someone chooses to change physical activity in the process of self-creation, redefinition and representation. Atkinson (2003) and Mun et al. (2012) suggest that the use of the body to present and represent identity is a basic deed in the social-communication process, and it seems like some kind of recognition. This can be the point of departure in studying tattoos, as tattooing can be seen as a source of constructing the identity. In body modification, the self confirms one's intention to be unique or different, to some degree, it is carried out for very personal reasons and the actions involved in getting oneself tattooed usually go through several different stages namely planning, receiving tattoos, and the process of recovery and treatment (Atkinson, 2003). Moreover, tattooing shows a 'subculture spirit' (Levine, 2003; Gelder, 2007; Copes and Williams, 2007; Winge, 2012).

The mainstream media and the public in general in Indonesia view tattoos among the *anak underground* as a symbol of a mischievous nature. The body project concept is advantageous because it can open up a new understanding to the wider society that in the context of the personal and social life of these underground scenes, the tattoos have contextual functions and meanings. The purpose of this study will be achieved if people, in general, come to know why in the community being studied, tattoos and tattooing have become part of its life. Contextually, tattoos' meanings and functions are narratively explored in my research. Pitts (2003) was concerned that the body project limits the self's ability to communicate the inner personal expression as it is affected by social and political pressures. This is reasonable because in modern Western perspectives, although tattooing is mostly celebrated, body projects still also receive stigmatisation. In Asia, for example in Japan, tattoos have long been

stigmatised for their association with organised crime gangs, the Yakuza, who initiate their allegiance with full-body tattoos. Therefore, anyone with ink, despite their professions, is mostly banned from visiting public swimming pools, hot springs, beaches, and even some gyms.⁷

2.4. Tattoos and spirituality

Spirituality includes mental and emotional aspects as well as social interactions (Jewell, 2003). From the view of Jankowski (2002) and Jewell (2003), it can be concluded that spirituality is different from religion or faith in God. Mathews (2009) notes that religion is just one way to express spirituality, and it is not essential to be a member of a faith group to have or to express spirituality. Yet, spirituality is the heart of religion. Shared rites, rituals, and religious traditions, such as worship, prayer, and dance, attract people to enter into the spiritual realm. Therefore, spiritual experience is different from religious experience. Mayo (2009) and Weinrach et al. (2004) note that a religious experience may include human beliefs and culture, while spiritual experiences go beyond what could be understood or conceptualised by the human mind. In some respects, a tattoo as a personal expression could be a part of spiritual implementation.

The link between tattoos and spirituality in Indonesia can be traced to the existence of local tattoo culture in tribal communities. The term *tribal* comes from the view of anthropology, used as an alternative to the term *primitive*. In this context, *tribal* includes hunter-gatherers and groups of people who produce food using simple technology (Keesing, 1989). One of the most well-known and adopted tribal tattoo styles by modern society are the tribal tattoos of the Dayak tribe. However, in addition to the Dayak tribe, tattooing culture is also found in various regions in Indonesia, such as Sumba and Mentawai (Rosa, 1994). Likewise, tattoos have been known for a long time as a custom in Timor (Riedel, 1907) and Rote (Van De Wetering, 1924). In the Indonesian context, it is important to take into account the spirituality and superstition perspectives to understand both the symbolism and motivation for some tattooing practices and imagery. This might come from the original aspect of Indonesian traditional tattoos which relies on the activity within the concepts of the macro and micro cosmos which are implemented into some rituals before getting tattoos.

⁷ Marsh et al. (2017) "Did Japan just ban tattoo artists?" <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/18/asia/tattoos-japan/index.html>

In past times in Borneo, women were both weavers and tattooists in their tribes. Tattoos in Borneo generally reflect their living environments such as their ethnic group, family and social status. Different ethnic groups have different designs, as there are dialect differences in the language they use. Kayan Dayak women have subtle tattoos on their hands that resemble lacy gloves (Krakow, 1994). Tattoos on the bodies of Kayan Dayak women are believed to be torches or lights in their later lives so that they will not stay in the dark. Moreover, Dayak women whose whole bodies are tattooed will be allowed to bathe in the *Telang Julian* River and will be able to take pearls from there, while women who are not tattooed can only stand on the banks of the river (Gilbert, 2000). According to Krakow (1994), Dayak warriors who lived along the waterways (Dayak Sea Warriors) who had beheaded people, had tattoos in the form of fine lines on both hands. With their experiences, they gained respect in their lives. Flat round flower-shaped tattoos on the shoulders or back (*Bunga Terung* or eggplant flower) indicated social class status in these tribes. An owner of a tattoo in Borneo would have a burden in their life afterwards if they acquired this kind of tattoo illegally, or by not completing certain requirements. It is believed that in the afterlife, they would be punished and labelled as an accomplished deceiver.

Tattoos in Mentawai, according to Rosa (1994), besides having a function as the tribal membership identity, were developed with local religions/beliefs, namely *Arat Sabulungan*. Mentawai's tattoo designs were not created to be applied to the body as a single or stand-alone motif, but were designed contextually for the whole body, starting from the face, neck, chest, back, ribs, abdomen, legs, arms, hands, fingers, hips, buttocks, thighs and shins. The overall design and motifs were created from lines, dots, crosses and other geometrical elements, as simple symmetrical forms, in the form of firm lines across the body, and were closely related to every part of the body and human anatomy. Rosa (1994) adds that Mentawai's tattoos have been known to have symbolic meanings as a conveyer of human's inner values, a sign of human connection with gods and ancestral spirits, and the eternity of life that transcends to the end of life. Tattoos were a unified representation of harmony and the closeness of the Mentawai people to nature. The Mentawai tribe viewed tattoos as something sacred and they served as a symbol of natural balance.

In Sumba Island, Saul (in Handoko, 2007) also mentions the relation of tattoos to the spiritual dimension. The tattoos were the men's identity when they entered the world of death, so they

would not die from burning. Meanwhile, for women, tattoos were a means of a transaction to buy goods to be cooked with fire. If they did not have tattoos, they would be denied entry into the realm of death (this belief may be taken from the beliefs of people on the Island of Timor). In the western part of Timor Island, indigenous tribes for centuries had the habit of regulating social relations and functions in a traditional way. One of them was using a marker of the tattoo. Riedel (1907) mentions that it was based on the local term *lula*, which was derived from the local sacred term, *luli* or *leu* which means holy. This tradition applied for hundreds of years before the arrival of the white people. The tattoos which were commonly found among the women were seen as a protection against evil spirits who wandered everywhere. Riedel (1907) notes that the tattoos depicted the symbol of the sun or a fire-making device, that the local people believed would be avoided by evil spirits as it is a symbol of the extraordinary power of fire, light and smoke. Fire, according to local belief, was a symbol of the street lighting at the time of death. The image of a fire instrument was set on a woman's chest in the form of grooves which looked like a yoni symbol. It was considered a secret place from which shines a productive force, fire or life. In *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago), this *yonis*, a pair of the phallus, were seen as symbols of female genitals. It is likely that this tattoo disappeared after Timorese women started wearing closed-shirt models, because at the time Riedel wrote this book in the early 1900s, the women there were already following a foreign way of dressing, one of which was to cover their chest.

The earliest researcher of tattoos in Rote was Wetering. In a book published in 1924, it was stated that the term for the tattoo in the Rote language was *balatete*, and tattoo images were called *balatetes*. Most residents of Rote, especially the women, had a tattoo. Until the beginning of the 20th century, tattooing in Rote had become a common act, because almost everyone got tattooed. The teaching of Christianity about life after death did not prevent them from using tattoos. *Gentio* people (non-Christians) believed that in life after death, tattoos could be used to buy food as people who had died also felt hungry and earthworms (*kalatik*) were a food source for the dead body. This food was bought from the ruler of the land (*Mani Dae*) or *Bai Dae*. Part of the tattoo image can be exchanged with the *kalatik*. Olong (2006) reveals that in the Belu tribe on the Island of Timor, tattoos on women were a symbol of beauty and a medium of attraction for the opposite sex. Because making tattoos was expensive and required ritual processes, tattoos then had prestige value. Women would be very embarrassed if they did not have tattoos because generally, men were only interested in tattooed women.

In contemporary society in Indonesia, there are some cases where the creation of tattoos is also associated with a spiritual aspect and religiosity (Handoko, 2007). In his research on tattoos among convicts in Yogyakarta, it was found that in prison, some Christians made tattoos in the form of images of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, as a symbol of repentance from sins. In connection with local Javanese belief, *Kejawen*, Handoko also found that someone had a tattoo on his penis, which was a green snakeskin motif, to gain the magical power of sex appeal. To achieve this goal, the convict performed prayers and rituals as recommended by his spiritual teacher, old man who lived in the Central of Java area. Another requirement was that he must make the tattoo himself. The tattoo, based on his confession, was working well because he could have four wives and all were satisfied with his sexual power. This is a compelling finding that I also explore further in this thesis, to identify the continuity in the development of tattoos from the traditional past to the modern Indonesian (Javanese) present, especially within the underground scenes in Surabaya and Sidoarjo, in East Java Province.

2.5. Tattoos and the stigma of criminality in Indonesia

Italian criminologist Lombroso attributed tattoos to the internal character of the criminal. He said that the same compulsion which made them commit crimes also made them take tattoos (Gilbert, 2000; Caplan, 2001), whereas the Frenchman Lacassagne explored the facts of tattooing through the structural conditions prevailing in prisons (Caplan, 2001; Angel, 2013). In England, Tattoos are one of the 'distinguishing marks' specified in the description of police records (Caplan, 1997). By the middle of the 20th century, tattooing was being seen as deviant (Sanders and Vail, 1989), and many of the US male prison populations are tattooed (DeMello, 1993). Some previous studies also mentioned tattoos in criminal gangs or cultures, such as Baldaev (2008) and Lambert (2003).

To develop this aspect, we have to understand what stigma is. The word is of Greek origin (Goffman 1986, pp.1-2), referring to “bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier”. Goffman (1986) divided stigma into the words ‘discreditable’ and ‘discredited’. Discreditable means that the stigma is invisible to the common people, such as homosexuality or any physical deficiencies that can be covered. The discredited are those which can be detected by plain sight or visually discovered. In this

perspective, criminality and any types of delinquencies are stigmas, as they are invisible. Unless we know someone who is a criminal, then the tattoo is indeed deliberately made to show affiliation to a criminal organisation. The stigma on tattoos in Indonesia cannot be separated from social and cultural experiences in that, initially in urban areas, tattoos were popular among the underclasses. In the Yogyakarta region, tattoos in the 1950s were only worn by street criminals and former inmates (Handoko, 2007). Marianto and Barry (2002) reveal the same facts that in Jakarta in around the 1960s and 1970s, tattooed people were former inmates. Their tattoos were created with rough techniques and generally in the form of writing. The tattoos were used as a means of showing courage and masculinity. Sometimes they were also used as a symbol of the group's identity. Prison tattoo equipment in the 1950s–1970s was made with several needles that were tied all together with a thread on a wooden stick match. As a pigment, they used *norit*, a poisoning prevention drug, made from sterile charcoal, which was diluted with coconut oil. In the 1970–1980s in Yogyakarta, there was a development where the tattooists began to get clients from foreign tourists who were visiting Yogyakarta besides their common customers, the under-classes. In their interactions with the tourists, they learned about how to deal and communicate with foreign customers. Sometimes there was a continuing correspondence between them. Some tattooists were so lucky that some of them got shipments of tattoo magazines from abroad.

In 1983–1984, there were events where tattooed people were killed and their bodies were found on the streets and public areas around some cities in Central Java. This event was known then as *Petrus* which stands for *Penembakan Misterius* (Mysterious Shooting) (Marianto and Barry, 2002; Siegel, 1998; Pemberton, 1994). At this time tattoos were linked to *Gali* (thugs or criminals). Psychologically, tattoos owners who were not criminals also got scared. They tried to remove their tattoos in various ways, such as by ironing them or using a chemical liquid. The number of victims of *Petrus* was hundreds of people. Most of them had tattoos on their bodies. In Yogyakarta, the first area of *Petrus*' operations targeted a famous *Gali* in the Suryoputran area named Wahyu. Marianto (in Marianto and Barry, 2002) knew this figure quite closely because he was often seen visiting his friend Wiwik Sadono. Wahyu died by being strafed by a group of unknown people using automatic rifles in the prostitution area in the east of the city of Yogyakarta. His body was left unattended. On the day of the funeral, it was said that most of the 'criminal' underclasses in Yogyakarta came to mourn.

According to the story circulating at that time, there was an undercover officer photographing everyone who came and were considered as thugs. The next day, they were killed in serial killings. The names of well-known petty criminals such as Slamet Gaplek, Irin, and several others died in the same way. These men were all tattooed. Knowing his brother's friend was killed, Aris, Wiwik Sadono's younger brother, ironed his hand to remove his tattoo. He was afraid of experiencing the same fate as Wahyu, being killed by a group of *Petrus* (Marianto and Barry, 2002). Throughout the same period, news in the newspapers featured photographs of *Petrus*' victims lying on the streets. This became common over time. The community then generally became permissive to *Petrus*' actions. Ironically, the thugs who were killed in 1983 were then recruited by the ruling regime to win the 1982 national election (Marianto and Barry, 2002; Siegel, 1998; Pemberton, 1994). When *Petrus* took place, the mass media did not highlight the crimes that were committed by the victims, instead, they tended to focus on their tattoos. Regarding this, Soeharto (Indonesian president during the New Order) said that the attraction of the tattoo was an indication or manifestation of the crimes. This proposition is a reminder of Lombroso's work that tattoos are related to crime (Gilbert, 2000). Uniquely, according to the news, many tattooed people came to the police station to ask for protection. This happened in the city of Bandung, West Java. Those tattooed people were worried about being hunted by *Petrus*, such as in Central Java (Marianto and Barry, 2002).

After the fall of the New Order in 1998, freedom and liberalisation were not only enjoyed by people at the political level but there was also freedom of expression among the urban youth who were likely to be more aggressive, reactionary and attractive in expressing themselves and their social environments. Tattoos began to spread among young people in the Punk, Rock and Black Metal communities as well as students (Olong, 2006). The outbreak of tattoos and tattooing activities were used as a symbol that was interpreted in various ways, for example just for fun, following the new trend among young people, rebellion expression, or a sense of art. Although the number of young people wearing tattoos was still limited to specific communities, the acceptance of tattoos in several major cities showed that tattoos and tattooing began to find their place at a better level than in the aftermath of the mysterious shootings in 1983.

According to Olong (2006), the growing acceptance of tattoos in Indonesia was caused by the increasing amount of audiovisual media that used tattooed models and celebrities in advertisements as well as music videos through the emergence of MTV in the middle of

1995. It created a new wave of lifestyles among youngsters. It also allowed the fans to easily see musicians like the Sex Pistols, Shinoda-Linkin Park, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Korn, and even local Indonesian artists who had tattoos. This triggered the fans to follow their way of having tattoos. The phenomenon of tattoos among young Indonesians, which grew massively from the late 1990s, showed that tattoos were no longer consumed only by criminals, artists, or performers but also by the wider community and individuals. The presence of MTV and other “Americanisation” products made many young Indonesians imitate their idols. An example is the popularity of American Indian films such as *Dances with Wolves* and *Last of the Mohicans*, which showed people with Indian tattoo imagery on their skin (Berman, 2016).

Olong (2006) mentions that (in the Indonesian context) teens tended to tattoo their body as expressions of protest and resistance. Step by step, tattoos were considered to be trendy and fashionable. However, some people who considered that their tattoos were part of a culture of rebellion also led to negative assumptions among conservative parts of society. According to Olong (2006), this negative assumption is still happening and is reinforced by various restrictions on certain religious teachings that consider tattoos to be illegal. In Indonesia itself, the social norms that apply in society also generally come from religious values. Thus, those who are seen to be violating the teachings or orthodoxies of religions are considered to violate the existing social norms. Hambali (2014), in his blog, wrote an article entitled “Suara Tato” (The Voice of Tattoo) which explained about how the term *Masberto* (the abbreviation of *Masyarakat Bertato* or The Tattooed Society), which was the title of a song by Marjinal⁸, popularised tattoos among the wider community, not only in the underground music scene. This song, which was produced in 2005, was criticised over the stigma of tattoos that were always associated with criminality. The content of the song told the story of the tattooed people who were rejected by the prospective in-laws, refused employment, and accused of being sinners. In this song, the listeners were told with the explanation that tattoos are not the cause of someone's evil acts. Anyone can be a villain, tattooed or not.

In this sense, people understand that tattoos among the anak underground are for self expression, and that more criminals and corruptors who have more negative impact on society are not tattooed, and tattoo owners use these reasons to defend themselves from others’ negative judgements. This may explain why the impulse to be tattooed is so strong even in

⁸ A punk underground music group. It is one of the most popular underground bands in Indonesia.

the context of public disapproval. Those tattoos, in some respects, stigmatise the owners as deviant. According to Olong (2006), until recently in conservative communities in Indonesia, young people were considered normal, handsome, and pious if they were neat and clean (not tattooed and pierced). All actions outside of these values were considered negative. Concerning this stigma, this study explores what the musicians and fans of underground music feel about the stigma and how they negotiate it.

2.6 Conclusion

Tattooing among musicians and fans of underground music has several points of view to be observed. Regarding tattoos as a part of the global tattoo culture, it can be examined from the perspective of global influences on the motivation to have tattoos, and whether there are links between the symbols found in the local underground scene with the ones that are universally known. It might be possible that some of the symbols have passed quite directly into Indonesian culture and subcultures. Many of the later bands, such as Metallica, performed in Indonesia in the 1990s to vast crowds who saw their body-image styles and then also went on to buy cassettes and CDs with the same imagery, supporting this argument. The ease of internet access since the mid 1990s and the emergence of MTV at that time and the circulation of foreign magazines and local magazines that discussed global tattoos and the intensity of communication and interaction between local punk, hardcore and metal groups with international music groups often increased the chances of exchanging symbols in tattoos. Yet, these perspectives raise a thought of whether it is so simple that every symbol created in the underground scene is always an effect of global influence as the tattoos, to some degree, might have personal meanings or values for the owners (Finnegan, 1997; Pitts, 2003; Atkinson, 2003). This is also an important factor to explore besides the aspect of “self-adjustment” in the process of interaction between individuals in a community. This is the basis for analysing the functions and meanings of the tattoos.

“Self-adjustment” customarily happens and sometimes because of certain circumstances and conditions people inevitably have to adjust to the conditions of their social environment. This was expressed by Gerungan (1991) who analysed that individuals always adjusted themselves to their physical, psychological and spiritual environments, often with the pressure of one or two of those aspects. Gerungan added that the process of self-adjustment means that people

are able to change themselves according to their social environments, but also sometimes they have an opportunity to change the social environments in ways they wish for. Gerungan called the first situation autoplasic (auto=itself, plastic=form), the second, alloplastic (allo=the other, plastic=form). Thus, the nature of the adaptation is passive and active. Likewise, among the members of the underground scene, there is a possibility of such adjustments. Personal interests and life concepts may also be influenced by the community, sometimes maybe subtly growing along with the group's activities that lead to 'familiarity', such as tattoos and tattooing, which then lead the self to the process of self-creation, redefinition and representation.

In the case of tattoos among the *anak underground*, there might be an 'imitation process' which, according to Tarde (in Gerungan, 1991, is a 'natural event' because the interactions are continuously carried out so that the attraction of the tattoos and tattooing become prominent in the scene, and it leads to an attitude of admiring this art of self-expression. This assumption is in line with the thoughts of Heard and Cultrara (2003) who revealed that some people made modifications to their bodies in accordance with their social environment and these became the implementation of their expressions of desire, and other aspects were because they liked what they had done and thought that others liked what they did. However, each tattooing activity and tattoo form also relates to the frame of reference and tattoo user's background of knowledge. As Chorus (in Gerungan, 1991) states, the process of imitation occurs if the subject understands the object to be imitated and that depends on the individual levels of intelligence and the structure of his/her personality.

As noted by Atkinson (2003) and Mun et al. (2012), tattoos and tattooing were the representation of identity, and as said by Marianto and Barry (2002), some people in Indonesia used tattoos as a means of showing one's courage and masculinity as well as the group's identity. These propositions can be explored further in the *anak underground* community. The alleged correlation between tattoos and symbols of both personal and group identity is coherent, and most likely, both are intertwined. The theory put forward by Feldman (1967) is still relevant, that aesthetic practice in the field of art includes the function theory in art, namely personal functions, social functions and physical functions. Personal functions are more towards self-expression, while social functions cover three aspects, namely exhibition, celebration or ritual, and communication. Physical function is more towards physical or structural benefits. It does not rule out the possibility that what was stated

by Feldman can be found in the function of tattoos among the lives of the *anak underground* because basically, all imagery is a language. For example, in the Yogyakarta Prison (Handoko, 2007), someone tattooed himself with a picture of a skull between cemeteries. This tattoo image was influenced by the psychological condition of the wearer who felt his life was already finished or useless. In this context, the tattoo communicated a message that the wearer had no more hope.

In conclusion, it can be seen that understanding each function and the meaning of the tattoo cannot be separated from the contexts of the wearers, because the frame of reference and background knowledge of each individual is also significant in determining the functions and meanings of the tattoos. In line with that, Miller (1997) observes that symbolism is a psychological language and tattoos are expressions of an individual's consciousness. Yet, in general, tattoos that are loaded with visual signs may lead to different views on the meanings of tattoos between the wearers and the observers. This argument is based on what Lodder (2010, p. 256) claims, that tattoos in the perspective of an "analytic re-evaluation of body arts", in some respect, are "not necessarily inextricable from their wearers; need not (to) be anchors of individual subjectivity, which means sometimes tattoos are not straightforward narrative expression". If we put Lodder's argument into a broader perspective, the possibility is that there are some aspects, besides personal narratives that motivate someone to have a tattoo. These factors are interesting in tattoos among the *anak underground*. One of the external factors is likely to be due to the increasingly globalised inter-cultural communication, which opens the possibility of 'convention' on the meanings of the images. The similarity of meanings of some objects, according to Rachmat (2003) could happen if there were similarities in the past or in cognitive structures which are referred to as *isomorphism*. The requirement for *isomorphism* is that the subjects come from the same culture, the same social status, and the same ideology. In other words, each individual has the same level of experience. However, the aspect of tattooing as an object of individual expression in this study still needs to be considered, because Rachmat (2003) adds that *isomorphism* never happened totally because there was always an individual meaning.

Then, with the prevalence of postmodernism, post-structuralism and feminism in Western academia, tattooing may be analysed with Foucault's and Barthes' discursive theories (Sullivan, 2001). This means tattoos and tattooing practice should be analysed from the perspective of textuality as they have a discursive nature of subjectivity, not only seen in the perspective of 'stigma'. Primarily, in Western social history, tattoos have been seen as

negative (Caplan, 2001) and, to some degree, still focus on the “nineteenth century’s criminologists perspective” (such as Lombroso and Lacassagne) who investigated and highlighted tattoos as one’s criminal expression as well as bringing the twentieth century psychologists’ point of view of tattoos through the lens of deviance issues or social disorder and corporeal decreases as shown by Angel (2013). Research on tattooing should consider the meanings beneath the surface which are influenced by affective aspects such as the nature of behaviour such as feelings, interests, attitudes, emotions and certain values. Vale and Juno (1989) describe how in some people body modifications are something rooted in one’s own personal experiences, ideology and mythology, yet most people, to some degree, still regard body modification as the depths of “masochistic sickness.

In the complex and dynamic human relations and interactions in contemporary social life, Grumet (in Sullivan, 2001) suggested that tattooing and tattoos should be understood in a certain way, which was later called the “dermal diagnostic” in which:

1. Tattoos are an individual’s affective expression and reaction which symbolises the self and represents identity.
2. Tattoos are an individual’s historical and archaeological artefacts in understanding the amount and the sequence of the tattoos on the body. Grumet (in Sullivan, 2001) explains about H-A-T-E tattoos on someone’s knuckles which indicates his past anti-establishment and anti-social symbolism but currently has a shift in meaning into “happiness-all-through-eternity.” This shows that the tattoo itself still remains the same yet the meaning can be changed (Sullivan, 2001, p.19)
3. The background to the creation of tattoos can include aspects of the social environment, relationships or other situations for example in prison, in a group or alone, or in a conscious state or not.
4. Tattoo placements represent psychological tendencies such as sexual perversions/fetishes and show that he/she is a prostitute if the tattoos are placed in the genital area or have criminal inclinations if the tattoos are put on visible areas. However, this fourth aspect was opposed by Sullivan because tattoos placed on open areas do not necessarily indicate an evil side or aggressiveness (Sullivan, 2001). However, the statement by Grumet cannot be said to be completely wrong because Lacassagne (in Kaplan, 2001) who had done a very long study and collected thousands of visual data revealed the same perspective. The cultural, social and political aspects that surround a person’s life might be the background for why the tattoo is

associated with violent passions. As Sullivan (2001) herself revealed, the reason a person acquires tattoos is a personal decision, so there might be certain reasons if people associate their tattoos with certain traits in them, for example their aggressive nature, because some of them may be experiencing social-psychological pressure which is then manifested in the form of tattoos. To prove this, Handoko (2007) who conducted research on tattoos and tattooing practice among Indonesian convicts revealed that tattoos and tattooing in some cases represented the rank of the criminal's organisation hierarchy which existed around 1980–1990. This means that today this practice might have disappeared and also the motive of the crime committed by the convict, for example the symbol of 351 which referred to article 351 of the Criminal Code concerning persecution in Indonesian law (Handoko, 2007). In the case of tattoo number 351, if analysed from the aspect of criminal tendency, as with Lombroso, the conclusions obtained clearly are that the tattoo is a representation of a passion of criminality.

This is also supported by Lacassagne's theory (in Caplan, 2001) that the placement of tattoos on the exposed part of the body indicates an aggressive and mischievous nature and this 351 symbol tattoo is indeed placed on the front of the neck so that it is seen by others. In this case tattoos must be understood in the context of discourse analysis to be fair. Handoko (2007) revealed that, according to the owner, this 351 tattoo was indeed related to a case that happened to him, but that does not mean he has a violent nature because when he committed the violence he was drunk. Thus this tattoo number 351, in a broader context, can be understood as a picture of a series of events that place a person in a situation where he cannot control himself (because he is drunk) and then commits acts of violence against another, is tried in a criminal court and then imprisoned. However the tattoo also benefits him in the context of life in prison. Everyone in prison knows the meaning of 351, so other prisoners who want to fight with him must think twice because he has a history of committing acts of violence.

Sullivan (2001) suggests that reducing the meaning of a tattoo to 'a sign' in a narrow spatial context, will make the meanings of the tattoos more flexible to understand. The importance of interpreting tattoos in the context of discourse, such as in the case of tattoo number 351, is in line with what is said by Juno (in Vale and Juno, 1989) that the tattoo is likely to be used as an expression of delinquency (in the context of life pressure or other experiences), however it

is not entirely that the tattoo is a translation of this evil trait: "there was a kind of rebellion involved even though this doesn't always manifest itself" (1989, p. 52).

Therefore, in the discourse context, the reasons why convicts have tattooed themselves in the prisons might not be, as the majority of people suggest, that the tattoos are the representation of an evil nature (Handoko, 2007). The convicts revealed that their tattoos are mediums of identity and art expressions, representations of spirituality and beliefs as well to express feelings of sadness, loneliness and belonging. For some convicts, tattooing is a means of 'membunuh waktu' which literally means 'killing the time' or a way of passing the time of boredom experienced behind bars. This function of tattooing is like to Lacassagne's data (in Kaplan, 2001) who conducted research among convicts in France around the 1880s.

5. Qualitative aspects such as accuracy, technique and balance, and tattoo size are also an indication of whether the tattoos have been done by professionals or beginner tattooists. Grumet (in Sullivan, 2001) called them artistic and jailhouse tattoos. Self-inflicted tattooing can be part of this issue as well, as sometimes people with anger, despair and disappointing situations tattoo their own body. Thus a dermal diagnostics approach considers that the meanings of tattoos have their objective and private discourses. The interpretations of tattoos may come from many perspectives such as medical and social relations (Sullivan, 2001) as well as expressions of 'individuality' (Vale and Juno, 1989; Sullivan, 2001) and the meanings of the tattoos are fluid. From Vale and Juno's perspective (1989), there are possibilities as well that people may have harboured their secret obsessions and feelings of uniqueness. Those body modifications, at some point, express those feelings as well as send a message to others that people need to enjoy themselves through being "attractively shocked".

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the way of collecting, analysing, and interpreting the research findings based on qualitative data and uses ethnography in the context of social science methods to collect it. The primary data have been captured in the initial and follow-up fieldwork research in Indonesia and the research was conducted through photography, audio recordings, and note-taking. Because the purpose of the research is to determine the functions and the meanings of tattoos in the context of the *anak underground's* social lives, then the most appropriate method is to use an ethnographic research approach. In this approach, the participatory perspective in seeing and interpreting a phenomenon is the focus of analysis. My fieldwork was based on Brewer's ethnography research definition by which the aims are 'to understand the social meanings and activities of people in a given 'field' or 'setting' (Brewer, 2000, p.11). The ethnographic component comes from participation in music events, gatherings, and visits to the target community in their homes and public places. Longevity of the research and intensive meetings are two approaches that I used to acquire what Brewer calls "intimate familiarity" with my research participants, as by employing these approaches I was able to capture the *anak underground's* social life meanings and understand what they think and feel.

According to the well-known Indonesian anthropology expert, Koentjaraningrat (1990), ethnography has been employed in Indonesia by the Western people for some centuries. They noted all the interesting phenomena encountered during their trips, including the customs, the composition of society, the language, and the physical characteristics of the tribes. Thus literally, ethnography means writing or reporting about a tribe by an anthropologist based on the results of field research or fieldwork conducted over months or years. Ethnography, both as report research as well as a research method, is considered the origins of science of Anthropology. Creswell (2013) explained that the root of ethnography lies in cultural anthropology. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, anthropologists studied "primitive" cultures through visits to other countries and struggled with their communities for long periods. They positioned themselves as 'being native' (indigenous people) and identified themselves very closely with the people they were researching, so they could write an objective story about what they saw and heard. At certain times, these stories were compared

with other cultures are far away on other continents, especially with American ways of life. For example, Margaret Mead, a prominent anthropologist, reviewed the care of children, adolescents, and cultural influences on personality in Samoa (Mead in Creswell, 2013).

In Indonesia during Dutch colonialism, some ethnographers, among them Snouck Hurgronje, were used by the Dutch to weaken Indonesian people and Islam in general. Orientalism, therefore, has a long tradition in the Western academic world. However, orientalism which has developed for decades or even hundreds of years tends to be used as a Western ideological tool to carry out hegemony and foster a new type of imperialism in the East, especially in the Islamic world (Hanafi, 2000). Consequently, there is a need for a new perspective in anthropological research in Indonesia which places Indonesian researchers on the research maps of their own cultures. However, the hegemony of Western thoughts on anthropological research in Indonesia is still strong. This hegemony can be shown in Koentjaraningrat's book entitled *Pengantar Ilmu Antropologi* (1990) which only introduces and explains anthropological theories from European anthropologists, with no mention of non-Western ideas. The enthusiasm for researching Indonesian culture from the perspective of Indonesians nevertheless continues to grow.

A female Indonesian anthropology expert, Ninuk P. Kleden (1999), in her scientific paper, claims that an ethnographic approach in qualitative research is needed to understand the specific concepts or values of a local community or group in Indonesia. In 1975 she researched the *Lenong* theatre. At that time, the study was considered successful, because the result was quite valid, according to the statistical formula. However, at one time, she felt that it was quite strange that such research only led to statistical testing. The feeling of hearing the *gambang kromong*, enjoying jokes that were considered pornographic by 'the good people', as well as to feel the suffering of the *panjak* (male performers) and *ronggeng* (female performers) – who were always considered as a group of people who must be shunned by the wider society because their 'free lifestyle' was considered beyond the social norms or negative – was lacking. The qualitative result could explain the meanings of the narrative and the show as a whole better than the quantitative approach. Moreover, she said that if we believe that feelings expressed in various forms were the manifestations of the mind, then it was the mind that must be studied. In the West, this anthropological research approach can be found in Levi-Strauss' *structuralism*, or Mary Douglas' *symbolic anthropology* (in Kleden, 1999).

There are two modes of knowledge that have different positions, namely nomothetic and idiographic. The nomothetic science works in general propositions, while idiographic emphasises uniqueness (Kleden, 1999). Thus, there are two basic methods in science, namely *Erklären* (explanation) and *Verstehen* (understanding). Subjective idiographic knowledge is clearly distinguished from objective nomothetic. Even though it is subjective, with methodological accountability, it can be validated. “Reality” is approached through understanding the signs and the objects that were observed. In terms of testing, the approach is through interpretation. In this method, the researcher has to be able to manage the rhetoric and ensure that the interpretation is valid. For example, Kleden (1999) gave an example of a teenage girl who misinterpreted a smile of a young man as an expression of love, not realising that the man did it to show politeness. In my research, therefore, I did not use a quantitative approach, for example by distributing questionnaires via e-mail or the internet. Although this method has advantages, such as being able to reach a very wide number of respondents, there is no direct interaction, and so there are several things that are likely to be missed. For example, the questions will not be understood by the respondents, and it can lead to the possibility that the respondents are not the ones being targeted by the researcher (Darmadi, 2011).

As a conclusion, the feeling aspect cannot be underestimated, because it is the basic material to be able to understand ‘something’, which has a role in determining behaviour in the face of ‘something’ (Kleden, 1999). Creswell (2013) mentions how to present analytic procedures of ethnography. First is the description. It becomes the initial stage for ethnographers in writing reports and presents the results of their research by describing in detail the object of the research. Second is the analysis. In this stage, ethnographers find some accurate data regarding depictions of the object of research. It can be through tables, graphs, diagrams or models. In this stage, the ethnographer explains patterns or regularity of behaviours, comparing objects of research with other objects and evaluates them with the common values. The other way is an interpretation which becomes the final stage of data presentation in ethnographic research.

The ethnographer uses the first personal pronoun in their explanation, to confirm that the research is purely the result of their interpretations and then provides structure for these interpretations by theorising it. An example is what was done by Haenfler (in Creswell, 2013)

who applied a critical perspective to these analytic procedures of ethnography in the Straight Edge community. He provides a detailed description of the straight edge core values as well as the individualized and collective meanings for participation in the subculture.

3.1. Collecting data

Referring to the research problem in my preliminary research, I specified the subject of the study using purposive and snowball sampling approaches. Participants were selected for these particular characteristics: they were actively involved in underground music performances as musicians, fans and sometimes as observers. The way I found them all was through visiting music studios. There, I saw the list of bands' practising schedules which hung on the wall. Then I tried to ask the people in the studio about which Metal bands on the list were popular in Surabaya regions. Then in the following days, I returned to the music studio according to their practising schedules. That was when I made initial introductions to them. Another way was by contacting my colleague who was a tattooist in Surabaya. I asked him for some names of people who were active in the underground music scene. Also, in February 2013, I worked with my students, and one of them had a tattoo, and he called himself an *anak punk*. Through this student, I happened to meet his colleagues. The other main criterion of the selected participants was that they had tattoos.

However, this research was also open to participants who did not have tattoos but were underground musicians and fans. Thus, I would have a chance to explore a broader range of practices of an embodiment to provide a contextual balance to my views of practices in the underground music scenes. The most popular places for gathering or socialising with this group were chosen as the sites of the research, namely cafes, music studios, gigs, tattoo studios, and music stores in the city of Surabaya and Sidoarjo. These are the primary sites of ethnographic work. In addition to the field observations, I also did in-depth interviews and took some photographs. I only used the close-up ones for analysis.

In my fieldwork, I conducted a participant-as-observer approach by gathering, discussing, and conveying my questions personally and in the forum; following their activities such as watching closely the tattooing process in some studios, houses, and in the outdoors; and accompanying several bands to some musical performances as a member of the bands – for instance helping them to transport their music equipment and taking pictures for their

documentation. These methods made it easier for me to be accepted in the underground music community because I was known before I went further into the scene. Interestingly, some of them were very enthusiastic to see me in the gigs as they thought their performances would be broadcast in the UK right away. In these situations then I was participating as a member of the audience and in more specific ways. In Brewer (2000), this method is described as “participant observation” in which the researcher observes daily activities of informants in “their natural setting: watching, observing, recording and talking to them to discover their interpretations, social meanings, and activities.” (p.59).

I got 51 musicians and fans of Punk, Hardcore, Metal (Metalcore, Death Metal, Black Metal), and Ska (rude boy), of which 39 people had tattoos and 6 others did not, as my participants. I did interviews using an audio recorder or made notes if they declined to be recorded during the conversations. In the interviews with 6 other people, for privacy and technical reasons, I could not do recording, or take photographs or notes at the location. After the interviews, I asked them to fill out a statement of willingness and consent that the information that was given including their profile and tattoo pictures could be used for research and published. I used Bahasa No. (Indonesian language) in the consent form in my preliminary research to minimise misunderstanding, mistranslation and misinterpretation as, according to Banks (2001), the consent has to be understood in a socially or culturally appropriate context. Wiles et al. (2008), based on the British Sociological Association Visual Sociology Group’s statement of ethical practice, says that consent is important, both for participation and for the ways and forms the visual data collected will be used, and the most important one is that participants have to be informed so they understand the content (Mitchell, 2012).

Two years after my preliminary field research, I visited my research sites once more. My purpose was to investigate whether there had been any changes in the meanings of tattoos over a period of time. I met 12 respondents of whom 10 were former participants; the other 2 were new ones. One of the new ones was a founder of *Underground Tauhid*, a conservative underground Muslim group that promotes the practice of Islamic law in daily life, especially among the underground scene. The other was an underground musician who became a professional tattooist. My purpose in meeting the founder of *Underground Tauhid* related to findings that some of the *anak underground* had decided to be more religious in their daily life. Even some of the male participants married conservative Muslim women. One of the underground musicians, a woman, also decided to resign from the world of underground after

learning about Islam in more detail. *Underground Tauhid* is also active in social media and has printed publications.

The emergence of local Muslim groups within the underground scene and some conservative ideas that spread through mainstream and localised media affected the underground musicians and fans' perceptions of their habits and life concepts. Although these issues are an interesting subject of research, my focus is not primarily on this phenomenon. This religious aspect needed to be understood to some degree, as in my preliminary research findings it appeared as an important theme. In Indonesia, music has played a role in spreading religious messages. Since the beginning when Islam entered the *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago) in the 13th century AD, the formulation of Islamic *dakwah* (the activity of educating Islamic teachings to other people) in the Nusantara synergises actively with realistic conditions of the local culture by acculturating with local wisdom. Within this framework, The Wali Songo who are revered as *the nine saints of Islam* (especially on the island of Java) had a role in spreading Islamic teachings in Indonesia, knowing that Javanese people were strongly influenced by Hindu-Buddhist religions. To attract attention, they used art and music. For example, one of the Wali, Raden Sa'id, later known as Sunan Kalijaga, structurally converted Gamelan, a local musical instrument of Javanese society, to the introduction of Islamic doctrine. The song 'Kalimosodo' introduced by him has been manifested as a religious song that is still sung today (Mas'udi, 2015). In contemporary society, the role of music *for dakwah* continues. In the 1970s – 2000s, Dangdut music was used by the King of Dangdut, Rhoma Irama, with his Sonata music group to spread Islamic values through their songs. Rhoma Irama's conception in music preaching had momentum on 13 October 1973. At that time, Rhoma Irama along with seven other Sonata's members vowed that their music was built on the principle of *Amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*⁹ (Mack, 1995). Since then, religious music has become popular among Indonesian citizens and many singers follow the Rhoma Irama's path to spread Islamic teachings through kinds of music.

In this study, my data collection technique is divided into emic and negotiation approaches.

a) Emic data

⁹ The meaning is "commanding the good and forbidding the evil".

Snape and Spencer (2003) describe it as the 'emic perspective' which means the research aim is to understand the perspective of the people or information provided directly by the participants. In this stage, I am exploring the participants' social lives and providing a holistic perspective analysis in context to find their frames of meaning. This data is often referred to as first-level concepts (Schwandt in Creswell, 2012), which are in the form of local languages, thoughts, and ways of expression that are shared or used jointly by the participants. The categories which emerged during the research process included the essential aspects of how to manage tattoo production within the underground scene, including the tools used in making tattoos, the types of tattoo artists involved in the tattoo production, motivation or not to get tattoos, tattoo positioning on the body, as well as the tattoo themes. The selection of images shown in the subsequent analysis is based on several categories. I stored each category in the form of a file in the folders on my computer. The advantage of the method of categorising the data based on the process of research is the flexibility in determining the tattoos' categories. The disadvantage is that there might be some potential tattoo categories that have not been touched upon, due to time constraints in this research or technical aspects of the data collection such as the difficulty of getting samples of Black Metal musicians. Thus, in this group, I have not been able to identify the functions and meanings of tattoos in this community/scene. This weakness also raises the potential for continuing research on tattoos among Black Metal musicians so as to answer the question of the extent to which tattoos are related, possibly not only in the aspects of their social interaction and identity but also with their ideology as local Black Metal. Information in the form of interpretations of researchers is made in accordance with the perspectives of the participants. This data is often referred to as second-level concepts, namely expressions or terminology that researchers use to express the same phenomena as those expressed by participants (Schwandt in Creswell, 2012: 471).

b) Negotiation data

Information that is mutually agreed upon by participants and researchers is used in research. Negotiations can occur at different stages during the research, such as when agreeing to procedures for entering a research location, mutual respect, and developing a plan to provide the information again.

3.2 Case studies

To get the results of deep analysis, in the discussion of tattoos concerning *anak underground's* social, culture, politics, economy and other aspects of their lives, there were six selected respondents used for case studies. Hammersley (in Brewer, 2000, p. 76) said that a case study is “any phenomenon located in time and space about which data are collected and analysed”. Case studies are defined by the focus on the instance of the phenomenon, not by the method used to study it. In simple words, Robert Stake (in Brewer, 2000, p.76) explained that a “case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of object to be studied”. The selection of six respondents for my case study is based on:

- a) Easy access to communicate directly with respondents after the first and second phases of field research. In this case, I can continue to greet them and discuss any recent issues via Facebook, or through WhatsApp Messenger.
- b) The case study subjects have enduring and prominent life experiences in the underground music scenes or are actively involved in them. It determines who is an appropriate subject in the case study. On average, they have been active in the underground scenes since adolescence (age 15-18 years).
- c) The subject has more than two tattoos on their body.
- d) Each respondent may represent scenes in the underground community.

As there are so many genres of music styles in the underground communities, my subjects at least can represent some of the genres in the underground music scene. I decided to choose some musicians of Thrash Metal, Punk, Hardcore, and Metalcore (a mixture of Metal and Hardcore). There is also a Grunge vocalist who is trying Blues, and the rest are fans. The compositions of the case study subjects were three males and two females of whom three were musicians, one a Punk social activist, and one a tattooist. Unfortunately, in the composition of a case study subjects, there were no Black Metal musicians. In my field research, I had technical obstacles to get information about tattoos in the Black Metal scenes because, at the time of doing field research, I found it difficult to find musicians or fans of Black Metal music that had tattoos. There was one person, but he was rather difficult to meet and communicate with. Based on his acquaintance, my Black Metal's non-tattooed informant named Sipit, who was also a Black Metal activist in the city of Sidoarjo, said that the prospective respondent did not want to meet me at that time as he wanted to investigate me

first through information from his friends before deciding whether or not to be involved in my research. Other technical obstacles were that generally Black Metal musicians and fans did not have tattoos. Twice, I attended the Black Metal gigs and I did not find tattoos on the bodies of the Black Metal musicians nor the fans. According to Sipit (interviewed on 22 July 2013), the theatrical stage performances took precedence over the tattoos. Their costumes and make-up became the stage power of Black Metal musicians, not the skin decorations. Sipit revealed that in the area of Sidoarjo city, the Black Metal performed the local characteristics of Javanese occult traditions, such as before starting the musical performance the musicians prayed certain incantations while lighting incense and also gave offerings in the form of flowers to a certain mystical power. In Javanese tradition, this is called *sesajen*. This local mystical theatrical and artistic side is more emphasised, not the tattoo. Nevertheless, the inverted cross symbol of Western Black Metal identity still exists on the stage and in their costumes. This is an example of “East meets West” traditions.

3.3. Data analysis and interpretation

Analysis, according to Brewer (2000, p. 105) is “the process of bringing order to the data, organizing what is there into patterns categories and descriptive units and looking for relationships between them”. For a case study, the analysis is a detailed description of the case and its setting. In data analysis, each case study is presented in several variables/categories which include how they got the first tattoo or their first motivation to tattoo. These variables/categories help researchers to find out what aspects could make a person who does not initially have a tattoo choose to tattoo. Secondly, variables/categories are related to certain functions, which are personal and social functions of the tattoo. To get a valid analysis, the steps which are taken are:

a) To describe and analyse each variable/category per case study independently and draw meaning from it without looking for multiple instances. To get an independent understanding of each of these variables/categories, a narrative approach is used. In the narrative theory perspective, the search for meaning in an event based on one’s life experience centred on *who we are* or *what do we think of ourselves*. Hardy in Vale and Juno (1989) said that the motivational and emotional lead some people to acquire tattoos. There are stories and the narrative conceptions of selfhood. The role of the researchers is to reveal the meanings of those tattoos. Oksanen and Turtiainen (2005) use the tattoo narratives approach to analyse

the tattoo portraits phenomenon as a form of self-expression and body politics in a tattoo magazine. They analysed that the meanings of tattoos varied from self-adornment to a narrative structuring of life history and identity protection. Hardy (1991) emphasises that tattoos are the medium of individual's art expressions and are used to plot life stories. Thus the narrative approach is like the autobiographical aspect of tattooing, which refers to the way that tattooed subjects tell their life through their tattoos.

In narratives method, the researchers noted all phrases which had been spoken by the owners of the tattoos, and then the researchers conducted an analysis of what the tattoo wearers said to the magazine. However, in my opinion, the narrative analysis which was conducted by Oksanen and Turtiainen (2005) has a certain inadequacy as it was based on a particular one-time context, namely the opinion of the owners of the tattoos at the time the interviews were conducted. Lodder (2010) criticised Oksanen and Turtiainen's narrative approach analysis based on interview data sources in this magazine which only spoke of a direct and singular subjective narrative. I agree with Lodder's view because Oksanen and Turtiainen missed one important thing to discuss, that meaning can change at any time (Lodder, 2010). It is like Kosut (2015) found, that the meanings of tattoos are "formed and reconstructed as individuals participate in daily life" and shift within a spectrum of stigma and fashion. This is my concern about how tattoos need to be understood in different contexts of space and time. To solve the problem with the subjectivity, I make comparisons per variable/category from several cases (see section b).

Some literature reveals that to interpret an object/work of art, one must pay attention to several aspects, namely social, cultural and political, along with economic situations and circumstances where the object is made or currently exists. From the perspective of narrative approach analysis, according to Bamberg (2010), everybody not only has a life story but also has the right to tell or share it. So this is more about how much we understand the concept of 'ourselves' and 'our actions'. Understanding these two things produces an understanding of the meaning of ourselves in a broader perspective, e.g. associated with the situation where we live (the social environment), our role in it, and so on (Bamberg, 2010; Lodder, 2010). Bamberg (2010, p. 3) adds that the whole story of ourselves lies mostly in our current and past life moments: "The stories that in such cases would connect our years before and after that point in time would probably drastically differ: they most likely would mark ourselves as

discontinuous”. It means the possibility of change in looking at the self or "who we are". This is the point of the narrative approach.

The benefit of using the narrative approach is to minimise the unintentional attempts to decontextualise and obscure the meaning of events that surround the respondents themselves, which have the possibility of influencing or forming the self-concept of who they are. In Mishler’s (1986) perspective, capturing the meaning of narratives that fit in the context of one's self is an important point, because the respondent is a representation of a larger socio-cultural production, and the body which is part of the self is the basis of personal narratives (Atkinson, 2003). According to Clandinin and Connelly (in Ellet, 2011) narrative inquiry is a way of understanding lived experiences and they often refer to their work as stories of experience. Ellet adds that narrative is considered both the phenomenon and the method; fundamental to the narrative inquiry are the beliefs that stories give implication to people's lives, and the stories are treated as data (2011). This approach leads to tattoos’ functions as points of reference or maps that enable life stories to be told. There are four aspects of tattoo functions relating to this approach:

1. A tattoo is the visualisation of subjectivity which means tattoos are references or maps that enable life stories to be told (Ellet, 2011).
2. The perspective that the tattoo is a reflective body project. This is based on the phenomenon that when someone experiences dramatic changes in life, they gain new tattoos on their bodies. Those new tattoos, as Oksanen and Turtiainen (2005) remark, are examples of Pitts's term of a cathartic process, in which tattoos signify a new life, replacing the old one. On the other hand, tattoos can be used merely to impress others. Moreover, there is also a function of tattoos that has relation to the case that the tattoos give a sense of security to the wearer, spiritually and mentally. This is called “shields of subjectivity” (2005). For instance, certain figures are believed to give protection to the wearers, bring peace of mind, and some others represent masculinity.
3. Tattoos as a medium of abnegation. The pain in the process of tattooing for some tattoo lovers is seen as a form of acupuncture. It relaxes the body and mind and makes the wearer feel more comfortable (2005).

b) Make comparisons per variable/category from several cases. The results of this comparison will enrich the analysis because researchers can describe in depth the similarities

and differences in each variable/category. The purpose of this comparison between variables/categories is to establish patterns and look for correspondence between two or more variables/categories. This is a form of cross-variable or synthesis category. This method can be traced in many aspects and dimensions. Brewer (2000) adds that interpretation involves attaching meaning and significance to analysis, explaining the patterns, categories and relationships. The meaning of tattoos may change according to the context of space and time on people's points of view, so pictures or images are arbitrary or subjective (Pink, 2003) but Bank's representations to some degree stand for the thing being depicted (Banks, 2001). Thus he suggests using both internal narrative, or visual self-representation (image story) and external narrative (image as the product of social relations) as the method of analysing the pictures.

The cross-variable or synthesis category also needs to be supported by multiple methods of data collection, in the form of literature and other data that can strengthen the arguments presented, for example, the tracking of certain tattoo symbols based on aspects of distribution or use outside the underground scene, both regionally nationally, and internationally. Martin (2013) in his research *Tattoos as Narratives: Skin and Self* explored the polysemic nature of contemporary tattoos by comparing tattoos' meanings given by the wearers, with the meanings which can be imputed to them through cultural history and semiotics (2013: 9). This is described as *referencing* which provides intellectual authority on the referencing attributes (by comparing) of similar symbols (Martin, 2013). This minimises the researcher's subjectivity and the lack of important information from the respondents relating to their tattoos. This is called a triangulation method which can check, for example, "the accuracy of what participants have said" (Roulston, 2010, p. 55). Hence I conducted my research into two periods and also always communicated with my participants through Facebook and WhatsApp as I lived in England while they were in Indonesia.

Research longevity is also a key aspect of getting valid information. This is done to minimise the meaning of tattoos from a singular perspective because the meaning can change with time (Bamberg, 2010; Lodder, 2010; Pink, 2003). Roulston (2010, p. 55) says: "Longevity in the field allows researchers to verify the stability of participants' reports and sequent analysis (data triangulation)". This is the reason why my preliminary research took 7 months and my second field research was 2 months. I spent time with participants to discuss not only tattoos but also their current lives, visiting more gigs, and hanging out with them. From these

activities, I obtained a lot of information about tattoos and the tattooing process. Different sources used in the triangulation approach improve the relations between *analysis* and *reality* to find the truth (Brewer, 2000).

c) Make generalisations to get the whole comprehensive perspective of tattoos among musicians and fans of underground music in Indonesia and how internal and external aspects determine the production of tattoos. The result of the study explores the role of tattoos in the process of identity-making and how social and cultural structures construct tattoo meanings and functions. This is the role of representation methods which can be the paths of any possibility of interpretation. The methods depend on the researcher's exploration of any kind of information on the social, cultural, even political issues that emerge before and during the production of the tattoos or exploring the changing meaning that can happen because the life experiences that are faced by the tattoo wearers are apparent (Goulding et al., 2004; Mun et al., 2012).

Tattoos can be treated as representation materials, as they are subject to social, cultural and individual significations. Yet to discuss the meaning of tattoos, we also have to consider the role of the tattooist in the process of tattooing as described in Chapter 2 (Tattoo Practice), because during the interviews, it was discovered that the owners of the tattoos could not explain the symbolic meanings of the tattoos because they entrusted the selection of the objects or images of the tattoos to the tattooists. This is confirmed by Lodder (2010), who says that there is disambiguation in the roles of the maker and wearer of tattoos in meaning production. For example, at the beginning of the field research and in interviews, I often simply asked them what were the meanings and functions of their tattoos. My initial thought was that every tattoo must have been made with a purpose and had a clear concept so that the respondents would be able to describe the tattoos' meanings clearly and in detail without taking time. In reality, it turned out that most of them often had difficulty in explaining the basic concepts of the tattoos that they had. Some even said that the tattoo concepts were derived from the tattooists, not from them.

I realised that a deeper contextual study would be necessary as, according to Lodder (2010), tattoos are intersubjective textual forms. The variety of questions needed to be carefully prepared before doing the field research, and sometimes we have to be more creative to dig information from them. Thus I had to realise and understand the relationship between the

tattooist and the client and how the communication structure was built between them. People sometimes aren't ready for the narratives about their tattoos when asked (DeMello, 2000). On the other hand, tattoo researchers try to find the meaning of each of these tattoos (Lodder, 2010). Thus researchers are sometimes fixated on just one side issue, that tattoos *must* have certain meanings because they are attached to the body. Then if the role of the body is eliminated, is the tattoo still meaningful?

The value of subjectivity, on the one hand, is inherent in tattoos because tattoos are the result of one's life experience. On the other hand, the tattooist had a role in the production of meanings in tattooing practices among the *anak underground*. Therefore, understanding tattoos should go through certain channels of subjectivity and inter-subjectivity. However, there are other aspects that should be understood. For example, what if the tattoos are inspired by images from magazines, food packaging or popular cartoon objects such as Mickey Mouse or Popeye? This is what Lodder (2010) calls a tattooing discourse. As a result, the questions that arise in the interviews are not only focusing on the meanings of the tattoos but on the backgrounds for someone to have them. This question will open up opportunities to understand tattoos from various perspectives, knowledge bases and contexts.

3.4. Methodological reflection: research journeys

3.4.1. Initial preparation

From February to September 2013, preliminary research was undertaken. This was the first field research activity that I had ever conducted in the community of the *anak underground*. In my preparation, sometimes I still felt worried, especially about my ability to adapt or mingle with the local community, namely the *anak Punk*, Hardcore and Metal in the cities of Surabaya and Sidoarjo, East Java. I perceived that their lifestyle was different from mine, as well as our mindset and habits in social interactions. The language was not the main issue because I knew local languages as I had been living in the suburbs of Surabaya since 2001. Mastery of local languages for a researcher is advantageous in collecting data. Another problem was due to the very large area of Surabaya, so I had never visited several areas in this city. In general, my daily activities were teaching on campus in the Waru area, on the border of Surabaya and Sidoarjo. I rarely roamed the city of Surabaya because in addition to

its large scope, it was also very hot during the day and the traffic was very heavy. Physically, I quickly got tired when riding on a motorcycle in such circumstances. This was a challenge for me at that time. Hence, I prepared myself to routinely take vitamins and bring medicines during the field research, including anti-cold medicine. Other key points at the beginning of the field research were preparing cameras, pens, pencils, tape recorders, papers, and some important books to support the research activities. I also needed to get a raincoat because from February to March 2013 was the peak of the rainy season at that time. Moreover, the readiness of my motorcycle was a priority because some areas of Surabaya sometimes experience flooding, so I also prepared my motorcycle by having it serviced in the motorbike workshop.

3.4.2. In the field

In the early days before visiting the community and individuals, I tried to find out about the *anak underground* communities in Surabaya via Facebook. There were several community names and underground bands there. On Facebook, I observed their conversations about gathering locations, gigs, and other activities. Generally, they gathered and socialised after practising music in the studio, or in the evenings or weekends they hung out at a café or coffee shop. Some also gathered at the production sites or shops of underground music merchandise, and friends' houses. Then I visited several music studios in the Prapen area, Surabaya, around the Sidoarjo bridge, and the Sidoarjo stadium. I also visited cafes and several coffee shops where I stayed for some time to make observations. From the first until the third week in February 2013, I was still making observations accompanied by my friend, Njet, who was a Blues musician. I became acquainted with Njet, an amateur singer in a small Blues band, in early February 2013, when I saw a student at my university wearing a 'Punk' tattoo on his fingers. His name was Anthony. I became interested in the tattoo and asked him whether he was a Punk musician. He answered no; he was just a fan of Punk music. With him at that time was Njet, who suddenly asked me whether I was interested in seeing underground music performances. He said that at the gigs I would see many young tattooed underground men and women, not just Punk. Njet knew the musicians quite well or had heard their names so that when someone greeted us and approached to talk, Njet could play a role in covering up my unfamiliarity of the conversation topics so that our presence did not invite excessive attention. Closed observation to understand the field research settings and possible obstacles and other disturbances, did not always go well.

Once in the music studio, when I was doing an observation alone, the studio guard asked me who I was looking for. He had seen me visiting a music studio twice but only looking at posters and the practice schedule boards and also sitting in the lobby reading the music magazines. I responded to him by telling him that I wanted to meet and talk with the underground musicians. He advised me to meet them shortly after they had finished practising. Then I wrote down their schedule and the names of the bands and musicians. From some information on Facebook and music studios, I had been able to guess who I would contact later for field research activities. In the field research, the presence of a liaison or informant is very important. For example, when I was with Njet, my presence was considered normal because they had seen Njet before on the scenes and gigs, even though sometimes they never spoke directly to him.

One time in March 2013, I was observing by myself, without Njet, in a café in the Rewin area, Surabaya. On my first visit, I felt an uncomfortable atmosphere when I entered the cafe. Apart from only a few visitors, the waiter also seemed reluctant. He and some visitors were suspicious of me. In the initial conversation, with a smile, the waiter immediately asked what my purpose was in coming there. That was strange. On other occasions I visited a café, the first question was usually whether I wanted to order drinks or food, not about my purpose for being there. At this initial meeting, I did not conduct any interviews at all. I just sat down and listened to their conversation and got acquainted with these new people. On my second visit, I invited Njet to come with me. His presence was very helpful in melting the awkward atmosphere because even though he had never spoken directly to them, his insights about music and issues around local and regional underground music were prominent. This made the conversation become interesting.

After the third meeting, I began asking questions about whether I could interview them and take photos and join them on their tour in Surabaya and Sidoarjo. Regarding their initial suspicion of me, I heard from Njet that one of the band members who often hung out in the café was being jailed for illegal drug consumption. Thus they suspected new visitors as being undercover police. From my initial observations, I began to realise that the success of my research would be enhanced if I was accompanied by those who already understood the ins and outs of the world of underground music. I needed informants and friends who could accompany me on my research trips to these communities. These informants would make my

field research more effective because they were the factor that speeded up my acceptance in these groups. The key informant can lead the researcher to the right target. Another benefit is that they can provide a good description of what kind of situations the researcher would face, and the possibility of obstacles the researcher should be aware of.

To illustrate my working practices, below is an example of working with one particular informant. In early March 2013, I found a very active person on Facebook and an underground website. Then, I tried to contact this Punk musician whose name was very well known in Surabaya. I refer to him as BD. According to Njet and some *anak Punk*, BD was one of the first Punk musicians in Surabaya. His band was very famous because of BD's financial strength. BD's appearance was also very impressive. If other Punk kids wore cheap clothes, he was different. All of his items were branded and expensive. It was understandable as BD was the son of a wealthy family, and his father was also a high-ranking military officer. However, even though he came from an elite family, BD had high loyalty to the Punk scene, some people said. This is why, at that time, BD was named as one of the Punk icons in Surabaya. Perhaps he was the only one who raised Punk's profile within elite society.

The day before the meeting, BD texted me via SMS. He said he needed "fresh money", an amount of Rp. 200,000. I told him I could not lend him money because I still needed it for research expenses. I was worried at the time that if I refused to lend him money, he would cancel the meeting. Yet, this proved not to be the case. On Saturday, in the third week of March 2013, I prepared to go to the place where he used to hang out with his friends. He gave me an address near the port of *Tanjung Perak*. On that afternoon the rain was very heavy, I decided to postpone the meeting because generally after the rain, some areas in *Tanjung Perak* tend to get flooded. But BD said that the area where we would meet was not flooded. Finally, after the rain subsided, I headed to *Tanjung Perak* on my motorbike. When approaching the location, I was surprised because the area was flooded with knee-high water. I contacted BD and said that the location of our meeting was swamped. He laughed and said that if I didn't meet him tonight, then it was likely I would not have another chance to meet him for some weeks because he would be so busy.

After all, he had asked his other friends to come. Possibly, they would be disappointed in me if I cancelled the meeting. I decided to go on and because I could not ride on my motorbike through the water, I guided my motorcycle through several housing blocks. Later I found my

motorbike was breaking down because of the flood. Arriving at the meeting place, an old house with many rooms, I was welcomed. To my surprise, at the meeting, I met some members of the bands; there were also several music fans who also gathered. In one room, I heard the sound of a tattoo machine. After I went inside, there was a middle-aged man who was tattooing someone using a very simple hand-made tattoo machine. I was very happy to see the tattoo process. This illustrated the unpredictability of working with these communities and the need for flexibility in my approach.

There was an interesting experience at the first meeting between me and this underground music group. They said they would not talk to me if I did not join them in drinking (alcohol). I said that I was not a drinker and never drank. Besides that my stomach was empty, so it was dangerous for me. Unexpectedly, BD called someone and soon there came a man who delivered a wrap of fried rice. BD asked me to eat fried rice and, after that, I had to drink with them. Then I agreed on two conditions, that I would only drink one glass of alcohol and they had to remain coherent during the interview. Regarding drinking the alcohol, I was worried that I would miss a great opportunity to talk and record the tattooing activities among the *anak* underground that night if I refused them. My main concern regarding my request not to drink more than one glass was that there were so many illegal alcoholic beverages and they were widely circulating. Moreover, I saw that the bottle did not have a label. Thankfully, I was still healthy that night. My initial meeting with the underground musicians ended at 4.00 a.m.. Then I went home, and so did some of them. The rest were still drinking. From my first meeting with BD and his friends, I felt that they were friendly people, but the habit of excessive drinking alcohol was seemingly troubling. When they started getting drunk I became anxious because I was afraid a fight might happen between the friends due to misunderstanding and drunkenness. It was because I had encountered drunkenness and fights three times when I was visiting the gigs. The smell of alcohol burst through the audience who gathered and danced in front of the stages. Not long after, there was a fight between them, but I had prepared for this situation. If there was a chaotic atmosphere, I ran backstage to avoid the chaos.

I found that alcohol was a common thing among the underground communities. This is notable in a local culture where consuming alcohol is much more taboo than in European countries for instance. Some of them also claimed to consume marijuana and drugs. I found out that some of them had been caught by the police because of drugs and some had died

from taking drugs as well, including one of BD's band members. I observed the police activity myself, when once I accidentally got an SMS from somebody that I met in the scene who warned all of his friends that night that we had to be aware that the police were carrying out a drug operation in the *Waru* area.

Relating to the life of the *anak underground* research field in the urban context, some Western scholars such as Wallach and Martin-Iverson had employed ethnographic research in Indonesia long before me. Wallach (2008) in his research *Living the Punk Lifestyle in Jakarta* attended some *anak Punk* performances to understand how they interacted and shared their collective life principles among the group. He attended one of the gigs called *Acara Total Punk* (Totally Punk Event) which was held in a *kampung* (poor urban area) located in the southern outskirts of Jakarta. Wallach (2008) said that as a foreign researcher his presence was tolerated by most of the event's participants, but some bands refused to be photographed. He experienced being spat on by one of the Punk singers when he took a picture. It seemed the Punk singer did not want his image to be published. From this phenomenon, it seems Wallach did not ask permission or did not try to do an initial study about the group's norms and codes before going into the field research. Although he was accompanied by informants, who were also *anak punk*, he did not realise that he was not free to do as he pleased. Learning from Wallach's challenges, I tried to inform the groups or bands, including the *anak underground* about my research and how I was conducting it. A consent form should be provided by the researcher before going to do field research in order to avoid misunderstandings during the collection of data.

Martin-Iverson (2011) in his research *The Politics of Cultural Production in the DIY Hardcore Scene in Bandung, Indonesia* also did ethnographic research, which he conducted in Bandung in 2004 and 2005, primarily through participant observations, meetings and workshops, and informal gatherings. He also conducted some semi-formal interviews with the Hardcore activists and others in the group. It seems that Iverson did not find any difficulties melding with the group as it is shown in his research that he could take many pictures of the Hardcore group activities. In Iverson's case, it seems that proper knowledge of the group's norms enabled the researcher to be accepted within the group, even though he was a foreigner. A good introduction such as giving information about the goals of the research to the participants guarantees easy access while doing data collection in the field research. Other things to do are to have key contacts in the community, someone who is known to the groups.

The person will help us to communicate sufficiently well with other peers. Understanding a local language is also advantageous.

In the process of my research in 2013 and 2015, dialogue or discussion was a useful method. This method created trust between myself and the informants. Moreover, my awareness of the importance of the dialogue process and mutual understanding made me able to see the gaps. Through the dialogue, I could explore many aspects of underground music interactions, communication and behaviour. This provided a lot of information about the functions and meanings of tattoos, personally, and in a group context. Dialogue creates trust that grows between participants day by day. Despite being an outsider in the local subculture groups, I found myself to be a part of them, assembling fragments of events, feelings or emotions, thoughts, values, and lives of the musicians, the fans of underground music, and the tattoos. Having a good understanding of local language, idiom, and dialect also gave me a distinct advantage over non-native researchers. The equivalent and egalitarian dialogue between me and the subject of research was a part of the element of validity of the study. In these dialogues, I was then able to find the right people to be involved in the case studies. I could also develop a level of understanding and empathy with those individuals over a sustained period. The establishment of this trust made it easier for us to talk about personal matters as well. It paved the way to understanding the way of life of the *anak underground* and the production and construction of the meaning of tattoos. Admittedly, at the beginning of my preparation for the field research, the first thing I had to do was find a quick way to get information about the functions and meanings of tattoos among the musicians and fans of underground music.

CHAPTER 4: TATTOO PRACTICE AMONG THE UNDERGROUND COMMUNITY

This chapter describes the production of tattoos based on data obtained during the field research. In recent years, tattoos have been available in tattoo parlours or studios which involve experienced tattooists. However, some people get tattoos done on the street, which means there are various types of tattooists, differing in the equipment they use and their workplace locations.

4.1 Beginner tattooists

Some belonging to the *anak underground* get their tattoos done by providing their bodies voluntarily to provide practice for beginner tattooists. These are teenagers who often do not recognise good standards of tattooing, in terms of both the aesthetic and health aspects of tattooing. To some degree, health considerations are becoming less important for them. In their minds, the most important thing is that they can get tattoos on their body regardless of any health and aesthetic issues. In general, they tend to be teenagers who have dropped out of school, from lower-income family backgrounds, who spend time on the streets with their groups. One example is the street punks. They are mostly found in parks, streets and the areas around the city centres. They survive by becoming street singers and tend to share daily expenses within the group. The future is not their main concern, but rather to survive, have fun and be free. Street punks have nomadic lives, moving from one place or town to another, and spending most of their time on the streets, at bus stations, parks and gardens. Their presence sometimes also attracts teenagers in the cities or towns they pass through. The punk members form an inter-city communication network, which also involves the use of social media platforms such as Facebook.

Beginner tattooists' quality standard artworks are usually formed from monochromatic single lines, with fewer proportional dimensions compared with real objects. There are also significant differences in the techniques of mixing colours and gradations. Generally, beginner tattooists use a hand-made tattoo machine and 'Rotring' ink. This brand is widely known for its use for designs on paper and architecture artworks. Professional tattoo artists,

however, usually use factory standard tattoo machines and special inks for tattoos, which can make the colour displacements look smoother and the outlines more integrated with the colour gradations. With the hand-made tattoo machine, which uses a single needle, more effort is needed to achieve better visualisation, especially for shading/gradation. In addition to the tattoo techniques, the use of 'international' standard equipment may affect the design and final visual outcome. In general, the professional tattooists use a machine called a 'tattoo liner machine' to outline. For the colour gradation or blocks, they use a machine called a 'tattoo shader machine'. The use of a standard tattoo machine improves the quality of the tattoo because a tattooist can specifically control the speed, depth and pressure of the needles. It is different from using a simple home-made tattoo machine that has a monotonous or fixed pressure, which means the tattooist cannot change the needle pressure from soft to strong, or vice versa. Similarly, when making typography tattoos, the results are not so tidy. The thickness of the stems and strokes on the fonts are not the same from one to another. Beginner tattooists can find it a complicated process and not all of them have a proper understanding of typography.

4.2 Door-to-door or street tattooists

The tattoos of several underground musicians and fans obtained from door to door or street tattooists looked somewhat better than the tattoos done by beginners. The level of experience, known as *jam terbang*, is what makes that difference. The street tattooists who have seriously studied illustration or drawing techniques have more skill in expressing quality images on the skin. Many of them learned by self-study, for example observing a senior tattooist working on their clients. This kind of non-formal education is called *otodidak* in Indonesian, an appropriation of the word *autodidact*. One example is Bludz, who learned to tattoo while living with his punk group on the street. Before going into the tattooing business and sharing his profit with the owner of a tattoo studio, he was a door-to-door tattooist. His clients varied from bartenders, waitresses, students and public transport drivers to his underground mates. He was still practising, visiting clients or offering his service to the public at tattooing events. The reason why some tattooists are still doing door-to-door business is because of limited financial capital that means the street tattooists have to open or run their businesses in public places such as parks and roadsides, or through private visits. This is an intriguing localised characteristic. This practice might be more impractical and difficult in a country that applies

strict health and safety regulations on tattooing practice, such as the UK. There is a fascinating story that Dhit Rats (Interview, 30/08/2015) told me regarding street tattooists. He said that one of the tattooists, who had tattooed him with a picture of the crucifixion of Jesus, was a recidivist in auto theft. Besides stealing cars and motorcycles, the tattooist's main occupation was making vehicle number plates, neon signs and banners. In his spare time, he practised tattooing at his street stall, and sometimes visited his clients. According to Dhit Rats, this street tattooist had then enhanced his tattooing skills while in prison for stealing vehicles. Initially, I had intended to meet this person to find out more about how he learnt tattooing in prison. Unfortunately, it turned out that he had been shot by the police and died, while stealing a vehicle in the area of *Kalibokor*, Surabaya. Tattooists who are active in the world of tattooing in the underground scene can be anyone, from former musicians who decide to become tattooists and music fans, to others who are not even fans of underground music but have very good relations with underground musicians and fans, while others may have links with prisons and prison tattoos.

Tattoos obtained from door-to-door or street tattooists tend to be cheaper because the quality of the ink is lower than that used by professional tattooists in their studios, but the health risks in the studios are lower as the needles are usually new, sterilised and wrapped. In the tattoo studios, tattooists use standardised tattoo machines while street tattooists still occasionally use a manual tattooing technique with the use of non-tattoo ink such as the 'Rotring' brand. Moreover, the health standards of street tattooists are very lax. I would often see street tattooists not wearing gloves. Mul, a door-to-door tattooist (Interview, 17/03/2013), confessed that he never changed the needle and used it repeatedly, but he was confident that his tattooing process was safe as long as he used alcohol and tissues to clean up the blood. These less professional tattooists are generally known as *tukang gores* (the scratchers). They usually do tattoos without regard for health and safety procedures and also lack related knowledge regarding infection and skin disease controls. Door-to-door tattooists are sometimes paid with other forms of compensation. Mul said that he had once been paid with packs of cigarettes. The working routines for street tattooists also tend to be tougher; Mul shared how he had to start offering tattoos walking across an area of *Tanjung Perak* from around 10.00 a.m. until late at night. His income was erratic. I met Mul and took his picture while he was practising at night, at around 2.00 a.m. when I was also visiting groups of musicians and fans of underground music near the dock area of Tanjung Perak, Surabaya.

Figure 1 shows the practice of tattooing of a street or door-to-door tattooist which is less hygienic.



Figure 1 Mul, a door-to-door tattooist, in his client's house in Tanjung Perak. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)



Figure 2 Mul's hand-made tattoo machine that uses the dynamo of a tape recorder. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Figure 2 shows Mul's tattoo machine which uses the dynamo of a tape recorder, though I do not have any valid data about the origin of this type of machine in the context of the underground community or in Surabaya and the surrounding area. According to my previous

research, such modified tattoo machines appeared at the end of the 1970s, in prisons and among the tattooists in Yogyakarta, Central Java. It was used in this city by some early tattooists such as Agus S.D., Budi A.A. and Darto. Agus explained that his clients were foreign tourists and common people, as well as thugs. This electric tattoo machine came into use in prisons in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Before the 1970s, the tattooing practice in prisons was simply to use a needle attached to a piece of wood using threads. These threads functioned to absorb and deliver the ink into the needle while the skin was being pierced. That is why the term has been known as *cocohan*, a Javanese word that means stabbed repeatedly (Handoko, 2007).

4.3 Studio tattooists

In Indonesia, there are no national standards or policies for health and safety in the tattooing industry. This is due to the lack of government involvement, particularly the health department, in providing regulatory standards for this profession. As a result, there are different standards of tattooing practices among tattooists. However, there has recently been some communication between the national and regional tattooing organisations and their members to apply health and safety standards in the tattooing industry. They reference what is being done in the West or developed countries, regarding the cleanliness of equipment and studios, including the prevention of disease transmission through needles not being replaced after use. Moreover, they have raised concerns regarding waste management, and better knowledge about the structure of the human body, especially regarding consumer safety. Another aim is to have a standard pricing policy based on the difficulty level of the designs. One way to campaign on this consensus is through festivals of tattoos. These events, besides exhibiting tattoos, are also used for communication and interaction between tattooists and the public who want to know more about tattoos. Through these events, an increased understanding of the importance of health and safety in the Indonesian tattoo industry can be achieved.

To improve their own ability, it is common for local tattooists to interact with foreign tattoo artists to exchange knowledge and skills through social media and visits to international tattoo festivals abroad. Another way is by going to an art college. This was the case with GT,

who chose to become a student of visual communication design to study design, illustration and communication, supporting his profession as a tattooist. His educational background gave him a distinct advantage as he now finds it easier to get clients from the upper-middle class because most of them are students or alumni who live around the university. I visited GT several times at his tattoo studio which he had made by refurbishing his bedroom. What I noted in his tattooing process was the way that health and safety standards had become a priority for GT. For example, he showed the client the expiry date on the needles which were still in an enclosed pack to confirm that the needles were safe to use. After the tattoo was completed, he would dispose of the needles in a biohazard disposal box and then send them to a nearby hospital to be destroyed. Both GT's hands were also protected with disposable rubber gloves, which prevented him having direct skin contact with his client. The studio I visited was also designed for privacy so that no one could enter the area apart from him and his client.

Discussions on studios are also interesting as there has been no set standard for what can be called a tattoo studio. Any place or room that is operated by the tattooist as their working place can be called a *studio tato* (tattoo studio), regardless of whether the room has the most advanced tattooing tools or just simple ones. Tattoo studios range from a booth or *kiosk* in a mall to a modest room in a *rumah kost* (boarding house) or as most people called it, *kost-kost-an*. This room, besides being used for tattooing practice, was also the sleeping place for the tattooist. I witnessed many tattooists using the *kamar kost* (boarding house bedroom) as a studio. Due to the absence of regulations in the tattooing business, setting up a tattoo studio in a boarding house does not require any special agreement or any authorisation from a government body. The tattooist only needs to get the landlord's permission. One example of a boarding house tattoo studio is in my father's premises in the city centre. He has two *rumah kost*, with 10 rooms in each building. One of those is located in the city centre, with two rooms being let to underground/metal accessories street-sellers who have a *lapak* (portable stall) in the *Taman Bungkul* park. One of these *anak kost* (the Indonesian term for boarding house occupants) also has a tattooing business in the afternoon. My father was happy to let him carry out his tattooing business in the *kamar kost* without asking for more fees for the business. It also happens that in my father's other boarding house there is another tattooist who opened up a tattooing business. His clients come from around the *rumah kost*, such as drivers, waitresses, lady escorts and students, as this boarding house is located near night

clubs, bus stations and traditional shops. Generally, people refer to these kinds of street vendors as *kaki lima* (literally ‘five feet’), as they bring home all the tables, equipment and the products on a handcart when they have finished working. This selling method is very common in Indonesia.



Figure 3 GT, a former underground musician who switched profession to become a tattooist. (Photo: Daniel)

The change in musicians’ preferences from using street tattooists to professional ones is influenced by the growing extent of their knowledge regarding tattoo quality, which is determined by the tattooist’s skill, tools and materials used in the process. Another reason is economic transactions where some musicians become endorsers for tattoo artists to promote their names. My findings, particularly those relating to people volunteering themselves for a beginner tattooist training, have not been covered in previous studies of tattoo practice, particularly in the countries with strict regulations in the tattooing industry, such as Western countries. Underground musicians and fans, take the risk of having tattoos with a non-hygienic tattoo process used by beginner tattooists, not necessarily because they can get free tattoos but as a representation of a good relationship that cannot be measured by money. For example, Edoy, an underground music drummer from Sidoarjo, East Java, said that all his early tattoos were the result of being a learning medium for his friends. The inverted pentagram and cross symbols were his first tattoos. When I asked him why he chose those symbols, he said that he had not specifically asked for those symbols; they had been determined by the tattooists (Interview, 03/07/2013). There is a point to be made here about trust and bonding arising within a shared subculture, with a certain shared visual iconology

that is meaningful to the members of that subculture. Possibly, familiarity with these symbols is the key, because the beginner tattooists are also fans of the underground music scene and such symbols are common among musicians and fans of the underground scene, especially the black metal scene. Interestingly, although Edoy's tattoos have been on his body since he was a teenager, he is not so aware of the details of the tattoos, because the tattoos are positioned on his back. He sometimes just looks at them casually while using a mirror. I explore this in more detail in Chapter 6.

Another finding was that most of the tattoo wearers, especially among the less educated and those from a lower social and economic class, did not understand or were not interested in understanding the meanings of their first tattoos. They had got these tattoos when they were teenagers, around age 14–17. In this age range, some of the *anak underground* are dared to tattoo their body for some reason, with the most common being simply for *ikut-ikutan* (following or getting influenced by their peers) and an expression of rebellion. These two reasons are possibly more important than the imagery itself, as the quality of the tattoos is also very poor. It is also notable that at those ages, these tattooed misfits received little attention from their parents. Thus, they would spend their time on the streets and the tattoos would be obtained from beginner or street tattooists or friends in their group who were trying to learn to tattoo.

On the subject of how someone gets an interest in becoming a tattooist, and the process of moving from being an amateur to a professional tattooist, Sinung, is a good example. I met him several times between June and August in 2015. Since then, we have remained in contact by phone and WhatsApp messenger. He is now a professional tattooist in Bali. I had the chance to ask him about his experiences in the underground music community and what brought him to become a tattooist. His explanation was:

“In 2005, I went to the college of fine arts and played *musik cadas* (rock music) or also known as underground music ... then I met my senior in the college, and noticeably besides painting he was also active in the world of tattooing. From this point, I tried to ask him about tattoos and I was very interested in the world of tattoo art since then.” (Interview, 01/12/2016)

To become a tattooist, Sinung had to learn how to draw and use a tattoo machine. He said that his first tattoo machine was hand-made from a tape recorder dynamo and an acupuncture

needle. The senior student in his university then trained him for three months. He started to learn and regularly practised. First he would observe the tattooing process in his friend's studio, and once he understood the principle of tattooing, he would practise it directly on his client's skin. The basic steps of tattooing are usually spreading alcohol on the client's skin surface, followed by drawing a single line object using a ballpoint. After the sketch is finished, the step of filling in colours using the needles starts. In most cases, experienced tattooists also use carbon paper attached to the skin, besides drawing objects directly onto the skin using a pen. This technique is commonly referred to as *stencilling*. The tattooist copies or prints the design of the tattoo on the stencil paper. After the image is imprinted on the stencil paper, it is then attached to the skin. An image will appear in purple when the stencil paper is pulled off the skin surface. Using this technique makes the tattoos look more precise and proportional.



Figure 4 Stencil technique result. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The design concepts of the tattoos can be collected from various sources, such as magazines, the internet, or tattoo samples called *flashes* which are usually put on the walls of tattoo studios. The ideas for tattoos, as I found during my previous research on prison tattoos and through to the underground music scene, can also be inspired by images on sweets packages, comic figures and sticker gifts from the purchase of goods. Common choices from magazines or the internet include global icons (for example Marilyn Monroe, Janis Joplin, and the Rolling Stones tongue and lips logo) and even symbols of Nazism. This reveals that in terms of their subject and style, tattoos have a relation to global hybridity (and to some extent uniformity), as analysed in Chapter 6.



Figure 5 Tattoos inspired by international icons. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Besides international icons and ornaments, *anak underground* also choose popular symbols derived from local values or beliefs and traditions. This emerges among the underground musicians and fans particularly, and urban youngsters in some cities in Indonesia. One of these, MS, honours his father by having the father's name tattooed on his body using Javanese script and also local symbols of Dayak, Balinese and Mentawaian to express himself as an Indonesian multicultural person. MS is involved in the movement to revive the culture of *Nusantara* through tattoos. A detailed explanation of MS's tattoo narratives can be read in Chapter 5. People's efforts to use local themes in tattooing practice could be observed at some tattoo exhibitions in Indonesia that accommodated and promoted local images and symbols, with tattooing techniques as the themes of the venues. At the *Festival Tattoo Istimewa 2016* held by Java Tattoo Club on 30 July 2016, at Jogja National Museum, the local logo of the Yogyakarta Sultan Palace, called 'Haba', was used as a competition theme in the 'Tattoo War' session which was followed by approximately 60 participants. The results showed 'Haba' represented in many styles of tattoos following the method and character of each tattooist.

Alfi, a post-hardcore musician became interested in having a tattoo when he saw a cultural exhibition featuring tattoos from various origins, with their distinctive shapes and motifs. However, he did not choose a traditional tattoo motif for his first tattoo, but rather an owl that reflected his life principles (Interview, 13/04/2013). The owl has been a popular symbol since the classical Greek era. For example, the coinage of the time displayed the head of Athena on one side, and the likeness of an owl on the other (Brook, 1991). According to Brook, in

Greek pottery owls were often shown on vases depicting worship of Athena. The reproduction of the owls can be found in many forms and materials such as the reproduction of the Mediterranean's owls on Pablo Picasso's 'Oval Plate with an Owl,' (1949, glazed ceramics).

Tattoo exhibitions provide a discourse for their visitors to reflect on the experiences and concepts of life in the form of visual alternatives. Alfi, who initially had no desire to have a tattoo, was then influenced by what he saw. This also happened to Dhit Rats, who was a sailor before he became active in the underground scene. He worked for a coal mining ship in Kalimantan (Borneo). He got a local tribal tattoo on his right hand after seeing people with tattoos in the deep area of Kalimantan. He then got a tattoo as a reminder of his experience of living in Kalimantan, the land of the Dayaks. Idea-based experience tattoos seem to be a common phenomenon for some people when getting tattoos.

4.4 Stopping having tattoos

For some people, having tattoos can give them problems later in life. They may regret having them years later, for many reasons. In a study by Armstrong et al. (1996), the main reasons given for tattoo removal were the desire to improve one's self-esteem, avoid social stigma and gain more credibility. Other factors in the removal of tattoos are family pressure and job requirements (Armstrong et al., 1996). Other similar research by Friedman (2015) explained that the desire to erase tattoos from the body usually correlates with a change of circumstances, for example *to erase painful memories of the past, or to seek a redemptive catharsis* (ibid., p. 129). In another similar case, Armstrong et al. (ibid.) found that the tattoo could become *psychologically embarrassing* because of the social life transformation or could physically cause discomfort.

For the *anak underground*, having a tattoo can have negative consequences socially and even economically. This will then motivate them to stop having tattoos, and even to get them removed. For example Ary blamed his tattoo for his failure to get a job. He said that when he attended a work interview, a little mark or tattoo on his finger would be spotted by the interviewer. Although he wasn't sure that the unsuccessful interview was due to his little tattoo, he tried to remove it as well as another bigger tattoo on his arm, using a chemical

liquid. He was disappointed with his tattoos and blamed them for his failure to obtain formal employment. (Interview, 28/06/2013).



Figure 6 Burned tattoo: failure to obtain formal employment that was blamed on the tattoos. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Another reason for stopping tattooing among the *anak underground* was marriage commitments. S, for example, said that his child was growing up and he did not want him to see his father as a strange person full of tattoos (Interview, 11/02/2013). Another reason is for a religious motive. AJ said that before he and his girlfriend got married they promised each other to do repentance. He would stop getting tattoos and his wife decided to wear a *hijab* (Interview, 27/04/2013). Related to this religious commitment, Niz, a female underground musician transformed herself into a *hijaber* (a local term for women who wear the hijab) which stopped her desire to get a new tattoo. She had even been thinking about getting it removed with a laser operation, but didn't do so as the operation was expensive, even more than the price of getting the tattoo itself (Interview, 18/04/2013). Sinung, although his current profession was a professional tattooist, had an interesting reason why he wanted to stop getting tattoos. He said it was because he was no longer able to bear the pain of being tattooed. Another, psychological, reason was the personal shame he felt and for his parents as his life achievement had not been as high as he had expected (Interview, 27/01/2017).

CHAPTER 5: CASE STUDIES

Through the field research and interviews, it was found that body modification is very popular among the *anak underground*, who really love the body, and happily offer the power of creation through the body. I used a structured explanation to convey the personal and social functions of tattoos holistically. The accounts started from the backgrounds of the tattoo owners, their life and principles, followed by an explanation of the functions of tattoos from the perspective of the owners and the tattoo images. These explanations are open to the links between the visual expression (tattoos) and the situations and circumstances around the lives of the *anak underground*. I also explore the relationship to the broader visual culture from which the symbols emerge to give more extensive descriptions for each category of tattoos as they have a certain non-fixity and are composite embodied narratives.

The range of informants included in this chapter varies from the musicians to the fans and from the street punks to the educated fans. This illustrates the wide variety of aesthetic practices, such as motifs and techniques of tattoos as well as how these tattoos illustrate, narrate and express different values. Such values include enthusiasm, philosophical thoughts and ideology, revealing and releasing suffering during difficult circumstances, and keeping memories of particular events. Another key aspect of this project is exploring tattoos as spiritual and religious expression, reflecting the fact that for Indonesian people religion is an important formal and personal aspect of life. For example, on the KTP or *Kartu Tanda Penduduk* (Citizen Identity Card), the cardholder's religious identity must be displayed. Religion is also deeply embedded in Indonesia, culturally and socially, as the social norms often come from religious principles (Dahlan, 2014; Bauto, 2014). Thus, religion or belief in God is a sensitive and intriguing issue that is discussed in this chapter, in addition to social interaction and cultural aspects surrounding the life of the *anak underground*. In these case studies, some of the most prominent aspects of social life and culture in Indonesia are discussed such as the interrelationship between individuals and their family or community, as well as religion or beliefs. Indonesian society tends to be more social than individualistic. Soekarno, the founding father of the Republic of Indonesia (in Handoyo et al., 2015) cited the “social capital” of Indonesia in the form of collectivist values such as kinship and *gotong-royong* (cooperation).

5.1. Case 1: AY

5.1.1. Biography

AY is a female singer and guitarist in an underground music group. The band members are all female. There was an element of feminism in the establishment of this band in that she didn't just want to be a gig spectator for her boyfriend's band and accompany him to every gig. She wanted her boyfriend to see her performing on stage as well. Therefore, she encouraged some other women to form a female band. The goal was for their boyfriends to turn to watch and accompany them while performing on stage. Her passion for music has been alive since her childhood, from kindergarten, when she attended various singing festivals. Uniquely, at an early age, her favourite songs were Brit-Pop music, not Indonesian children's songs as other children liked. It was her father, an engraver and sculptor, who introduced her to Brit-Pop. Her parents were very supportive of her talent in music. Her family could be described as from a middle social and economic class as her parents were able to pay for her university education. The support from her family enabled her to learn many musical instruments and play various musical genres. Apart from *Dang Dut*, Indonesian popular music, she explored a range of styles including Brit Pop, Grunge, Progressive Rock, Skinheads and Blues. She said that every genre had a certain emotion that represented particular feelings. For example, today she more often plays Blues as it makes her feel calm. She said that playing Blues was a way for her to reduce any anger inside her, a sort of anger management.

From music, her hobby led her to reading books relating to feminism, for instance, the history of the women's movement in Indonesia and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*. She became interested in feminism when she got pregnant with her boyfriend, without being married. She received a lot of social pressure, especially in the neighbourhood and the family. At the beginning, her mother refused to accept the baby in their big family. In Indonesia, a couple who are not legally married through government institutions, namely the KUA (Kantor Urusan Agama or Religious Affairs Office) will experience negative stigma and social sanctions, such as being excluded or being the subject of gossip in the neighbourhood. Such promiscuity or *zina* (Yanti, 2012) and the babies from these relationships are called

anak haram or *anak zina* (illegitimate children) (Irfan, 2013). Those in such relationships are known as *kumpul kebo* (cohabiting partners). The Department of Fostering and Language Development, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, explains that *kumpul kebo* is a term used by people to replace the word *samenleven* (Dutch). However, this is not an accurate expression in Indonesian because *kumpul kebo* was taken from the local words *kebo* meaning buffalo, and *kumpul* meaning gathering¹⁰. In Western countries, this situation might be considered normal or acceptable, although moral judgements may still be made, but the legal and social frameworks may vary between countries. In Indonesia, however, it is still considered taboo and immoral, violating social norms (Nurchakiki, 2016). It is often reported by the mass media that *kumpul kebo* couples have been raided by the police after receiving reports from citizens.

As cited in Irfan (2013), children from unmarried couples will get negative stigma as *anak zina*. This was noted by AY but she also considered the high levels of abortion in Indonesia which she did not want to do. It encouraged her to become a feminist activist in the underground scene. She began to educate others about sex before marriage with all the risks, regarding both the health and social aspects, travelling from one city to another on the island of Java. She got tattoos on her journeys. Each tattoo was made by a different tattooist from each city she visited while performing her music. During her visits, she tried to educate women about the importance of protecting themselves from irresponsible relationships that could destroy their future. Her band's songs reflect her life as well as the themes of women. Activity in the social field also extended to activities outside the underground community. In February 2017, she was with the community of *Food Not Bombs* carrying out social activities in a nursing home in Jombang, East Java. *Food Not Bombs* is a social movement founded in the United States during the cold war. The early establishment of this movement was a reaction to the arms race developing nuclear weapons among the Western and Eastern Blocs, while at the same time, hunger and poverty were occurring. This raised the idea that the funds could be used for food instead of making nuclear weapons, to fight hunger in the world. This was adopted by anti-war activists to form a *Food Not Bombs* movement. This movement has principles that the food they provide should always be vegetarian, and should be free for everyone without any boundaries; each branch of the social movement is independent and has autonomy. It is also not structured like any government or organisation or a spontaneous

¹⁰ *Apakah Arti Kumpul Kebo? Ungkapan Indonesia Yang Benarkah Itu?*. Retrieved from http://badanbahasa.kemdikbud.go.id/lamanbahasa/petunjuk_praktis/184

charity movement. The principle of the movement is social change for peace, not violence. The *Food Not Bombs* movement has now spread to several countries, including Indonesia.¹¹

5.1.2. Tattoos



Figure 7 AY's tattoos (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

AY's tattoos had been collected during her visits from one city to another on the island of Java. Each tattoo not only represented the physical journeys through these cities but also the spiritual and emotional journeys (*bathiniah*). Most of her tattoos were on her back but the most recent tattoo was on her thigh. All the tattooists were members of the underground community. These tattoos depicted ideas, ideals, hopes and the mother–son and husband–wife relationships. Indeed, the tattoos were private, which meant that only she and her husband (she married another man, who was not her ex-boyfriend) could see the tattoos on her back. Thus, these tattoos, in terms of communication, tended to be more *personal communication*, or what Doss and Hubbard (2009) refer to as intrapersonal communication, where the tattoos are used as a means of personal reflection on something for the tattoo bearers themselves. Kaufman and Raphael (1984) call it “inner dialogue”, which negotiates relations with one's self. So those tattoos had particular functions and meanings for AY. Hebdige refers to ‘secret’ identity and forbidden meanings (Williams, 2007). However, once the images of the tattoos had been shared with me for research material purposes, with her permission, their functions changed. The tattoos were now communicating personal messages

¹¹ *Gerakan Sosial “Food Not Bombs”*. Retrieved from www.catatankaki.info/gerakan-sosial-food-not-bombs/

to a wider audience. Those tattoos, which previously had have private functions, turn to communicate specific messages to a wider audience and can be 'intentionally' interpreted from various angles.

AY's first tattoo was a red serif-styled typography tattoo of *Ibrah*, the name of her son which is attached to a yellow and green combination of stars and ribbons. The story behind her son, as explained earlier, was that *Ibrah* was the result of a relationship outside marriage which in Indonesia is considered as socially negative. A lot of abortions occur to avoid this negative stigma. AY revealed that among the underground community there were also some women had their children aborted, but AY did not do that. She gave birth and proudly acknowledged him as her son. She said:

“The first is the *Ibrah*, inside the star symbol. It was an appreciation of my son. It has a story, why I had the tattoo. When I wanted to store the picture of my son on my computer, my mom would not allow it. So, where should I store it? Then I asked (some friends) if a tattooed face image was allowed? They said it was not allowed as they said at the end of the world it will be asked, asked for the soul. Okay, then I made a word tattoo of *Ibrah*, yes *Ibrah* means a mandate. His full name is actually *Ibrahimovich*, I just took the first word.” (Interview, 22/04/2013)

AY said that her son's full-name was *Ibrahimovic*, inspired by the name of *Zlatan Ibrahimović*, a Swedish professional footballer. This is an example of a global context in both tattooing and activist practice (Food Not Bombs) in naming children after international footballers. However, AY has her own ascribed meaning of the word 'Ibrah,' which means a 'mandate', in Arabic, 'Ibrah' means 'crossing'.¹² Thus the word 'Ibrah' can be seen from different angles and is indicative of a globalised term or word. This is a common thing in the Indonesian language (derived from Malay - a 'trading'/contact language) which absorbs many words from local and external or global sources. Related to AY's subjective meaning of an 'Ibrah' as a 'mandate', it means that baby 'Ibrah' for AY is a valuable thing and needs to be taken care of responsibly. This is why there are stars, ribbons and music notes around the name of 'Ibrah', as symbols of high value, appreciation and joy.

¹² The word *ibrah* (عبرة) comes from *`abara - ya`buru - `abratan wa `ibratan* which originally means crossing from one edge to another on the opposite side. Therefore, the ferry boat in Arabic is called 'abbārah.

From some of AY's expressions, some interesting things can be revealed about the relation between the tattoo creations and her religious belief, Islam. As she revealed, when she wanted to tattoo her son's face on her body, her friends were against her idea. They said that having a portrait tattoo on her body would be a problem when she died as she would be considered as owing a life to the one that she had tattooed on her body. This perspective may not be orthodox Islamic thinking, and so there may be some localised Islamic practice or even pre-Islamic taboos incorporated into this particular superstition, but it influenced her decision. Finally, she decided to tattoo *Ibrah*, in the form of typography rather than a portrait. The concept of not being allowed to draw or tattoo a human figure is rooted in the Islamic view that it is not permitted to depict living creatures. She therefore depicted herself and her husband more simplistically by using a cartoon style. This was to follow the concept of *niat* (intention) not to create any form of a religious idol. This notion is explored by Martono (2009) who explains that there are many different opinions about the principles of drawing or making a sculpture of living creatures from Islamic perspectives. In the Qur'an, there is not a single verse that mentions the issue, but in the *hadith*, there is an explanation that addresses it. From there came differences perspectives on the form of objects and motifs that can be painted by Muslim people. In his paper titled *Mengenal Estetika Rupa Dalam Pandangan Islam* (Understanding Visual Aesthetic in the Islamic Perspective) Martono mentions the following:

1. It is forbidden for someone to make a painting or sculpture that depicts currently living creatures such as humans and animals. In the hereafter, he will be responsible for giving a life (a soul) in return, and as he cannot fulfil it, God will punish him. Thus painting or sculpting that depicts living creatures is forbidden or *haram*.
2. People may create images of animate creatures such as humans and animals, but with the proviso that they should be two-dimensional flat shapes such as photos, drawings and paintings. It is not permitted to create three-dimensional images that can be touched, such as reliefs and statues.
3. It is permitted to create an image in a three-dimensional form, but they should not be the "living" creatures. Creating an image or sculpture in the form of half of the body (a bust) would be acceptable because it is rationally impossible for half a body to exist because it is not complete. Another concept is that people can make paintings or sculptures of people, animals, heroes, statues or monuments, as long as they are not created to be worshipped or

believed to give particular strength. In the Qur'an this is called *Al-Ashnam* or *Al-Anshab* (Martono, 2009).

AY's second tattoo was a Venus symbol combined with a clenched fist. According to her, this tattoo symbolised feminism. In the interview, AY said that she had been involved in various social activities, such as providing advocacy to a lot of women among the underground communities in various cities in Java Island during her musical performance tours. This tattoo was identified as both feminist and a form of resistance against men's rule, also reminding her of the responsibility to educate other women about their rights. These different aspects of her communicative activities appeared in her goals for her music tours:

“Firstly, my journeys were for musical performances. Secondly, the goals were making personal approaches to women...As the matters were similar. 1001 problems were similar: pregnant, dumped by their boyfriends. Some girls (who were being ignored) insisted on begging their boyfriends to maintain those relationships.” (Interview, 22/04/2013)

As a feminist, AY believes that women who have been dumped by their boyfriends should no longer have feelings of love for them. She tried to become the “shoulder to cry on” for those who needed her, by sharing her experiences to help with their problems. Sometimes, she also advised some of the women in underground communities not to have abortions and communicated to them how to deal with social judgement. She also introduced them to safe contraception and accompanied them to visit midwives. She said that her greatest desire was that the women in the underground community would understand and take responsibility for what happens to them. She especially wanted them to stand up to the injustice that was conducted by the men or their partners, and to fight against authoritarian social relationships and deception of women. That is why the clenched fist tattoo seemed to fit her mission. The clenched fist image, for Indonesian people, has been a popular part of the greeting “Merdeka!” (meaning independent or free) since the 1945 revolution against the Dutch. It was most likely popularised by a poster during the revolution, *Boeng, Ajo Boeng*, which was created jointly by the famous painters Affandi, Soedjojono, Dullah and the poet Chairil Anwar.



Figure 8 Indonesian Revolution poster of 1945 *Boeng, Ajo Boeng*
in Kardinata (2015) *Desain Grafis Indonesia dalam Pusaran Desain Grafis Dunia*.
(Image: PT Desain Grafis Indonesia, p. 83)

How is the symbol of the clenched fist seen in the context of the underground music scene? In the world of metal, punk, hardcore etc., it seems that a clenched fist has been used, re-used, re-modified, and re-conceptualised into different forms of expression. It has been used in the name of a band, the title or lyrics of songs, or as a slogan throughout the development of metal music. For example, there is the heavy metal band *Clenched Fist* from Sao Paolo, Brazil, which was founded in 2000. Another example is a hardcore punk band, *Raised Fist*, which started playing in Luleå, Sweden in 1993. The use of the “clenched fist” symbol can also be found in Indonesia.



Figure 9 Clenched Fist, a heavy metal band from Sao Paulo.
(Image: www.inferno-records.net/bands/351-clenched-fist.html)



Figure 7 'Clenched fist' illustrations on the CD cover of Scared of Bums, an underground music band from Bali, based on their song titled *Kepalkan Tangan Kiri* (clench your left hand). (Image: Spotify)

Conceptually, the 'clenched fist', according to Scared of Bums, is the representation of the spirit of rebellion or resistance against opposition.

*“Kepalkan tangan kiri ... satukan bulatkan tekad
Rapatkan barisan satu kata lawan
Jangan pernah tuk menyerah*

*Bersama, bangkitkan semangatmu
Kuatkan janji bersama tanpa rasa segan untuk satu tujuan
Menutup kata tuk menyerah
Yakinlah trus melangkah
Angkat kepalan kiri ... kibarkan bendera perang
Runtuhkan semua dinding penghalang
Tanpa ragu tuk buktikan
Yakinlah, berjuang dengan jiwa
Kobarkan api semangat atur serangan bantai para pendusta
Tuk wujudkan kemenangan bagi kaum tertindas
Bila mataku matamu terarah
Sisipkan sebuah makna yang sulit tuk terucapkan
Berharap semua kan jadi indah
Kepalkan tangan kiri, suarakan penuh arti
Melangkahlah dengan keteguhan hati
Angkat kepalan kiri suarakan isi hati
Perlawanan ini tak kan pernah mati*

English:

*Clench your left fist ... unite, strengthen the commitment
Close the ranks, one word: resist
Never give up
Together, raise your spirit
Strengthen our promise, without hesitation, for one purpose
Never say: surrender
Be sure to keep stepping
Raise the left fist ... hoist the flag of war
Tear down all the walls of the barrier
Without a doubt to prove
Be sure, fight with our soul
Ignite the spirit, organise the attacks, slaughter the liars
To achieve the victory of the oppressed
When my eyes, your eyes are focused
Insert an unspoken meaning
Wish all turn beautiful
Clench the left fist, speak up meaningfully
Step with courage
Raise the left fist speak up the inner voice
This resistance will never die*

Interlude (Originally in English):

*Keep up the fight rise till the end we'll never give up
Keep up the fight rise till the death Fight back against the wall strike back
Break down authority we fuck the rules
Just fuck the system*

*Break down authority we fuck the rules
Revolution wooooooooooooo.”*

The clenched fists on AY's tattoo and the Scared of Bums CD cover (figure 2) are similar, both using the 'left clenched fist' image which is often used to refer to socialist ideology. However, although this can be observed in the visual data from the history of social and political movements, the use of the 'left clenched fist' image is not specifically associated with socialist movements as shown in some posters and other media, which dominantly use the right clenched fist.¹³ One exception is in Malaysia. The logo of *Parti Sosialis Malaysia* (Socialist Party of Malaysia) uses a left clenched fist (white) on a red background. In this case, the *Parti Sosialis Malaysia* uses the concept of *left* as part of its socialist ideology symbolism besides the colour red that has been used in many socialist parties and countries that affiliate with socialist ideology. In Indonesia, red has not been used by a political party as it was associated with G30S/PKI (September 30 Movement, pioneered by PKI, Indonesian Communist Party) in 1965. This party used red as the background for its logo, the hammer and sickle. The Movement killed six army generals, and the impact of the G30S / PKI lasted a long time, during the New Order which ruled for three decades, under the leadership of General Soeharto after the overthrow of President Sukarno, who was considered as a protector of the PKI. This brought widespread trauma as there were mass killings in various regions in Indonesia, followed by *desukarnoisasi* in which all things related to Soekarno were prohibited, for example banning the ceremony of the birth of the Pancasila (Indonesian's five principles) from 1 June 1970 and manipulating the history of the Pancasila. Those who were accused of being involved in the G30S and their families were arrested, killed and stigmatised as PKI members among society. Those who remained were discriminated against in the social sphere, and could not be civil servants or military/police members. In turn, this labelling was also used by the New Order regime for practical purposes to silence critics from the opposition, by accusing people of being members of the PKI, or evicting farmers by buying their land at very cheap prices and labelling them as communists if they refused to cooperate (Adam, 2018). Many people were also killed who were not PKI members. Most of them were members of organisations related to the PKI such as the Barisan Tani Indonesia (Peasants Front of Indonesia, BTI), Gerakan Wanita Indonesia (Indonesian Women Movement, Gerwani) and the Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat (People's Cultural Institution, Lekra). It was dangerous for all those who had inclinations that could be considered 'leftist',

¹³ See in Cushing, L. www.docspopuli.org/articles/Fist.html

and Chinese people were accused of being supporters of PKI because this party had close relationships with China. Nevertheless, many people were also killed because of fake accusations and chaotic situations (Reardon, 2002).



Figure 11 The logo of *Parti Sosialis Malaysia* (Malaysian Socialist Party). (Image: <https://partisosialis.org/>)

The visual evidence indicates that the underground community in Indonesia created its code of resistance using the ‘left clenched fist’ as their symbol. But whether it is associated with left-wing ideology requires further investigation. This symbol of the ‘left clenched fist’ suggests that the underground groups in Indonesia are not differentiated by region. This is proof of the spirit of togetherness that they have always hailed through the spirit of sharing and caring for each other. For example, if colleagues from other cities or towns visit their place to join in with gigs or local events, they will support them and fulfil their needs. The common use of the “left clenched fist” symbol indicates a shared visual concept of resistance used by the underground communities, which can also be used to express solidarity, togetherness or unity, and strength among them.

The next tattoo was of two cartoon-styled male and female figures wearing black clothing, which, according to AY, represented her and her husband. She hoped that this image would strengthen both her and her husband’s commitment to their marriage. In the meetings with AY,

I noted that she was slim and dark-skinned with short dark hair. When communicating her ideas and speaking about her life, she seemed very open, and during our conversations, she was always laughing or smiling, a cheerful figure. I also met her husband once. He was a calm person who just smiled when responding to AY’s brief statements about their relationship. At that time we also talked about jobs and the opportunity to get a scholarship to study abroad for teachers as he was working as a temporary teacher in a private school in the Sidoarjo area. From this meeting, I can confirm that this tattoo is a simple representation of them both. In the tattoo, the figure of AY’s husband is drawn as a smiling man with a straight body posture with his right hand in his trouser pocket. AY is depicted with a sassy posture,

wearing a short skirt and swinging her left foot. It therefore depicts both their attitudes; the man quiet, and the lady cheerful – contradictory but unified. For AY, the tattoo is a modern reconceptualisation of a Javanese representation of *Loro Blonyo*, which she saw at a Javanese marriage party.



Figure 8 *Loro Blonyo*. (Image: <https://ruangkumemajangkarya.files.wordpress.com/2011.11/sampul-buku.jpg>)

Subiyantoro (2009) explains that the structure of the pair of binary oppositions, in the *Loro Blonyo* which was placed in the central *senthong* room (main room, in the centre of the *Joglo* house) manifests cosmic reproduction. *Loro Blonyo* is not merely a symbol of fertility, but also the duumvirate embodiment or *loro-loroning atunggal* (in the Javanese language) – the unity of the human element and the only God. *Loro Blonyo* represents the principles of harmony and balanced life both horizontally and vertically within the context of the relationship between humans and God. Thus, the meaning of the cartoon tattoo of a man and a woman, if viewed from the aspect of local culture, is not only a form of commitment but also a representation of hope, living in harmony, and complementary relationships. These elements have some of the key characteristics of complementary pairs of opposites, *Yang Yin* (China) or *Yab Yum* (Hindu and Buddhist). Carl Jung called it the male and female principles (Jung and Franz, 1964). The depictions of a couple, a man and woman, symbolically have meanings across cultures, such as representing fertility and sustainable life (Fontana, 1997; Nozedar, 2008). In Jungian psychology, they are called *animus* and *anima*. If they are separated this will lead to “incompleteness: each is barren and unfruitful, one-half of the pre-existing whole” (Fontana, 1997). The unity symbol of male and female in Indonesia can also be traced from the cosmological concept of fertility which has been used since the pre-Islam era, for example the Hindu discovery of the *Lingga* (phallus) and *Yoni* in some *Candi*

(shrines) in Java Island, and shown at the Monumen Nasional (National Monument) in Jakarta in the form of a statue of the bride and groom called *Loro Blonyo* in Javanese culture.

The next of AY's tattoos is a lollipop which is surrounded by blue, green and black stars. The composition of the tattoo is a circular form joining with the form of a stick on the bottom. The circle is divided into eight spaces that make the circles appear as if it has dimension. The colours of the lines used to form the space inside the circle are blue. At the centre of the circle, there is a gradation of green which gives the impression of dimension. The stick is formed from the composition of black lines. The reason for having this tattoo, according to AY, was its likeness to a lollipop, her favourite sweet. She said "I did it on a whim. I like it."

The interesting thing relating to the tattoo production in AY's case is that each tattoo has different characteristics, in terms of both the technical aspects and themes. Her tattoo of a Venus symbol combined with the raised fist tattoo focused on dark block colouring. Each colouring technique is intended to remind her that each represents a different story of her visit to a place or city. Thus, the tattoos were also finished by different tattoo artists. Each tattoo represents a different situation, atmosphere and spirit, as well as providing a souvenir of the journeys she undertook. Another aspect is the position of the tattoos on her back. The main reason related to her Islamic practices. She did not want to get tattoos on her arms or legs because it would contaminate the process of *wudhu*, the process of washing parts of the body before prayer namely the face, both hands up to the elbows, wiping the head and both ears and washing the feet to the ankles. The second reason was that she wanted to work in the formal sector, and having tattoos in visible areas may have resulted in a negative perception from potential employers. This represents an interesting codification and compartmentalisation of the social, professional, ritual and expressive elements regarding how she conceptualises her embodied identity in different contexts. She expressed this in one of our meetings at the end of 2013. Recently, AY has been working for her own private company, with screen printing productions, selling t-shirts and merchandise, as well as being active in social activities. Nevertheless, her principle of not tattooing any pictures on the arms and feet for religious reasons is still strong.

5.2. Case 2: MS

5.2.1. Biography

I met MS through my key informant, Njet, who suddenly came to my office in Surabaya along with MS on 27 March 2013. “Sir, I bring a friend and a tattooed punk music fan. His tattoos are unique, and very different if compared with others,” Njet said. I asked MS about his tattoos. He mentioned his father’s name written in the Javanese scripts, Dayak’s eggplant flowers, and *Rangda* and *Leak*, the two positive and negative symbols in Balinese Hindu culture. MS was a 23-year-old underground music fan based in Surabaya. He got tattooed for the first time at the age of 18. At that time, he was still in high school. MS is half Javanese and half Chinese. His father is a local Muslim Javanese person from Mojokerto, the city where the Kingdom of Majapahit was located, while his mother is a Christian. With his family background, MS naturally learned about tolerating and respecting differences. At the time of the interview, he was a university student in Visual Communication Design.

5.2.2 The tattoos

The tattoos of his father's name, *Suwarno*, Borneo *Dayak*’s eggplant flowers, and *Rangda* and *Leak* were all in areas that were covered up as he did not want his tattoos to be seen by others. He was worried about being misjudged by others as, from his experience, some people did not like his tattoos although others did like them. The choice of where tattoos were placed and competing for social identity was a theme with this case study as happened with AY in the previous case study. He was also worried about his father who would probably be angry, as once his father had said to him that he considered his son to be immature as he still could not get enough money from working independently.



Figure 9 Javanese scripts and *Bungaterung* tattoos. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

He changed his mind and got a new tattoo in 2017. He got a thick line tattooed which encircled his left hand. He got the idea after seeing the *Mentawai*¹⁴ tattoos. When I asked him whether his father was angry, he answered: “No, because I have been working, I’m married and have a child.” It seems that, culturally, Indonesian parents often consider their children to have grown up if they have been able to get money from their own efforts and get married.

MS’s first tattoo was Javanese Scripts of *Suwarno*, his family name which was derived from his father’s name. This tattoo is a reminder of how his father had worked hard for the whole family and that he was a Javanese man. MS said “I am a Javanese descendant because my father was originally from *Mojokerto*”. From this tattoo, it seemed that MS wanted to identify as a Javanese, like his father. One thing I noted when I first met him, was that I assumed from his appearance that MS was a young Chinese man, not Javanese, as he had plain, fair skin and his face showed Chinese physical characteristics. MS told me that his father was a Javanese Muslim and his mother was a Chinese Christian. This is an interesting case study as this person is from a mixed cultural and religious background and had chosen a mixture of motifs from different Indonesian cultures and religious practices, although relatively localised (even nationally bounded aesthetic). When I asked him whether his father knew about his name being tattooed on his son’s body, he said that he did not want his father to know about this tattoo as he was still worried that his father would be angry with him as, at the time, MS was still supported financially by his parents (which meant he did not live independently). It was also because his father was a Muslim who considered it not permissible for MS to get any tattoos. His mother knew about all of his tattoos, but it seemed that she did not see these

¹⁴ The Mentawai are an ancient tribe that for thousands of years have lived on Siberut Island, West Sumatra, Indonesia.

tattoos as a problem. MS presumed that it might be because his mother was not a conservative Christian which meant that she understood about MS's choice to have tattoos.

Concerning the family's name, *Suwarno*, in the Javanese cultural context, people's names are also used as signs. Wibowo (2001) classified Javanese names into 14 functions:

Table 1 Javanese names' functions and descriptions. Adapted from Ridha Mashudi Wibowo in *Nama Diri Emik Jawa* (2001). *Humaniora*. 8(1), 51–52.

Functions	Descriptions
Identity	The name is used to distinguish oneself from others
Symbol of hope/ideality	<i>Raharja</i> (happiness); <i>Basuki</i> (good luck); <i>Sulistyawati</i> (beautiful); <i>Wulandari</i> (as beautiful as the moon)
Social tribute	Honorific names that are attached at the beginning of real names, such as <i>Kyai Tomo</i> , <i>Ki Mangun</i> , <i>Nyai Sarmini</i> , <i>Nyi Umah</i> , <i>nDara Putri</i> , <i>Den Bagus</i> .
The symbol of dignity/high value	<i>Wibawa</i> (honour), <i>Jaya</i> (triumph)
Signs of professions	Used as a second name: <i>Karya Pande</i> (Mr <i>Karya</i> the blacksmith), <i>Atma Krupuk</i> (Mr <i>Atma</i> who sells cracker snacks).
Birth order in the family	<i>Eka Siswanto</i> (<i>Siswanto</i> as the first child), <i>Dwi Harianto</i> (<i>Harianto</i> as the second child), <i>Tri Handoko</i> (<i>Handoko</i> as the third child)
A sign of historicity	<i>Anggara</i> (born on a Tuesday), <i>Rejeb</i> (born in <i>Rejeb</i> , a Javanese month), <i>Karbit</i> (when he was born his father died because of a calcium carbide tube explosion)

Associations to gender and particular values.	<i>Priyatama</i> (the first man, the prime man), <i>Setyoputri</i> (the faithful woman)
Religiosity or ideology affiliation	<i>Muslimah</i> (a Muslim woman), <i>Kristiono</i> (Laki-laki pemeluk Kristen), <i>Marhaeni</i> (<i>Marhaen</i> ¹⁵ woman)
Kinship name	Placed as the second or third name, such as <i>Rosalia S. Budi</i> (<i>Rosalia</i> , the daughter of Mr <i>Budi</i>)
Familiarity	By shortening the names: <i>Prabowo</i> becomes <i>Bowo</i> , <i>Rahayu</i> becomes <i>Yayuk</i> .
Humour, mockery	Names are used as attributes associated with parts of the body or other references: <i>Yati Pesek</i> (<i>Yati</i> the pug-nosed), <i>Amat Kumis</i> (<i>Amat</i> the moustached guy), <i>Johny Gudel</i> (in Javanese, <i>Gudel</i> means a calf), <i>Gondo Kirik</i> (in Javanese, <i>Kirik</i> is a dog)
Alias	Secret name
Prestige or certain impression	Names are used with phonetic similarity with others such as Westerners: <i>Sari Kasidi</i> (derived from <i>Cherry Cassidy</i>), <i>Joko Hemingway</i> (derived from <i>Jack Hemingway</i>)
Teknonymy	<i>Teknonymy</i> is the practice of referring to parents by the names of their children ¹⁶ . Such as <i>Bapakne Handoko</i> (<i>Handoko's</i> father), <i>Simbahe Handoko</i> (<i>Handoko's</i> grandfather or grandmother)

¹⁵ Marhaen was the name of a poor farmer who was working hard in his small rice field when Soekarno, who then became Indonesia's first president, passed by and they had a discussion about the farmer's principles of life. This farmer's spirit of life then inspired Soekarno's Marhaen ideology. The term 'Marhaen' became a symbol of the weak, poor and oppressed people as a result of imperialist atrocities for centuries in Indonesia.

¹⁶ *Definition of teknonymy*. Retrieved from www.definitions.net/definition/teknonymy

Suranto (in Widodo and Saddhono, 2012) noted that the names of Javanese people had a socio-cultural aspect. Therefore, in the Javanese community, giving a name to the newborn baby used to be celebrated with traditional ceremonies. From Table 1, it can be seen that in the context of Javanese culture names can be interpreted as having particular significance. According to Wibowo (2001), names in the Javanese community are a combination of the signifier (form) and signified (concept/meaning). The sign can be conventional, like a symbol, as can be observed in the “Suwarno” tattoo. In terms of meaning, according to Wibowo (2001), “Suwarno” consists of two words, namely *Su* + *Warna*. *Su-* is a morpheme and is positioned as an honorific name, meaning good and beautiful. *Su* is derived from a Sanskrit word for good and beautiful. Thus the function of the name *Suwarno* is to give the hope that the owner can become a handsome man with a good character. Thus, the “Suwarno” tattoo, in the socio-cultural context, not only represents the personal identity of the bearer but also explains how the owner of the tattoo has attached himself to his cultural identity and origin. The use of *Hanacaraka* (Javanese scripts) as his family name can be seen as MS’s self-affirmation that he is a truly Javanese person (but expressed and embodied in a modern twenty-first century way).

MS’s second tattoos were two *Bunga Terung* (eggplant flowers) in monochrome gradations, a Dayak-styled tattoo. One was on the left top of the chest near the shoulder, and the other was on the right one (opposite side). The composition seemed to be in a symmetrical position on the body if viewed from the front. According to MS, these tattoos were a remembrance of Kalimantan, the island of his family fortune and hope, the place where his father had been working hard for the whole family. On this island, his father earned enough income to improve the living standards of the whole family. In our conversation, he did not specifically describe these tattoos as eggplant flowers. However, from their shapes and position and the black/white style, supported by his explanation that these tattoos were a commemoration of his father who was willing to work far into Kalimantan Borneo, it is likely that these tattoos were a modified form of *Iban’s Bunga Terung* (eggplant flower) tattoo design. See Figure 14 below.

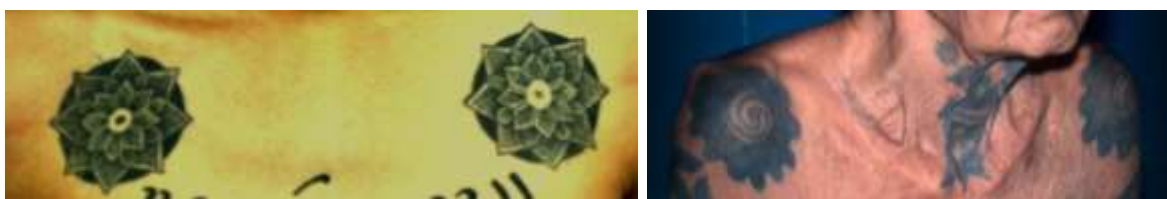


Figure 10 *Bungaterung* tattoos. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko and Lars Krutak).

The *Bunga Terung* tattoo in its *Dayak* context is a sign of a coming of age stage. Sonny (2012) said:

“The *Bunga Terung*, which translates to eggplant flower, is the first tattoo a Borneo male would receive. The *Bunga Terung* is a coming of age tattoo which marks the passage of a boy into manhood. The *Bunga Terung* has a spiral at the centre of the eggplant flower, known as *Tali Nyawa*, which means the rope of life and is identical to the underside which symbolises the beginning of a new life.”

The *Bunga Terung* tattoo also has another meaning according to Eddy Barau (in Wardhani, 2011), a *Dayak*’s chief warrior. He said that by getting the *Bunga Terung* tattoo, someone in the *Iban* community will be considered as a *professional*. It is like a social rank. Interestingly, there is another meaning if *Iban* people have eight eggplant flower tattoos that surround their waist. The meaning can be that those people have been *Plor* (filled) or satisfied with their wanderings, having visited many places outside their social environment (*merantau*). In the context of the *Iban* community, the *Bunga Terung* tattoo tends to have a sacred meaning which relates to the rite of passage or social status achievement. However, both tattoos have similarities as a sign of progress towards a new life. For MS, the symbol is just to remind him about the place where his father worked hard for the family, Kalimantan (Borneo). Another reason is that he wants to collect traditional Indonesian motifs on his body as he admires the rich Indonesian culture. In Indonesia, traditional motif tattoos have become popular recently. Hendra, an original *Dayak* tattooist who preserves the ancient method of tattooing said “There is a growing trend now, there are more people who want to learn about traditional tattooing.”(Charlton, 2016). Hendra also explained that nowadays *Iban* tattoos are popular among youngsters in Indonesia, such as the *Bunga Terung*. This tattoo is usually put on men’s shoulders as they are considered to bear the responsibility for the family. Krutak (in Charlton, 2016), said that tattoo lovers (in Indonesia) nowadays are becoming interested in the ancient Indonesian designs as they are distinctive, beautiful and have spiritual meanings.

Krutak suggested that people living in big cities wanted to be rooted in something meaningful that they could have on their bodies for the rest of their lives. However, not all young people in the city get traditional tattoos using the hand-tapping method. MS, for instance, had local symbols tattooed on his body using modern tattoo machines. However, he had a kind of nationalist motive triggered by what he saw as a lack of Indonesian youngsters giving attention to their own culture as they consumed imported imagery, such as globalised rock culture symbols. The Dayak tattoos on MS can also be seen as hybrid and 'intra-national' symbols as they come from beyond MS's particular ethnic and cultural heritage. To some degree these have been popularised by the Western tattooists and scholars, such as Jeroen Franken who had his first tribal tattoo deep in the jungles of Borneo when doing research on the tattoos of the Iban, the biggest ethnic tribe in Borneo. He was doing the research because he had not been able to find references that explained the deeper meanings of what had been called 'tribal tattoos'. When he finished writing the book, 'Pantang Iban' (1998), with Sven Torfinn as photographer, he apprenticed professionally at *Hanky Panky Tattoo* in Amsterdam.¹⁷

The reusing of the symbols of the visual traditions of the tribes of the past in the modern body, as happened for MS and is currently becoming a trend in Indonesia, is likely to mimic the same practice that began to develop in the West a few decades earlier and has continued to grow. Juno and Vale (1989) refer to this as 'Modern Primitive', that is, the existence of aesthetic practices in a synthesis between older tribal 'customs' and modern tools and bodies through tattoos, piercings and scarification. The visual expression on the body of MS, reflects a desire for the body to be outwardly an actualisation of 'old' values or traditions integrated through modern visual links such as magazines and TV. There are exhibitions that show traditional art or artists, musicians, and punk people who are using the same symbols themselves, for example, eggplant flowers that are already global. It will provoke a change in his appearance. As an *anak punk*, it would be usual for MS to have a tattoo but certain values had restricted him to 'earn the right' to have a tattoo, from the perspective of his father, for example, who saw MS as economically not yet established. On the other hand, his father's role was so great in increasing the economic prosperity of the family, that it prompted him to get his father's name tattooed on his body, as a tribute. He understood that if his father knew, he would be angry. But MS was waiting for the right time to commission the tattoos, which

¹⁷ <https://sevenseasatelier.com/jeroen-franken/>

for him would be a form of externalisation of his identity which is punk, Indonesian, Javanese, Christian and as a son of Suwarno. His courage to have a tattoo, overcoming his father's prohibition, would free the creative part of himself but to some degree bond him to the source of his life, his father. This is expressed by Juno and Vale (1989) who say that there is a similarity in function between the tribal practice and that of Modern Primitives, which is to create a lifelong bond with others. In this case, the tattoos on the body of MS, both those written in Javanese Scripts and Eggplant Flowers, were done by way of a form of spiritual bond between himself and his father.

The third tattoo on MS's body was a depiction of a lion-like creature and a demon-faced creature using the black and white gradation technique. The tattoos are on the rear of the shoulders, one on the top left, and the other on the right one (the opposite side). The composition was symmetrical, like the *bunga terung* tattoos. For MS, these two creatures were symbols of peace and an expression of his love for Bali Island and its culture. These two symbols can be found in a fascinating sacred dance of *Calonarang*. The dance shows the battle scene between *Barong*, a symbol of truth, and *Rangda*, a symbol of the evil inside a human. It demonstrates how *Barong* encourages the villagers (played by the trance dancers to fight back against the *Rangda*. The villagers, who filled with the Barong magical power, stab themselves using krisses (Indonesian swords) and daggers. This act is a symbol of the liberation of the evil spirit in men. *Barong* and *Rangda* can be seen as the medium of contact between the sacred and the profane. After the battle, "polarities of evil and good are at a balancing point." (Tafoya, 2009, p.29). The tattoos of *Barong* and *Rangda* show the relationship between tattooing and other artistic practices and are integral aspects of Balinese life. People can see these figures in paintings, sculptures, woodcarvings and textiles.



Figure 11 Barong and Rangda in a *Calonarang* performance (left), and as tattoos on the back of MS (right).
(Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko and <https://baliartinformation.wordpress.com/2016/05/27/barong-dance-bali>)

Figure 15 shows the differences in the use of colour between the *Barong* and *Rangda* masks that use red (on the heads), covered in thick white fur, and with gold jewellery decorated with pieces of mirror, when compared with MS's tattoos that utilise the black to white gradient technique. When I asked MS why he did not have colours on his tattoos, he said that he liked the monochrome technique because it was simple. In photography, the use of the black and white technique, in addition to its simplicity, has a technical reason in that it is more able to highlight the shape of the object and the lighting. The focal point is the contrast; monochrome (black and white) objects give the impression of pure and very strong emotions and interpretations (Bailey, 2014).

Visually, the monochrome colouring technique on these tattoos gives more accentuated details on each of the *Barong* and *Rangda* elements by reducing the distraction generated by the variety of colours and decoration in the original forms of *Barong* and *Rangda*, as shown in Figure 16. Nowadays, *Barong* and *Rangda* can be seen tattooed on the bodies of foreign and domestic tourists as a souvenir of their visit to Bali Island. This is an example of the transformation of sacred symbols into profane material in the tourist industry. For the Balinese people themselves, the tattoos of *Barong* and *Rangda* have also become more common. Some of them admitted that they had these symbols tattooed as an artistic expression, to preserve local symbols and the identity of Balinese people (Setiawan and Jayanegara, 2016). MS's reason for getting Balinese traditional motifs tattooed on his body was that he was very fond of the Island of Bali. Every year he would spend a vacation on the island. Foreign tourists and local tourists like MS who consume similar 'primitive' or traditional tattoos, are an example of the global exchange and sharing of imagery. However, it had a slightly different meaning for MS than for foreign tourists, as he said that he wanted

tattoos of *Barong* and *Rangda* as both elements encouraged him to conduct balanced activities outwardly (profane) and inwardly (spiritual). This is another example of how spiritual beliefs and religious practices have become very syncretic over time in Indonesia, which can be seen as a continuation of a longer-term phenomenon. On MS's body, *Barong* and *Rangda* are placed as opposites, which has a conceptual reason, again with a dichotomy or positive–negative being played out as in other case studies. *Barong*, symbolising a positive and good spirit is placed on the left shoulder, while *Rangda* (the demon) is on the right. This differs from the general concept in Indonesia, that goodness is usually represented on the right side, and the left as the place for the negative one. The reason for this is interesting; MS considered that in practice or everyday life, the right side (represented by the right hand) was the most widely used, as well as to perform negative activities, as there are many examples of people carrying out harmful or violent actions against others using their right hand. In contrast, the left hand was rarely used, he said, except to cleanse the body in the toilet. Logically, it could be therefore be assumed that the left hand would be doing much less negative activity than the right-hand side. It thus made sense for him to put *Barong* as a symbol of goodness on the left rear shoulder. The conclusion to be drawn from the conceptual and contextual perspectives was that MS's tattoos represented his identity as a Javanese person, a man who appreciates multiculturalism and differences and as an Indonesian, whose body becomes a gathering place for the local cultural symbols of Indonesia. His body becomes a display of the spirit of Indonesia, *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). Furthermore, the tattoos are likely to give the impression that the owner is drawn to something more spiritual, as shown by the selection of tattoo objects which are viewed as having cosmological values, according to the social and cultural contexts. MS, similar to other tattooed people who put modifications of traditional symbols on their body, is following the trend of the new culture today which is becoming influenced by awareness of their ancestors' art. Having tattoos with images of their ancestors' symbols can be a way of 'imaginative travelling' to embrace the practice and to engage in how it was once done, through modern tools. This is part of a modern exercise in identity construction.

Hegarty (2017) in his research at several tattoo studios in Indonesia observed that there was a tendency for a growing interest in *kustom* tattoos, a term used by tattooists and enthusiasts which refers to a community of customised motorbikes and cars. He noted the contrast of these tattoos with tattoos that were 'ready-made' or 'mass-produced.' It meant that these tattoos (objects, motifs and techniques) were based on the requests of the tattoo wearers. One

of the basic ideas of ‘Indonesian’ *kustom* tattoos is to have traditional motifs which are created or finished with modern techniques and tools. As Sonon said (a *kustom* tattooist, in Hegarty, *ibid*) said that the *kustom* style is inspired by traditional culture.

In the 1990s, rumours spread that some rockers such as Hanky Panky, Anthony Kiedis and Flea had planned a trip to Borneo to explore the indigenous tattoos. This caused some Indonesians to recognise the potential of their local tattoos and tattooing through “the eyes – and on the skin – of foreigners” (Berman, 2016). Foreigners are an important factor in how some local tattooists have absorbed the ‘Indonesian taste’. Traditional Indonesian symbols on MS and other Indonesian people may be, as Hegarty (2017) notes, a reflection of the growing interest in identity and self-expression through modified, not copied, local symbols with modern techniques. It is a combination of local and transnational values and vocabulary, where the function of tattoos as an individual’s expression and desire remains the main focus. This is an example of the decontextualisation and reappropriation of local symbols in the contemporary Indonesian nation-state.

5.3. Case 3: AJ

5.3.1. Biography

AJ had been interested in metal music since junior high school, at about the age of 13. This interest in metal music was influenced by his father who at that time liked to listen to Deep Purple, Bon Jovi, Guns and Roses, Led Zeppelin and the other western rock classics. AJ himself admitted that he was originally not a connoisseur of underground music, preferring to listen to old rock music. The first time he got involved in underground music was when his friends invited him to join them to form a music group. Two of the friends were classmates at elementary school, and one was a friend from college. They became the main members and co-founders of this metalcore band. Like many other underground music bands in Surabaya and Sidoarjo, this group were not completely embedded in the music scene as all of the members had main jobs outside the music scene. They currently just play music in their spare time because they have steady jobs outside of playing music. Like other musicians, AJ said that if someone wanted to live entirely in the underground music scene, it would be financially difficult, because the revenue from playing music was not so great. He explained

that they set aside some of their income to finance the music group. The money was used for travelling and other expenses during their music tours.

5.3.2 The Tattoos

AJ's tattoos had various themes, from horror to religious symbols, and family member names. As a graphic designer and metalcore musician, his motivation to get tattoos was not far from his 'world'. He said:

"The reason I got tattooed is that I'm an artist, a designer. I like pictures, so I embodied them on my body. On my body, there is a tattoo of my band *Nematoda*, the name of my parents, the names of my two siblings. One which is on my chest is my religion. *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*¹⁸. The reason why I tattooed *Bismillah* on my body was because if I want to start something, whatever it is, or if I want to go anywhere, initially I started with *Bismillah* for those to be safe and running smoothly. The first tattoo on my back, the second that was on my hand, and the ones on my right and left hands, were not noticed. The one on the chest was noticed because near my shirt collar it was a little swollen. Daddy asked, 'Did you get a tattoo?' I said: 'Yes, I did.' That was it. After a few months, my mother noticed them. Both of my parents then asked me, 'Why did you get tattoos?' I said: 'Don't worry.' They asked: 'How are the jobs?' I said: 'That will be alright because these tattoos are not seen.' I proved it, oh that was fine. Yes, three to four times I changed my jobs but I did it because the jobs were not convenient, not because of my tattoos. So while I am working, I wear long sleeves. I do not want to show off my tattoo. Even when I am doing (music) performances, sometimes I do not show them off." (Interview, 27/04/2013)

The reason he wears long sleeves while working is that he does not know what his bosses would think if they saw AJ's tattoos. He is afraid that his bosses are not open-minded, and would associate the tattoos on AJ's body with having a criminal nature or other negative associations. Once AJ told me that in the future he would cover his body all over with tattoos of his wife and children's names, but with a proviso, only if he already had ten cars, five houses, and his future wife would permit him to get more tattoos. It is therefore clear that AJ currently doesn't feel confident about tattooing his entire body. He is waiting for the right time to do that when he attains a higher economic status. This shows the social pressure on tattooed people, probably because the majority of the public underestimate tattoo users as having *masa depan suram* (no future), considering their tattoos to be associated with a felony as shown in Martin-Iverson (2011) and Olong (2006).

¹⁸ In English it means "In the name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful."

I personally experienced evidence of negative stereotyping of people with tattoos when I met some tattoo informants at a food stall in the *Siwalankerto* area in Surabaya, in August 2015. After my informants had left, some people at the food stall were surmising that those tattooed people must be unemployed, and would find it difficult to get a job. I explained to them that those guys had a job in the screen printing home-industry and they had decent homes to live in. Then the conversation shifted to the issue of their religious perspective that tattoos were forbidden in Islam. As the discussion was becoming more sensitive, I did not continue the conversation for fear of causing an argument. This disparaging view of tattooed people, sometimes causes those in the underground scene to strive to prove to the public that they are self-reliant and have prospective jobs. A high level of achievement will reduce the underestimation of people with tattoos. This, to some degree, also highlights the commitment and connection that people feel towards being tattooed when they could just choose not to have them and to conform to normative expectations. In Indonesia, many celebrities and famous figures, such as Tora Sudiro, Rio Dewanto, Melanie Subono and even Susi Pudjiastuti, an Indonesian Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries under President Jokowi, are all tattooed.

Reflecting on how achievements affect people's acceptance, some tattoo owners try to achieve a common standard of living so that they will be respected. For example, it took AJ a long time to fit in with his girlfriend's family because of his tattoos. This was because his girlfriend's family adhered to a conservative line of Islam from Pakistan. Slowly but surely, he succeeded in persuading his girlfriend's whole family by deciding not to tattoo anymore in order to be able to worship God better. Interestingly, his girlfriend symbolically marked AJ's decision by wearing the *hijab* to show her gratitude to 'Allah' and for AJ's decision not to get more tattoos. This trading on visible symbolic acts and commitments is intriguing, and I found similar cases among others of the *anak underground* regarding decisions to stop tattooing, drinking and other 'common habits' because of the commitment between couples. This is just one of many examples of someone stopping having tattoos because of getting married or religious reasons. A popular Indonesian actress, Olla Ramlan, did it as well. Furthermore, she erased all her tattoos as her future husband asked her to do it based on his interpretation of religious principles.¹⁹

¹⁹ *10 Artis Wanita Indonesia yang Memiliki Tato Indah di Tubuhnya*. Retrieved from www.portalfia.com/2015/08/10-artis-wanita-indonesia-yang-memiliki.html

The first time AJ had a tattoo was in 2007, in his first year of college. It is on his back, a small typography of “Death Guy”. He said that the words looked cool and gave the impression of being ‘eternal’. The philosophy of these words concerns a dead man who goes hand in hand with living people as if he were still alive. Because he has already died, he can encourage the living ones not to give up. As most tattooed young men did, AJ tried to hide his first tattoo from his parents. However, from the characteristics of the letter, this tattoo appears to read as “Death Gun”, as the last letter looks more like the letter ‘n’ than ‘y’. I twice asked AJ whether he had given me wrong information about this tattoo, but he insisted that the tattoo said “Death Guy”. It’s possible that the tattooist might not have understood the correct typography. However, the purpose of the tattoo which uses this *Blackletter* (Gothic) script was for encouraging and motivating himself as well as others.



Figure 12 AJ’s “Death Guy” tattoo. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

According to AJ, the tattoo is a description of himself as a ‘death guy’ who encourages the living ones to keep up their spirits in life. At first he denied that the tattoo was associated with him as a metal musician. But then, when I asked what the themes of his songs were, I found a connection between the tattoo’s philosophy and his songs’ themes which talk about life spirits. His songs are *Fire Burning*, *Move On*, *Keep Survive*, *We Never Give Up* and *One Falls, Millions Rise*. All these songs encourage young people to stand up against life’s obstacles. The relation between the philosophy of the tattoo and the themes of the songs is a personal consciousness that life is important.

Taylor’s (2014) study suggested there was aware of death can have a prevailing certain effect, and might bring about a change in attitude and perspective. The study gave examples

of people who had changed their way of life after recovering from suffering and disease. The link between the “Death Guy” tattoo and metal music taste can also be seen from its typeface style. The *Blackletter* or Gothic font is one of the most popular fonts among the metal community in Indonesia. Ganon (2018) notes that the Blackletter font with its dramatic medieval appearance is an international standard signifier for metal and rap musics. It is found on many bands’ logotypes, posters, albums and merchandise, as well as having nationalistic, literary and artistic associations with the Gothic font in some countries. In terms of identity, the “Death Guy” tattoo represents the international tastes of local metal musicians, the *anak underground*, which can also be seen from their song titles and sometimes the lyrics which often use English.

AJ’s next tattoo was a skull-headed screaming figure and a satanic-like object. The screaming figure is surrounded by red and orange objects that resemble a burning fire. For AJ, this tattoo is a visual identity of underground music and the words ‘dead’ and ‘end’ in the tattoo are the brand name for the underground merchandise shop. This is an interesting case concerning the possibility of having commercial interests or commercial relationships embodied in a tattoo, which could be issue for future research. The symbolism of death and destruction can also be seen in the visualisation of other metal music materials. Fiore and Contani (2014) observe that the visual identities of hard rock and heavy metal, such as the skull, exaggeration, and the representation of the devil are created to attract a particular audience and have rebellious connotations. They argue that all these symbols represent “provocation/nonconformism, vitality/rejuvenation, immortality, and liberty, also awakening enormous curiosity” (2014, p. 52). AJ’s tattoo of the skull-headed screaming figure whose entire body is submerged in a flame seems to fit with Fiore and Contani’s analysis. The skull is decorated with the seven-pointed star (*Septagram*). On the head of the skull, there is ‘NM’ which is the initials of *Nematoda* (AJ’s music band). AJ said that the seven-pointed star was inspired by Slipknots’ similar symbol. Under the *Nematoda* symbol, there is the same horror depiction of a devil with the words ‘dead’ and ‘end’ in its eyes. This tattoo shows AJ’s commitment to the band which is expressed in a ‘permanent’ tattoo.



Figure 13 AJ's hell tattoo. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The seven-pointed star, according to AJ, is more precisely associated with the seven doors of hell according to Islam. AJ explained:

“Actually, if connected with hell, it is even more frightening. Initially, this is from the thought that by using number 6, later people will consider me a Satanist. So I use 7, yes lucky number 7 can be said. But it makes perfect sense if combined with the 7 doors of hell. Let people be more afraid or more inclined to learn religion.” (Interview, 10/07/2017)

I asked AJ why he, personally, had chosen a frightening symbol. He said: “That spooky picture might describe us as *underground*, we live underground, associated with demons etc.” If the hell-themed tattoos are linked with Nematoda, the band's name, then the tattoo's function is to show that the group is an underground metal group that adopts symbols of death or tortured objects as their visual identity. The trend of using horror symbols is common among underground musicians, and extends globally, as mentioned by Unger (2016). He notes that the death metal and other metal genres focus explicitly on the slasher sword style symbols, featuring horror themes with scenes of death, disgust and mutilation. There is also an exploration of the modality of the contemporary experience of defilement with horror, profanity, gore and strangeness (Unger, 2016) as well as torture, porn and despair (Briefel, Miller and Westmore in Unger, 2016). Another theme in the metal genre

that became a trend was ‘madness’ (Robert Walser in Unger, 2016). Bands such as Carcass, General Surgery and Exhumed have all used graphic details of the horror theme of mad and corrupted science. AJ explained that “Dead End”, the name of the merchandise store selling underground music products, which was shown in his tattoo, had chosen AJ as a brand ambassador. Thus this image of the demon has the function of promoting a product but it also has economic value. This tattoo therefore represents both an association with the world of metal music as well the commercialisation of tattoos in the underground music scene.



Figure 14 Some of Surabaya and Sidoarjo’s underground festival posters that use skulls or other death symbolism. (Image: Konter Kultur)

Concepts of death are employed mostly in the death metal and black metal scenes. Black metal vocalists articulate the voice of the devil from hell by screaming, while the death metal vocalists use low guttural sounds. Both techniques represent nuances of horror. Another way to represent horror is in the songs’ themes. According to Narendra (2012), black metal identifies itself with Satanism and occultism, while death metal speaks of torture and suffering. Dietrich (2015) notes that in Northern Europe, for example in Norway, some black metal bands are anti-Christian and their musical themes relate to Satanism which has been adapted from the Satan narration of the bible. Another aspect is the inclusion of social, political sentiments or issues in Norway which helps it to become more popular among youngsters. Negative actions carried out by musicians and fans of the Norwegian black metal scene that reflect their anti-Christian principles include destroying and burning Christian churches. One of the churches that was burned down, the Fantoft stave church (medieval wooden church), became the cover image for Åske’s album in 1993 (Dietrich, *ibid*). An anti-Christian ideology typifies the black metal scene in Norway, but what about in Indonesia?

According to Sipit (interviewed on 22 July 2013), the theatrical stage performances take precedence over the tattoos. Their costumes and make-up become the stage power of black metal musicians, not the skin decorations. Sipit revealed that in the area of Sidoarjo city, black metal bands perform local Javanese occult traditions. For example, before starting the musical performance, the musicians pray certain incantations while lighting incense and also give offerings in the form of flowers to certain mystical powers. In the Javanese tradition, this is called *sesajen*. This local mystical theatrical and artistic side is more exposed, not the tattoos. Nevertheless, the inverted cross symbol of the Western black metal identity still exists on the stage and in their costumes as an example of the appropriation of international forms of performance and their hybridisation. In tattooing practices among the *anak underground*, this hybridisation can be seen in the use of international symbols embodied on their flesh as in AJ's case.

On the Island of Java, especially in the central and eastern parts, several of the metal scenes identify themselves as *Kejawen*, which is the local belief of Javanese society, while in West Java they identify as *Kasundan* (Sundanese culture). Usually, they are known as *Kejawen Black Metal* and *Kasundan Metal*. Those who identify with the theme of *Kejawen* have concepts similar to Norwegian metal, which is opposed to foreign values which influence all social aspects of its society, as most religions in Indonesia have been imported at different times in history. This is an interesting and contradictory phenomenon of cultural hybridity as *Kejawen* black metal believes that ancient Javanese culture also has religious value and this is placed alongside imported tropes of international metal. Narendra (2012) explains that for the *Kejawen* black metal, their perspective of God is different from the Islamic and Christian view as the *Kejawen* believe in diverse Gods, not a single entity as taught in *Samawi* religion²⁰. Their musical identities accommodate the spirits and the supernatural and mystical world, not to worship Satan but to respect local spirits, which were believed in by people in the past era of dynamism and animism or the indigenous religious or spiritual tradition. In practice, the themes of the songs and their style of performance use local approaches, for example, using Javanese and Sundanese languages and wearing costumes showing Javanese and Sundanese identities.

²⁰ Susanto and Idris (2017): "A samawi religion is a religion that is revealed to the prophets or apostles through holy books containing the words of God. Samawi religions are also often referred to as monotheistic religions. The religions often categorized into monotheistic or samawi religions are Judaism, Christianity and Islam."

For metal music in Indonesia, there are many themes that include both the local identity as well as Western-adapted styles, for example using Western terms for band names, song titles and lyrics. However, in my fieldwork, I never encountered underground musicians who used local mystical symbols, such as *Nyi Roro Kidul*, the South Sea-lord mystical woman who was well-known in local beliefs, especially in Java Island. I had found the same thing in my previous research on tattoos among the convicts in Yogyakarta (Handoko, 2010). In general, the inmates had horror-themed tattoos. Nevertheless, their tattoos depicted ghost or demonic tattoos of Western and even Japanese cultures. The reason they did not have tattoos of local ghosts was that psychologically, local ghosts were more ‘real’, so they were worried about being haunted for life. Another reason, they said, was that Western ghosts were more ‘aesthetic’. In the underground scene, as AJ explained, there was a view that local ghosts were more real and frightening if tattooed on the body, whereas Western ghosts seemed more aesthetic and people were more comfortable with them on their body. Moreover, the use of visual horror material seemed to identify them with particular subcultures and the expression of rebellion. These horrors have become one of the visual identities of the underground scene.

The next of AJ’s tattoos is a line of Arabic script of “*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*”, with a red blur /gradation background. Below, there is a symbol of one-eye. According to AJ, the tattoo is a prayer, a sign of an Islam follower, and the one-eye symbol means the eye of the heart. Both tattoos are in the middle of the chest.



Figure 15 AJ’s “*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*” and one-eye symbol tattoos. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

AJ told me that today’s life was full of negativity. This situation was felt by many young people in the underground scene, who were thus moving in the direction of spirituality. They

were becoming more serious to learn about Islam, which was considered one way to attain a good place in the afterlife. Like others, his tattoo can be seen as his desire to be closer to God by inking the symbol on his body. As he said, the tattoo of *Bismillah* was a prayer, whatever he did or wherever he went, the tattoo always reminded him to say *Bismillah*. Under the Arabic scripts, there is the one-eye symbol on the *epigastrium* area. AJ explained that the eye symbol was his personal interpretation of the eye of the heart. He said that the eye was related to the Arabic letters above it. Later I searched to try and find links between each symbol in Islamic teaching. I found that in the Qur'an it was said that man has two tools to see. The Qur'an calls it *Al-Bashor* and *Al-Bashiroh*; *Al-Bashor* is an eye-catching sight while *Al-bashiroh* is the light of the heart that can see the nature of things. It is not deceived by the outward appearance and can see the nature of goodness or evil behind it.²¹ AJ's one-eye symbol is the visual representation of *Al-Bashiroh*, a deep view whereby anyone can see all things with their heart, not just with eyes. If a person is blind, then only their vision will be lost, but if a person is blind to their heart, *Al-Bashiroh* will be far from them as well. Allah says: "Have they not travelled in the land so that they should have hearts with which to feel and ears with which to hear? For indeed it is not the eyes that grow blind – but it is the hearts, which are within the bosoms, that grow blind". (*Sûrah al-Hajj*: 46).²² Thus the one-eye tattoo on the body of AJ is not related to the popular eye of Horus – the symbol that emerged from the ancient Egyptian era, also known as the all-seeing eye. In the Christian tradition, the eye is iconography that represents God the Father (Fontana, 1997).

As both the "*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*" and the one-eye symbol were related to Islamic teaching, I presumed that AJ was one of the underground musicians who chose to join the *Underground Tauhid* movement. In this community, the underground musicians and fans declared themselves to be conservative Muslims. On 19 August 2015, I met the founder of the *Underground Tauhid*, whose name was Adt (he asked me to use initials as he did not want to be exposed). Adt said that the founders of this *dakwah* organisation were actually musicians who were no longer active in the underground music scene. Adt himself had decided to leave the world of underground music in 2006. One day, on Facebook, he met friends who were also no longer active in the underground

²¹ See *Apakah Bashiroh (Mata Hati) itu?*. (2014). Retrieved from <http://khazanahalquran.com/apakah-bashiroh-mata-hati-itu.html>.

²² See Sheikh `Abd al-`Azîz b. `Alî al-Suwayd. "*It is not the eyes that grow blind, but the hearts...*" Retrieved from "<http://en.islamtoday.net/artshow-282-3184.htm>

d scene and had been studying Islam seriously. They then had the idea of preaching what they had learned about Islam to other underground musicians and fans. The hope was that teenagers and youths involved in the underground music scene would stay away from the negative underground lifestyle that they had known such as drinking alcohol, adultery, consuming drugs and other negative activities.²³ They wanted to encourage the youth to keep playing music but in an Islamic way, and to stay away from those negative activities. In 2010 *Underground Tauhid* was formed, concentrated in the areas of Bekasi, in West Java Province and Surabaya, East Java Province.

Adt said that the *Underground Tauhid* movement classified the *dakwah* target audience into three groups. The first was the lovers of underground music who ‘lacked an understanding of Islam’ and were sensitive about being asked to join discussions about matters relating to Islam. The second group were those that could be invited to discuss Islam but still wanted to follow what the *Underground Tauhid* saw as a un-Islamic lifestyle, such as drinking, smoking and consuming marijuana, though in daily life, they were interested in praying. The third group were people who were already practising religious values but were still engaged in the underground music scene. After various considerations they decided to target the second group because it was easier to invite them to discussions and then encourage them to modify their practice of Islam. Also, their youth factor meant they could potentially be the next successors of this movement. The big issue was the first group which was very difficult to reach because they already had negative views on the *Underground Tauhid* movement. To spread their *dakwah* teachings they used online media. In addition, Adt personally created other *dakwah* media in the form of a zine which was not part of the *Underground Tauhid*. However, as Adt was one of the founders of *Underground Tauhid*, this zine became linked with it. However, because this zine essentially criticised the punk, hardcore and metal ideology, it led to fear of friction or hostility with the underground community which could not accept the criticism. Realising this, Adt then left the *Underground Tauhid* in 2014 and handed over his management to other friends. However, the *Underground Tauhid* began to decline because Adt had been the main contributor to the *Underground Tauhid* postings. Almost all the posts on the *Underground Tauhid* had been done by Adt.

²³ The *Underground Tauhid* goals are similar to the Straightedge lifestyle, as mentioned in Chapter 1 of this thesis, in that they avoid “heavy alcohol consumption, extensive drug use, and/or promiscuous sexual dalliances” (Atkinson, 2003).

In September 2014, Adt founded *Konter Kultur*, an online media website that discussed the Islamic lifestyle with a disguised approach, attaching itself to positive news from underground music issues, for example the Straightedge lifestyle against drunkenness, adultery and narcotics. The audiences did not realise that messages about Islam teaching or values were being inserted into the posts with the aim of gradually changing the lifestyles of the target audience. This was also a medium of *dakwah*, but Adt did not want to use the name of Islam directly in this new style of preaching, in anticipation of early rejection by the target audiences. The purpose of this *Konter Kultur* was simply to change the habits of the younger generation, for example, at the lowest level, changing mindsets among the *anak underground* who still considered consuming alcohol or smoking as acceptable. Adt hoped to give the audience a new perspective on things that are *haram*. Since its emergence, Straightedge has been the benchmark of *Konter Kultur* in persuading the fans of underground music to choose a more orthodox lifestyle. Adt considered that in this way he could be more successful in guiding young fans of underground music to choose a healthier and better lifestyle according to Islam. If any of them showed interest in studying Islam more deeply, Adt had a place to meet and learn Islam offline. AJ had heard about the movement some years previously and admitted that there had been some of the *anak underground* involved in the activity of that group. Another movement he knew of was *Metal Satu Jari* (One Finger Metal). AJ respected those *anak underground* who joined *Underground Tauhid* and also complimented *Metal Satu Jari* but AJ himself was not one of its members and did not participate in the *Metal Satu Jari* gigs although he had an Islamic symbol tattoo.



Figure 16 *Metal Satu Jari*. (Image: www.djarumcoklat.com/article/sekarang-metal-satu-jari)

AJ's Arabic prayer tattoo can be seen as a phenomenon of the relationship between metal and religious values among musicians and fans of underground music in Indonesia. Before the idea of Islamic values became the current trend among some metal musicians and fans in some countries, metal music was associated with demonic or dark music. The *Bismillah* tattoo is a sign of spiritual awareness that began to grow among the subculture groups, a change in the social situation of the metal scene. What was the trigger for the emergence of this phenomenon? Hidayatullah (2014) explains that globalisation became the trigger. He cites Bourdieu's term of *the arena of cultural production* in which globalisation enabled the establishment of a hybrid identity. He gives examples of the emergence of some products of popular Islamic culture in Indonesia. They appeared in the forms of Islamic music, movies, *sinetron*, fashion and Islamic novels. These things represent the hybridisation process between local and global elements as a way for urban Muslims to adapt or integrate, sometimes as a resistance to the influence of global culture both from the West and the Middle East (ibid.). This is a really important point in terms of resisting and negotiating both Western orthodoxies and Arabising orthodoxies within Islam.

One of the latest phenomena that represent the process of hybrid culture among young Indonesian Muslims can be seen in the emergence of the *Metal Satu Jari* movement on the Indonesian metal music scene, and *Underground Tauhid* and *Konter Kultur* among punk and hardcore-based fans. *Metal Satu Jari* itself emerged at the *Urban Garage Festival* which was held at Rossi Music Center, Fatmawati, in South Jakarta in March 2010. At the concert, one of the senior musicians of the Indonesian metal music scene, Ombat, vocalist of band *Tengkorak* ("skull" in English), declared the replacement of the symbol of the metal greeting²⁴ from three fingers, which was the cultural symbol of metal associated with Satan, into one finger. This is one of the symbolic postures incorporated into Islamic prayer as they read the *Shahadat* (declaration of belief in Islam and the prophethood of Mohammad). Previously people only knew the symbol *Meloik*, commonly known as the *demon horn*, which was first popularised by Ronnie James Dio, a frontman of the power metal group, Dio. With the finger and index finger that became the symbol. Since then the *meloik* has

²⁴ Sekarang Metal Satu Jari???, (2014). Retrieved from www.djarumcoklat.com/article/sekarang-metal-satu-jari

developed into one of the eternal symbols for universal metal music culture. This connects with the 1960s counterculture fascination with Alistair Crowley and his brand of Satanism.²⁵

Although AJ has a tattoo with a prayer written in Arabic, his songs are not themed with Islamic propaganda, but more the social problems of urban people or youngsters. AJ studied Islam because of self-awareness, not because of the appearance of the movement of *Metal Satu Jari*. He carries out the five-day prayer principle and avoids the culture of free sex and drugs. From AJ's tattoos and the growth of conservative Islam among the *anak underground*, the phenomenon of the Islamic *dakwah* has entered the area of metal music, which previously had nuances of drunkenness, Satanism and occultism, towards a new paradigm of a more religious Islam.²⁶ However, as stated by AJ, his worship of God on one side and practising metal music on the other should not be mixed up. Music is music, and worship is a form of personal responsibility by himself to glorify God. This is the difference between AJ and the one-finger metal musicians. His Arabic tattoo is a sign of his relationship with God and his identity as a Muslim. Yet, his perspective on metal is still the universal metal alongside pluralistic views.

5.4. Case 4: AM

5.4.1. Biography

AM is the vocalist of a famous local band in Sidoarjo, *The Shantoso*. Besides being a musician, AM is also a tour guide for music groups from abroad who visit Indonesia. Usually, those bands also collaborate with *The Shantoso* to do tour performances in various cities and towns in Indonesia. AM's job is to provide accommodation and transport during the tours. The financing of the tour is organised collectively and also relies on merchandise sales. He has been actively involved in the underground music scene since 2004, when he was still at high school. At the end of 2008, he joined *The Shantoso*, a hardcore band that was formed in Sidoarjo in 2005. He was requested by *The Shantoso's* management to fill the vocalist position as the previous singer left the group for an office job. The band's musical themes are more about political issues, personal life, friendship and social issues. For example, *The Shantoso* song entitled *Gives My Life Back* talks about violence to a child in a

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ The emergence of the *da'wah* use of the music medium started in the 1970s using Dangdut or Melayu music. That form moved in the opposite direction to become mainstream pop nowadays.

broken home family where an alcoholic father used to beat the child and his mother. In this song, *The Shantoso* criticise the view that divorce is the best way in this situation, as the effects of parents' separation will always affect the children's future. This song is about how the loveliness of life is grabbed away from a child's life. The song is in English. Usually, every song by Indonesian musicians which has English lyrics will be explained before being sung by the vocalist during the gigs. The singer often makes a little political oration or speech which relates to the topic of his song before singing. The hardcore scene's live dynamics inspired AM to have some images and slogans which expressed his feelings about the hardcore community, his spiritual journey, and life. I talked with him about the tattoos that were inspired by songs and slogans that became the main ideas for the tattoo creations on AM's body. I focus a lot on the song lyrics for this case study as the concepts of each tattoo relate to song titles.

5.4.2. The tattoos

AM's first tattoo was done in 2006 when he joined the *Bak Pecah* (Romantic in Black), a hardcore band from Bojonegoro, East Java. His first tattoo does not have any relation to music. It was a picture of Jesus' head. AM told me that since he was little he had wanted to have a Jesus' tattoo figure, for it to be the medium to keep God in his mind and heart. The second tattoo was Jesus' crucifixion on his back as a sign of his identity as a Christian and a spirit of devotion to God. Both tattoos are located on the chest and back, so they are not visible to the wider public except his underground community, as once I saw him topless while performing. Then the third tattoo he had on his arm in 2010. It is an angel image holding a rosary. This tattoo is a symbol of his late mother. Another tattoo is the community tattoo of HSC (Hardcore Sidoarjo Community) with its slogan "We stand, we believe, and we proud". The tattoo shows the iconic baseball batter combined with brass knuckles or knuckle-dusters. There is also a tattoo that has a connection to his musical journey on the left arm. It is a tattoo of a tour with an Australian hardcore music group called 'Clear Summer'. The image of the logo is unique, being a duck head and its intestine. This tattoo marks the 12-day journey along with the Java cities. Other tattoos are the titles of the band's songs such as *Hardcore Sex* and the name of the group with its slogan, "The Shantoso: Stay with Your Pride". I asked him about the family's response regarding his tattoos and whether those tattoos had been used as part of his musical performance, and he replied:

"The first time to have a tattoo, I did not live with my family. At first, there was a sense of anger amongst them. My family was disappointed. I explained that the tattoos were not criminal symbols. The family did not like that I considered having them as normal. My friends did not see it as a matter. I was tattooed not because I was influenced by friends or anyone else ...Tattoos are not a part of my stage performance. However, some people think that with many tattoos will look cool on the stage. The important thing is we behave cool." (29/03/2013)



Figure 17 AM's first tattoo, a portrait of Jesus and a slogan which represents Jesus as well as hardcore principles from AM's perspective. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The head of Jesus with his eyes closed was chosen by AM as his first tattoo to express a devotion to the miserable Jesus who did penance for the sins of humanity. Different from the previous case study subjects whose tattoos were done using an advanced tattoo machine, the Jesus tattoo on AM's chest was made using a simple tattoo machine that was commonly used by amateur tattooists, the one that uses a dynamo tape recorder with an acupuncture needle. The ink that was used was commonly for writing. The use of non-specific ink for this tattoo has made the colour change gradually. Initially, it was black, but after a few years the colour has faded. The placement of this tattoo on the left side of the chest corresponds to a sense of respect so that the figure of Jesus was placed on the chest close to the heart. The philosophy of this position is that Jesus will still be in the heart, always accompanying him in every second of his life. The words "Friendship, Loyalty and Respect" according to AM can be interpreted in three ways. First of all, it is the attitude of Jesus who is always willing to accompany anyone who suffers and help them. Jesus is a loyal figure to his Father in heaven who asked him to sacrifice for mankind. Jesus did not escape the responsibility of carrying the cross and suffering and dying on the cross.

Another thing about Jesus' figure is that he has great respect for his parents, especially his mother, Mary. Personally, this is the same as AM who greatly respects and loves the figure of his mother, who during her life also respected the Virgin Mary. That is why he has a tattoo inscribed "In Loving Memory: Mom" which is depicted as an angel figure who prays using the rosary (see Figure 22). When examining the character of the letters of the words "Friendship, Loyalty and Respect," once again it is using the typeface that is commonly used among the *anak underground*, namely *Blackletter* or Gothic style fonts. The choice of the typeface, explained AM, is because he is very familiar with it and its characters which seem classic, and looked appropriate to be put beside the figure of Jesus. AM also referred to the words "Friendship, Loyalty, and Respect" representing the spirit of the underground music community that relied on collectiveness (Interview, 29/03/2013).



Figure 18 AM's tattoo that became a remembrance of his late mother. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The negative views of the *anak underground* with their tattoos, such as being accused of not having the spirit of religiosity seems to be indisputable. This is contradictory because, for those who are Christian as well as Muslim, the tattoos which are created based on the idea of religious symbolism, besides showing their identity as followers of a particular religion are also an expression of devotion to God or prayer. An example of this is the tattoo of Jesus hanging on a cross on AM's body (see Figure 23). During my field research, I found the tattoo of the Jesus symbol on the cross was always placed on the back. There are several reasons, and generally, it is based on technical reasons. The back is the broadest area of the body compared with the other parts, so that vertically and horizontally, it can be used to set

the crucifixion picture properly because of its vast field. Secondly, the placement is more philosophical in describing what is in the New Testament when Jesus carried his cross to Golgotha. For those who have this tattoo of Jesus' crucifixion, they always say that they want to be with Jesus and carry the cross on their back or shoulders, which is associated with this image of suffering, selflessness, sacrifice, etc. That is why the tattoo position of Jesus' crucifixion is put on the back.



Figure 19 The tattoo of the cruxifixion of Jesus. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

AM's decision to choose Christian symbols is to reflect his love for his religion, rooted in his parents who were Catholics. The religious confirmation can be seen as well from the mother's tattoo which is depicted as an angel holding the rosary (see Figure 23). In her lifetime, it seems that his mother was a devout Catholic, which made AM very impressed with her.



Figure 20 *Arwah bebek* (the duck spirit) tattoo which was done by an Australian musician. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The first time I saw the *arwah bebek* I was so impressed. It is a picture of a head of a duck and a wiggly thick black line. AM said it was a depiction of the spirit (in Indonesian, *arwah*) of the duck. The thick wiggly line was an intestine. This imagery is similar to *Penanggal*, which is a kind of vampiric ghost in Malay tradition. It is a detached female head with the stomach and entrails dangling below it. Instead of giving a negative perspective, this tattoo does not have a relation to horror, but is a symbol of the Java tour of *The Shantoso* and *Clear Summer*, a hardcore band from Australia. AM said that the meaning of the soul is a figure that moves quickly from one dimension to another dimension. It illustrates how the band moved from one location to another in a short time. The duck symbol represents a particular way of life of this animal, which can live in water, on the ground, and in the air. Philosophically this illustrates that the underground community consists of various scenes or types of music (Interview, 29/03/2013), as among the underground scenes in Indonesia where we can find Punk, Hardcore, Ska, Death metal, Black metal, Trash metal, Metal *Kejawen*, and so on. This distinction is not a matter of concern, but rather gives a variety of nuances while remaining united. The principle is a mutual respect in not discriminating against the music scene. In the underground music community, the different scenes are supposed to merge into one unity.

AM also said that the other reason for using the duck as the symbol of the tour was based on the character of the duck which is fussy. It is also like the *anak underground* who will not stop singing and voicing their hopes, ideas or criticism through musical activities. This intestine can also be associated with a long journey that has to be done as the tour travelled to various cities in Java which was very tiring because they had to travel long overland distances from one city to another for 12 days. As a road, the intestine that is winding shows the length of the tour trip (Interview, 29/03/2013). The use of a quite symbolic and meaningful tattoo, but not as aesthetically sophisticated as the duck symbol on AM's body, was seen in the 'Venus symbol combined with the clenched fist' on AY's body.

AM is a well-known figure in the underground community in Sidoarjo and Surabaya, as the singer of The Shantoso, one of the bands that has a considerable fan base. AM's totality in the world of underground music can be observed in his busy life with his band and the Hardcore community of Sidoarjo. His strong feelings about being a part of the Hardcore community in Sidoarjo can also be seen in the way he expresses it an HCS tattoo (Hardcore Sidoarjo) logo. The HCS logo consists of the words "HCS Family Crew" and the HCS

slogan: "We Stand, we believe, and we proud" in the black bold serif typeface. These words are surrounded by images of the brass knuckle and baseball bats.



Figure 21 A tattoo of the logo of HCS (Hardcore Sidoarjo). (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The brass knuckle tattooed on AM's right arm was actually a famous symbol that was often associated with Hardcore music culture because of the nature of the music and the nature of its listeners related to the values of violence or 'tough guy'.²⁷ Likewise, a baseball bat sometimes has other functions than just for sport especially when it is used in a commotion/riot, and could turn into a weapon. From this perspective comes the meaning of violence. In the history of the emergence of Hardcore, it is undeniable that the characteristic of this music scene was a brutal fan base, physically and emotionally. They fought with fellow music fans in gigs and studios, and even attacked the police. They are very anti-authority. Sanford (2014) said that the spirit of Hardcore in the early days was a rebellion against the situation that occurred, but it became excessive and furthermore, in its development, Hardcore music brought the physical strength aspect as one of its musical traits.

Thus, from the beginning of the formation of the Hardcore music scene, the association of violence, brutality and rebellion in this community was incarnate in the form of the use of brass knuckles and baseball bat symbols. Both icons are an example of the visual identity of the musicians and the Hardcore scene which was then adapted and imitated in Indonesia. In

²⁷ *Brass Knuckles Information*. Retrieved from www.weapons-universe.com/Brass_Knuckles_Information.shtml

the local context, in Surabaya and Sidoarjo, both symbols reflect not the violent physical nature of this group but more the visual image showing the spirit of the local Hardcore scene and its thematic roots in Western Hardcore music.



Figure 22 The CD cover of a Hardcore band in Surabaya, Stab In The Heart, that was released on 30 September 2013.
(Image: <https://www.last.fm/music/STAB+IN+THE+HEART>)

Another example is the album cover of the Hardcore band of Surabaya, Stab in the Heart, featuring a male figure with a gesture of attacking (Figure 27). In his right hand, the figure is using brass knuckles. Visually, the image appears violent, emotional and ferocious. Similarly, the HCS symbol uses the same object (Figure 26). However, as far as I know, there was never any serious violence caused by Hardcore or underground music performances in Surabaya and Sidoarjo during my field research. I only observed some conflicts because of bodies colliding while dancing. It used to happen with drunken groups of people involved in the gigs. To prevent serious security issues, at some gigs the police attended to guard the events. This was a kind of prevention by the local authority. In Indonesia, every activity carried out by members of the community and involving a large number of people is required to give a report to the nearest police station, for both outdoor and indoor activities. This is based on the *Juklap Kapolri*²⁸ No. Pol/02/XII/95 concerning licensing and notification of community activities, such as music performances (e.g. Dangdut), *Wayang Kulit* (shadow puppets), *Ketoprak* (local Javanese stage drama), and other shows. That is why I sometimes saw some police at underground music shows to guard the event. It was possibly for preventive measures and if there was chaos it could be controlled quickly. Although its relevance is questionable, the association of violence with Hardcore music is evident in the views of the

²⁸ The National Police Chief's guidance

people outside the scene, especially when it involves the influence of alcohol in music performances. Yet, probably this is how the participants also play up to this image and expectation of violence in terms of their expressions of visual identity and symbolism.



Figure 23 Police guarding a gig in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

AM's next tattoo is a burning baseball image with the slogan "Hardcore Sex" which is a visualisation of the band's title song from The Shantoso. AM's tattoos seem to have continuity of visual discourse as one tattoo connects with another following the same themes: music and Hardcore.



Figure 24 *Hardcore Sex*, a song title of The Shantoso. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The *Hardcore Sex* song, according to AM, is about the collective spirit of community, friendship and the city of Sidoarjo. At first, I suspected that the word sex was related to the

notion of sexuality, which in the view of local people was taboo for discussion. However, AM explained that the word 'sex' here did not mean the negative term, but was about male and female, representing equality or relationships. A baseball and a bat are used as the visual representations of the Hardcore scene, along with brass knuckles. This is symbolism of affiliation to an international 'scene'. The *Hardcore Sex* song seemed very popular among underground music fans in Sidoarjo. In one of his performances, AM sang this song while not wearing a shirt. As mentioned earlier, he had said that he did not expose his tattoos in public outside the underground community. In his community, it seems different. All the tattoos on his body were visible. He sang and danced around with a group of music fans. Although AM said that the tattoos on his body were not a part of his stage identity, in this instance, his tattoos could be seen as part of the body performance. By showing the name of the group, the song titles, the logo and the slogans of the Hardcore community, this could be interpreted as a form of confirmation that he was entirely involved in the spirit of the local Hardcore scene. This is reinforced by the lyrics of his group's song dedicated to the local Hardcore scene which is performed in English:

*"We stand and proud with the crew
Nothing different we all same
Make a friendship until the end
moreover, Hardcore sex family crew
me and you, we still together
Friendship commitment now and forever
Loyalty and friendship never the end!!!!
Hardcore Sex.....
Hardcore Sex.....
Hardcore Sex.....
Hardcore Sex....."*

They danced together shouting "Hardcore sex!" repeatedly accompanied by loud clanking music. AM sang the song for about two minutes but it seemed enough to drain the fans' sweat and created a spirit of togetherness and joy among the musicians and fans in the small gig. This spirit of togetherness is represented on his body by a burning baseball. Both the choice of language and the choice of tattoo imagery which have foreign origins, show that the local Hardcore absorbs and uses the international values.

AM's last tattoo is the words 'The Shantoso: Stay with Your Pride.' The decorative style typeface of the tattoos reflects the band and the underground community as well as the issues that occur in the scene.



Figure 29 The Shantoso's song title: *Stay with Your Pride*. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

As explained earlier (in the duck soul/spirit tattoo concepts) this underground community consists of various scenes such as Punk, Hardcore, Death Metal, Thrash Metal, Black Metal, *Kejawen* Black Metal, Ska, and so on. This diversity can lead to a kind of tribal conflict if each scene considers their scene as superior. The song *Stay with Your Pride* criticises the dangers of feeling superior to the others. There is a message in the song and the tattoo that the underground groups must unite to be stronger to face the displeasure and scorn of the people outside the community who are not familiar with the principles and lifestyle of the *anak underground*. The song expresses the need for unity:

*"On the streets, we burn our flag
Bring a fortune for your life
You know you're not alone
Don't be afraid someone besides you take all
And That makes you pride
And coming out together
STAY WITH YOUR PRIDE
Damn all of human going by
Wanna be sacrificed on the war
Living out now before we die
And give it on my face I want you to know
Before we go to walk alone
Before we die to change a distance*

*Before we can take a step inside to your fucking pride
STAY WITH YOUR PRIDE."*

The most important words are the phrase "On the streets, we burn our flag. Bring a fortune for your life." According to AM in our conversation on 02/07/2017 - four years after our first meeting in 2013 - each scene should put away its group identity (represented by the word *flag*) to establish the spirit of unity among the underground community. He realised that the differences essentially existed, but they were not supposed to be exclusive. They were all the same and united, he stated. The concept reminds me of the spirit of togetherness in the social life of the Indonesian community in a broader perspective which has the motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which means "unity in diversity" in the Sanskrit language. The tattoo functions as a manifestation of the spirit of togetherness that must remain preserved among the underground musicians and fans.

5.5. Case 5. Ayik

5.5.1. Biography

Ayik is an ex-street Punk, a single mother of two children, and a self-employed worker in the screen printing home industry. She became interested in joining the underground community while she was in senior high school. In 2005, she joined the Punk community in Sidoarjo, East Java, when entering high school. She chose the scene because she had a desire to live more freely from her parents' pressure. Her reason to join the community was because of her friends who had already joined this Punk group and seemed to enjoy their freedom as human beings. Between 2005 and 2010 she was living nomadically as a street Punk in Malang, Jakarta, Kediri, and Lumajang. She got her first tattoo when joining the Punk group. The tattoo was a *Hellcat* (black cat), placed on her back. It was a representation of the dark side of life. In her new life outside the family, her activity was *ngamen* (being a street musician) and she spent most of her time getting drunk with friends. One day, she realised that what she had done was not valuable for her progress in life. She did not get any benefits from doing what she had been doing. She was described as stupid just for doing those two things (*ngamen* and getting drunk) all the time. She felt a loss with everything she had sacrificed like school,

family and friends. Then she tried to find information related to the positive Punk community outside her group; she wanted to change her life. Then one day, she found out that in a small town called Blitar in East Java province, there was a Punk scene that succeeded in involving itself with the wider community and gave some benefits to its social environment. In 2008, she decided to join the group and lived with this local Punk community to learn about merchandise production, graphic design, and household waste recycling. She described how this Punk group was so different from her previous group. She explained what she had been doing during her residency:

"In Blitar, it was like working as a social worker, Bro. It was in 2008. That was really like a social worker. I was really faced to the essence of punk life by practising it directly in Blitar. Punk was not anti-social; precisely during my time in Blitar, I was doing social activities such as free school, not the actual school but free study groups on every Friday. We were taught screen printing, design, music and so on, learned just non-academic." (Interview, 10/04/2013)

She added that she felt a different atmosphere in this Blitar Punk community compared to when she was involved with the street Punk. This group was comfortable and positive. Another thing that was unique about this Punk group was that it was deeply integrated with the wider community. Their involvement included, for example, when a neighbour passed away they all gathered at the funeral houses and helped the families with the preparations for the burials, such as the setting up of their tombstones. Every Sunday they had routine activities to take the rubbish from around the village and help the villagers regarding household waste recycling by separating the wet and dry garbage. Wet garbage would be processed into fertiliser because geographically the Blitar area is agricultural. They gave the fertilisers for free to the farmers. Some of the dry rubbish such as plastic bottles was turned into artwork. She revealed that, as she was living in Blitar, she learned about positive values of Punk, such as treating fellow human beings well, as well as the environment. Besides doing household waste recycling, these local punks had a car wash business where the detergent was not thrown into the river but was processed into more eco-friendly waste by mixing it with a sort of decomposer. They also applied work standards following the International Labour Organisation (ILO) regulations where people worked a maximum of 8 hours per day.

5.5.2. The tattoos

Ayik said that anger and emotion were her first motivations for getting tattooed. She said:

"Initially, what motivated me to get a tattoo was emotion, just emotion. So the first time I got a tattoo, arguably it was an accumulation of anger for years because of my broken home. Well, during high school, I finally got a tattoo which can be said as the expression of my accumulation of anger, dissatisfaction with my family's choices, rules, and so forth. Those things were all that I tried to express, to feel through tattoos. Feeling the pain, after the pain, I felt so relieved, so satisfied." (Interview, 10/04/2013)

One day, her mom asked her why she had tattooed her back. Ayik replied: "I am tattooed because of a derivative factor. My father was tattooed; his daughter was not wrong if doing the same, not much different. Then my mother became silent." Her brother saw her tattoo as a problem as well, saying: "Hi, what is it on your back, what did you do?", then Ayik answered: "Well, what is it on your arm as well? Who talks also has tattoos. You are complaining about my tattoo, even though both of us have them." From these two conversations it can be seen that there is a gender gap where it is considered inappropriate for a woman to have a tattoo although in the family a tattoo is a common thing because in Ayik's case her father and brother also had them. So there was a tradition of tattooing in her family. It happened in more than one of the case studies, as shown in the next case study (Bludz). The anger and rejection of Ayik's tattoos could be due to the lack of acceptability of tattoos in the past, especially among the Javanese women. This meant that tattoos were not seen as appropriate in the previous generation. It would be different if compared to traditions in other parts of Indonesia such as among the Dayak women who were already tattooed from a young age as part of their local tradition.

Previous research *Makna Tato Bagi Wanita Surabaya* (The Tattoo Meanings among Surabaya Women) by Sudrajat (2008) explained that, in general, negative views of tattoos on women in Surabaya were caused by the existence of a social construction of the 'single beauty concept', an understanding that a woman's body must be 'pure'. According to Sudrajat (ibid.), in response to this, some women had chosen to have temporary tattoos. In some respects, this kind of tattoo was considered more beneficial because the motifs and positions could be changed according to the need. For women whose work in the entertainment business used tattoos as one of the stage attractions, this temporary tattoo was a good option

because after the performance, the tattoo could be removed or its position could be changed according to the theme of the events.

For the female performers in Surabaya, according to Sudrajat (ibid.), the tattoos were important because they increased ‘self-capitalisation value’. Sudrajat added that for women who had permanent tattoos, the tattoos were put in covered areas because they were still worried about social pressure or gaining negative judgements from others. They showed the tattoos to others in the community where there was wide acceptance of tattooed women, such as in entertainment workplaces. In these social environments, some women wore dresses that allowed their tattoos to be seen by others, especially the opposite sex, to create the impression of being sexy or attractive (ibid.). Hawkes, Senn and Thorn (2004) found that small, neat girlish designs were more acceptable. This was similar to what happened in Surabaya. Sudrajat (2008) said that feminine impressions or designs were more easily accepted by the public with less pressure.



Figure 25 Tattoos as a sign of a spiritual journey. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The tattoo Ayik liked the most was the tattoo on her left arm of the Virgin Mary, an angel, and fire (the place where Evil was burned). The Evil that had been burned in the fire was the imagery of her bad qualities, she said. There is a tattoo using a decorative font that reads “Aibe” and a picture of a woman holding a cross. Narratively these tattoos tell of God sending down St Mary and the angel to fight the evil in Ayik’s body by the way of *aibe*, which she interpreted as a battle for freedom. She had found this word in a textbook. Finally, she felt like she had won the fight against herself to get the cross of Christ. These tattoos

pictured her journey to becoming a Catholic. This was a particularly difficult transition to make due to Muslim orthodoxy regarding conversion because formerly she had been a Muslim. In some countries such as Malaysia, conversion would not have been legal, but despite its legality here, social acceptance was the problematic thing.

Her interest in learning about Catholicism was aroused when she was in high school. There was a question from her teacher about why his students became Muslims. One of the students answered that it was because their parents were Muslims. It raised a question for Ayik in that she felt people had the right as human beings to choose their own religion rather than inheriting it from their parents. She said that religion was a choice of free will, without pressure or coercion. One night, when travelling to Bali she had dreamed of being baptised by a figure she believed to be Jesus. She became restless, and two days after the dream she sent a short message to the CBN prayer service.²⁹ They replied by saying that God wanted to help and use her as His tools. Then, after that event, she experienced many instances, which all created a peaceful feeling, which she had never felt before. Dreams are believed to be the medium carrying information about the future of humans. It was said by Wibowo (2001) that Indonesian people, especially the Javanese, already have a collective awareness of dream interpretation dating back several hundreds of years. He studied dreams based on a manuscript written by H. Maksoem of Tegal, Central Java, in the 1930s named *Ta'biraning Impen*. From the manuscripts, there are four symbols contained in the context of dream interpretation in Javanese culture, including religious symbols, which are:

1. Angels, prophets/apostles, God, heaven and hell.
2. Symbols relating to nature, namely: the sky, sun, moon, stars, rain, lightning, rainbows, clouds, fire, wells, rivers, seas, hot water, wind, mud, soil, forests, sand/dust, mountains, earthquakes, large and small trees, drinks and milk, livestock, wild animals, reptiles and venomous animals, birds, fish.
3. Symbols relating to human life such as marriage, pregnancy and childbirth, death, men and women and parts of the human body.
4. Symbols of human work such as ships, bricks, houses and corners of houses, bridges, clothing, women's make-up and money, weapons, containers and equipment, and various other objects.

²⁹ The Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) is a global outreach service which is designed to spread the gospel to people through mass media and personal service.

A smaller proportion of Christians exist in Java but dreams have been highlighted in the context of Christian teachings (Ardila, 2014). Ardila, who conducted a theological review on dreams based on the Genesis 37: 1–11 and its relation to the life of Christian believers, reveals that:

1. Dreams are a means of revelation, through which God gives instructions and leads his people in his ways.
2. God communicates with humans, not only to people in the Old Testament, but even now God still uses dreams as a means to communicate with humans to remember and convey God's purpose to humans.
3. God speaks to humans in dreams, so humans know that God is sovereign in providing information about the future.
4. Through visions, God gives warnings to humans. He gives warnings to certain people whose lives are not pleasing to God so that the person repents.
5. God can deliver the intention to humans.
6. Dreams can be used by God to express visions for certain people, by giving a vision of the future.



Figure 26 Tattoos of God's creation. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Ayik's next tattoos are God's creation of the world and Alfa-Omega tattoos. These tattoos and the rest had been done by the same tattooist. On Ayik's right arm there are some images of the sun, stars, moon and peacocks, which are narrations of God's creation of the world. Uniquely, there is a heart image in the middle as a symbol of human life. Ayik said that through these tattoos she wanted to say that God created the universe and its contents,

including men, with beauty, compassion and heart. These tattoos are not completed yet. She wanted to add a tattoo of Jesus above the images of the sun, moon, stars and heart symbol as the centre point. But the addition of Jesus' figure had to be postponed because the tattooist migrated to Kalimantan for an indeterminate time. In the underground scene, it seems there is also a broader issue of loyalty to a particular tattoo artist and some of the *anak underground* tend to have tattoos from just one tattooist, such as Dhit Rats.

Ayik's idea of the planned visual narrative to match a spiritual worldview was an interesting motivation. These can be seen as 'virtual' tattoos externalising an internal world, but also taking a hold of the future through planning. Thus Ayik's perspective on tattoos can be described as fully conceptualised. This assumption can be seen in the connection between the tattoos on Ayik's left arm and the tattoos on her right arm. This can be seen as a form of continuity of the Christianity concept as Ayik argued that these tattoos had the same value as the other ones as both were done with grateful expression for the life that had been gained by Ayik so far, especially through knowing the Christian faith.

The next tattoos also seem to have continuity from the previous tattoos. On the right and left upper arms, there are the words "Alfa" and "Omega". At first, I thought they were other biblical names of Jesus. According to Ayik's perception and knowledge, however, *Alpha* means God existed before time, before the creation of the universe, while *Omega* means God is everlasting. Those tattoos represent Jesus, said Ayik, adding that Jesus would be the first and the last God. However, these two words were also the names of her twin daughters, who would become her first and last children as she might not want to have another child in the future. The typeface of the tattoos is a decorative ornamental style.



Figure 27 Tattoos of Ayik's children's names, Alfa and Omega. (Photo: Cons Tri Handoko)

This supports her argument that these two children were a form of beauty that God had given to her. Ayik said that for these tattoos, she had given the tattooist the freedom to choose the typeface himself. Interestingly, about the tattoos, her twin daughter once asked her why their names were written on their mother's arms. Ayik then explained to them the meaning of the tattoos. She also confirmed to her children that the tattoos on her body should not be seen as something that is *ora ilok* (Javanese for not proper) or *haram* (an Islamic term which is commonly used in public, for something that is not allowed by the religious teaching). She taught them that something called *ora ilok*, or not proper to do, was something like the act of stealing or taking other people's possessions, but not tattoos. She tried to give an understanding of her tattoos to her children early. She hoped that they would understand that their mother was not as bad as people might say.

In addition to places of worship, schools are the types of places that can spread an implicit rejection of people with tattoos. But at university level, tattoos seem to be regarded as common, especially in universities with Arts majors and/or universities that are not owned by religion-related foundations. Ayik said that she tried not to expose her first tattoo until she dropped out of her senior high school. Regarding dropping and picking up her twin daughters from school, she said that her children's friends and their parents most likely knew that Ayik had tattoos as she had some tattoos on her fingers. However, no one had asked her about it until, one day, there was a social gathering at her children's school, where parents and students gathered at a swimming pool. At this event, all participants were required to participate in outbound activities where one of the activities was to plunge themselves into the pool. Of course, for this part, Ayik had to wear a swimsuit but she forgot that her swimsuit was not the kind that covered all parts of her body so the teachers and parents saw that Ayik's body was covered in tattoos. At the time, the teachers seemed to disapprove of what they saw. But Ayik still thought that it was nothing of concern.

With the incidents of rejection and disapproving views of her tattoos, both in the family and outside, and the occurrence of cynical views of her daughters' school teachers, it then raised the question of why Ayik kept insisting that the tattoos were important to her. Did the tattoos make her feel more beautiful or confident? She explained that the tattoos were symbols of 'victory'. The meaning of victory here was that she had the freedom to treat her own body in the way she chose. She had her full body, which was her own territory and was autonomous, not influenced by social pressure. Similarly, in terms of Modern Primitivism, for example,

“Many women have their bodies decorated or pierced in order to feel that they are reclaiming themselves after physical or psychological abuse” (Juno and Vale, 1989). Ayik added that if anyone told her that the tattoos made her look unattractive or not beautiful, she would not care because this was her own body. She argued that the problem lay with the people who saw her body and made the judgements. For her, the meaning of beauty was similar to freedom, that is, being ‘happy to be yourself’. The concept of being herself or independent was also caused by people’s dislike of her tattoos. The more she was rejected the more she would show those people her tattoos. So, based on her experience of being rejected, Ayik put her nickname, “Ayic” and “Gyga” on her fingers. *Gyga* had the same meaning as *Aibe*. Those words had been found by chance, and meant independence. Both could also have the meaning of a responsible, self-sufficient and dependable nature, said Ayik. So, through the tattoos on her fingers, she tried to legitimise herself as being free or independent. The tattoos were also a means of motivating herself. She said about it: “It could be self-motivation, to be always independent in terms of thinking as well as in action, even if we are not 100% free.” It is interesting that Ayik showed a self-aware discourse both with herself (internal) and with the world at large (external).



Figure 28 Tattoos of Ayik's nickname and slogan. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

In terms of the tattoos on her fingers, Ayik suggested that her tattoos were a sign of declaration that she was a free woman. The position of the tattoos on her fingers was also seen on some Punk, Hardcore and Metal musicians that I encountered in the underground community. Generally, they write their names on the front side of one hand, and the name of the scene, such as Punk or Metal, on the other. It seems that Ayik adopted this concept, with the words of the scene replaced by the word *Gyga*. This was a creative appropriation of a form with new content; in terms of semiology, it is called a 'paradigmatic relationship'. I saw

this process in Ayik's case and with Bay, one of the underground music vocalists in Surabaya, who used "Thir" and "Teen", using his lucky number to replace the scene name.



Figure 29 Bay's tattoos on his fingers. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

When talking about other people's tattoos or non-tattooed Punk musicians, Ayik seemed inconsistent in her opinions. From her perspective, tattooing was 'free willing'. On the other hand, she criticised others who were not tattooed, especially the musicians. She said that she hated non-tattooed musicians and called them hypocritical. This notion was based on her argument that punk or underground musicians should understand the common rule that when entering into the punk community, they had to know that in general Punks were tattooed. This rule-based thinking was notable as it appeared as the kind of normative cultural thinking which had common ground with aspects of 'mainstream' culture. Although Ayik's opinion was subjective, as I had seen some Punks who were not tattooed on the Punk scene, Ayik questioned why they didn't try to get some tattoos, or what the reason was for them not to have tattoos when their friends had tattoos. Some answered her questions with less obvious reasons which made her very disappointed. Ayik said that it was alright and understandable if the music fans chose not to have tattoos, but the musicians, she thought, looked less manly or macho without tattoos. So her judgement seemed to be based on physical and superficial reasons but she did not want others to judge her on her physical appearance.

From Ayik's experiences of having lived with two different Punk groups, she learned about social interactions within the group on the one side, and with the wider community on the other side. One tended to be exclusive while the other was inclusive and, therefore, she found two different worlds of Punk. Once she came to the idea that life should be meaningful, such as being useful and not harming others, the most important thing was to engage in wider community activities without abandoning her unique identity as a Punk. She finally came to the idea of right Punk principles in the context of Indonesian society as being more social

rather than individual. Yet individuality, with its concept of free-thinking and action, must remain an important part, and in her opinion it could not be contested by parties outside of herself. This related to the many people who questioned her tattoos. To her the tattoos were her identity, her autonomous body could not be controlled by others. Ayik's statement clarifies the relationship between life events and personal outlook and the act of tattooing in the context of her social life experiences.

5.6. Case 6. Bludz

5.6.1. Biography

Bludz had enjoyed drawing since childhood. However, the social environment that he found himself a part of made him more interested in studying tattoos, as many of the young people around him had acquired tattoos. His first tattoo was a phoenix, but because the tattooist was an amateur, he made it looked horrible. Bludz called his first tattoo a total failure. The phoenix bird did not even resemble a bird. The tattoo was done in the *Tanjung Perak* Port area, which was famous as the place for 'cheap' tattooists ranging from the beginners to the door-to-door tattooists, or the less professional ones. The drawing quality and techniques of tattooing among the novice tattooists tends to be less artistic. When his parents found out he'd had his first tattoo, he was beaten by his father who was in the Indonesian Navy. But Bludz was a recalcitrant child. A few weeks after getting his first tattoo, he had another one done. His father was even angrier and beat him again. He stubbornly got tattooed because his brother had a tattoo and did not get punishment from his parents. He did not consider that when he first got tattooed he was still an 11-year-old boy. His teachers in elementary school who knew Bludz had got a tattoo were very disappointed. They said Bludz would have a bleak future. He then decided to leave school and his family in 2002. Shortly after his father died, around 2004, he stopped living on the streets. To commemorate him, he had his father's portrait tattooed on his upper right arm. I asked him why he remembered his father in the form of a tattoo, knowing that, in the past, his father had punished him every time Bludz got a new tattoo on his body. Bludz explained that as a Javanese person, whatever happened in the past, children should pay respect to their parents.

5.6.2. The tattoos

On Bludz's left arm there are some tattoos that depict ornamental motifs in the form of leaves, flowers and flames. Yet when observed in more detail, there were images of women, skulls, and demons visible behind the ornamental motifs. Bludz said that these images suggested that life was actually like a hell. He said, "So this life cannot be separated from hell. The man is not free from mistakes. There are beautiful women, supposing these are the devils. There is my name *Bludz*, date of birth, 85 (year), 3 (month), 16 (date). Overall, the meaning is I live in hell." When I asked further: "Do you feel your life is like in hell at present?", he did not answer straight away, he just laughed instead and said, "It is, it is." As mentioned earlier, Bludz decided to leave his family because he wanted to find freedom. He joined a Street Punk group and his life was spent on the streets. It seems this is what he meant as his life being in hell because it was completely uncertain and not easy.

Regarding dark-themed tattoos, as a tattooist with many clients, Bludz claimed that those tattoos were chosen because they were popular among the underground musicians as they were worn by many Metal musicians, both locally and abroad. Once I asked Bludz whether the actual owners of the devil tattoos were satanist, anti-christ or anti-religion, or whether this style was just a trend. He explained that in Indonesia it was a trend. Many of his clients asked for demon tattoos usually because they wanted them as a part of a visual display, nothing more. This is another example, besides AJ's tattoos, of copying the imagery of the international iconography of underground music.



Figure 30 "Life as Hell" tattoos. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Bludz's statement about the figures of women symbolising demons is very interesting to explore as it can be linked to how the image of a woman, to some degree, is reconstructed as a visual representation of a negative or threatening object in tattoos, especially in the local social and cultural contexts of the *anak underground*. However, if it is seen in the perspective of narratives of human creation relating to Adam and Eve, it was said that Satan tempted Eve who infuriated Adam and ate the fruit which God forbade them to eat. In the bible, the woman was shown as easily deceived by a demon to provoke the man (Adam) and bring them together to fall into sin. This narrative view of women found in both the bible and the Quran as the 'trigger' of sin can be seen as reconstructed in society. This is a bigger point that alternative subcultures are still bringing broader 'conservative' societal values into their subculture although they may see themselves as 'progressive'. This is the case I found not only on Bludz's tattoos but also on some tattoos on the bodies of musicians and underground music fans implying the same thing, where the female figure is blamed if a man commits adultery. Many tattoos on their bodies used women as a representation of sins or mistakes in the past. This is shown in Anthony's tattoos of his past sins (see Figure 37).



Figure 31 Symbols of sins as tattoos. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

There is a standard of bad habits that humans have to be aware of in the Javanese culture, which called *Ma Lima* or five sins (Muzakka, 2002). One of the sins is adultery, and the term for adultery is *madon* from the word *wadon*, which literally means 'woman'. In this sense, the portrayal of women tends to show them in a weak position, blamed for causing male immoral acts. Javanese people are familiar with the term *molimo*. In doing *molimo* people are expected to suffer both physically and psychologically, in the world and in the hereafter, in material

and non-material ways. Conversely, if people avoid this *molimo*, their life will be healthy and they will have a happy life in this world and in heaven. Asna (in Muzakka, 2002) said that the term *Ma Lima* implied five behaviours preceded by the syllable *ma* or *m* sound, i.e. *madat* (smoking opium), *madon* (men visiting prostitutes), *minum* (drinking liquor), *main* (gambling), and *maling* (stealing). Abstinent behaviour is expected because the resulting consequences are very harmful to the self and others.

On Bludz's right arm, there are tattoos with similar motifs and images, such as flames and demons, with a more diverse colour tone. There is a tattoo on his wrist of the word 'nothing'. I thought this tattoo was to show a certain meaning as on the left arm, such as a worthless life or the like, thus the use of the word *nothing*, but it turned out that this tattoo was a cover-up tattoo. Previously this tattoo had said "Novi", the name of his former girlfriend. Because their relationship was over the *Novi* tattoo had been modified into *nothing*. The function of the tattoo here was a cover-up, which was quite a clever narrative response to life changes.

Tattoos that appear on Bludz's neck and stomach are more related to the concept of himself as an *anak punk*. A phenomenal Dangdut singer, Inul Daratista³⁰, was his favourite celebrity who represented his rebellious nature. Some other tattoos on his stomach have contrary meanings to the tattoos on his neck. They relate more to his spiritual statement of belief in the existence of God and are a symbol of his shameless personality. He said:

"On the neck, the tattoo is about the woman. I was born from a woman; I also need a woman. So that is why there is a womb image here. There is a tattoo of 'Fuck Gina'. There are 'Punk Never Die' words as well. It means that I was born as a punk...In here, (he pointed to his stomach) is the image of Inul Daratista, with the words 'love body girl'. Inul is depicted as a butterfly, the meaning is she is a sexy dancer, a teaser³¹. There is also the word 'Almighty'. Humans are not separated from God the Almighty. There is a symbol of the sun at the belly button, the meaning is that my life has no shame. The belly button is on fire." (Interview, 14/3/2013)

³⁰ Inul was one of the most phenomenal figures in Indonesia's *Dangdut* history with her vulgar dance on the stage. She started out singing *Dangdut* music from village to village and became very popular when people started to upload her performances on YouTube more than a decade ago. She then got a lot of singing offers in major cities and on national television. Even though the style of her dancing, known as *Goyang Ngebor* (rocking down dance), caused some opposition from religious leaders who said her dance style violated the social norms, Inul remained a national sensation. Rhoma Irama, known as the originator of *Dangdut* music, and dubbed the King of *Dangdut*, also condemned her and called on the television stations to boycott her. Inul is now a leading figure in the music industry, managing her own company and karaoke music house.

³¹ In Indonesian, there is a term "Kupu-Kupu Malam" (A Night Butterfly), which refers to a prostitute.



Figure 32 Vulgar and erotic-themed tattoos that were created on the streets when Bludz was a street punk. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The womb image, which is accompanied by the “Fuck Gina” tattoo may lead the viewers to interpret it as a phallic symbol. Moreover, there is a cartoon figure of a dog that is depicted with an erection. This cannot be separated from his lifestyle as a street punk, which often dares to challenge the unfavourable views of some community groups on punk activities. When he had dealings with civil service officers and the police, who tried to catch the street punks during their activities on the streets, he said that those who had a lot of tattoos on their body were slapped by the police. An interesting part of his explanation of the tattoos is the description of the burning belly button as his shameless life. The combination of these two symbols can be interpreted as life without meaning, or a destroyed life. In another sense, as he said, the shameless feeling has gone from him. This is really personal/subjective. Although the symbols are very simple, the meaning that has been created is the depiction of nature or personality formed from the life experiences of a street punk.

Concerning the word ‘almighty’, Bludz realised that although he did not do *sholat* or prayer while living on the streets, he still believed in God. After marrying a Muslim girl, he said that he started to pray regularly as he lived with his wife’s parents. The five-times-a-day prayer was the family’s religious activity at home besides going to the *musholla* (small mosque) near their house. His marriage changed his habits relating to spirituality. On this issue, he tried to accommodate and understand the new norms in the scope of the family. This ended the rebellious acts to show his individuality as he had to protect the good relations with his wife and their child, as a family. When I asked about how he would respond if his children in the future tried to copy their father by having tattoos, he said that it would be up to them. He

could not prohibit them as long as they knew the consequences of having tattoos on their body.

Most of the tattoos on his legs are the work of Bludz himself. He prefers to use his own body as a medium for practising. For example, there is a tattoo depicting the moon and stars which is a reminder of the time when he was still living on the streets. The Javanese term is *mbambung*. To earn some money, besides singing on the streets, he also received orders to do tattoos. The payments were up to the clients, sometimes in the form of money, or sometimes cigarettes, or food and drink.



Figure 33 Various tattoos inspired by daily events and items. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Figure 39 shows tattoos of a catfish, chillies, a flower, a lighter, 'Masberto' lettering, some stars, and lines. Catfish is typical cuisine easily found at all food stalls on the roadside or pavement. It is usually consumed as a side dish for rice, better known as *pecel lele*. According to Bludz, this is the type of food that he ate almost every day while living on the streets. An unstable income made him less able to access other types of cheap food at that time. The taste of this type of cuisine cannot be separated from *sambal*, a mixture of spices and chillies that make it delicious. However, a continuous increase of chilli prices meant that the chilli content was reduced in what was served to customers. This affected the delicious taste of *pecel lele*. The chillies tattoo reminds Bludz of the time when chilli prices soared in Indonesia. It is an interesting fact and phenomenon that a chilli tattoo became a documentation of economic problems from the perspective of a street punk. This shows that

tattoos can be analysed from different perspectives, not only in terms of artistic, cultural or political aspects but also from the aspect of daily needs. The increase in chilli prices affected the government's economic team performance, drawing more criticism from various media and opposition. This chilli problem became a hot issue even in 2017, as revealed by the Jakarta Globe³²:

“The price of bird's eye chilli peppers is blazing hot across Indonesia, exposing a lingering problem in the country's food production and distribution system that the government still struggles to overcome.

Data compiled by the Jakarta Food Information portal shows that prices of the commodity stood at Rp 121,000 (\$9) per kilogram on Friday (06/01) – four times higher than in October.

Local media reports during the week also highlighted unusually high prices in other regions. The chilli peppers commonly used fresh for Indonesian sambal, traded at Rp 250,000 a kilogram in Samarinda, East Kalimantan, and Rp 200,000 a kilogram in Raja Ampat, Papua.

Chilli prices accounted for about an eighth of the country's headline inflation last year. Failure to reign in prices could complicate the government's efforts achieve its inflation target for this year, already under threat by higher energy prices and a strengthening United States dollar.”

Another tattoo shows a lighter, which was one of Bludz's valuable possessions. One day it had gone and he was upset. Even though he asked some friends and searched for it at some food stalls he had visited, he could not find it. To commemorate the loss of the lighter, he then created a tattoo with twisting lines, stars, and very small geometric shapes depicting the dizziness of losing his favourite possession³³. Some small human figures depicted people who might have stolen the lighter. They looked without guilty expressions at what had happened to him. This lighter tattoo, in another sense, shows the social problems among the street children in Indonesia. Even though these punks are still very young – Bludz said he had joined the group when he was 13 or 14 years old – they are already dealing with smoking issues. It shows the weakness of regulation on cigarette selling among the public as these underage children have free access to consumption. Sometimes this smoking habit can lead to the use of *ganja* (marijuana), drugs and liquor.

³² <http://jakartaglobe.id/business/indonesia-braces-for-red-hot-chili-pepper-prices/>

³³ This can be an expression of poverty when a relatively cheap item like a lighter is commemorated in this way.

CHAPTER: 6. DISCUSSION

From the case studies in the previous chapter, it appears that tattoos are a manifestation of *anak underground* spiritual strength and acts of faith, to anchor the personal uniqueness which also affects an increase in self-confidence, and a feeling of pride through the tattoos (the expression of personal uniqueness or personal identity). Tattoos are also seen as a medium of bonding to the underground scene. For the *anak underground*, tattoos convey information about what they believe and the circumstances that influenced them to tattoo their body. To be able to better understand tattoos' representations and functions, in this chapter, the data already gathered from the case studies are analysed, theorised and explained as well as contextualised within the broader world of tattooing.

In this chapter, I will also introduce some smaller vignettes as part of the discussion in order to broaden the range of visual and narrative examples and to support the observations I made in the previous chapter. As shown in previous works of Pitts (2003), Sanders and Vail 2008), and DeMello (2000), tattoos sometimes showed provocative messages or visualisations in which the functions of tattoos had relationships with certain subcultural values within the gangs, criminals, or specific social/political movements. The clenched fist symbol may be used as one of the examples within other examples found in previous chapters. As the symbol can be found in Western Metal music culture, it can also be found among the *anak underground* in Indonesia. This indicates the transnational influence through the internet, CD albums, and social media. As in the West, this clenched fist is used as a symbol of resistance. Based on the case studies in Chapter 5 and supported by information from Chapter 2: Tattoo Practice among the Anak Underground, tattooing among the underground community can be divided into thematic discussions, namely: personal motivations, the ritual of tattooing practice, and the positions of tattoos based on themes.

6.1. Personal motivations

The discussion on this aspect of personal motivations includes the psychological reasons that make someone decide to have a tattoo and the functions of the tattoos for them, both psychologically and physically.

6.1.1. Personal catharsis

One aspect that stands out in this study is that the pain of the tattooing process has a kind of positive impact on some people's perspectives. The pain that emerges from the process seems to release hidden emotions, such as anxiety, anger and fear, that exist within a person. The pain that arises in the body modification process can evoke positive emotions which can be categorised as a personal catharsis. Winchel and Stanley (1991) proposed that the pain in the tattooing process possibly releases endorphins in the body, which then produces a feeling of comfort besides the anaesthetic effects. Atkinson (2003) found that among abused women, body modification as a means of deliberation over their emotional problems gave them feelings of greater control and authority over their own lives. The affirmation that the body is a part of the self is the basis of personal narratives, and the tattooing is the self-healing process (Atkinson, 2003; Strohecker, 2011)).

In relation to the self-healing process, there is another issue, which is an addiction to tattoos. This is another reason that people want more tattoos after another. As noted by Winchel and Stanley (1991), tattoos retain an addictive lure for the wearers. Among some of the *anak underground*, their first tattoos related to their struggles with their social environment or parents. These issues led some of them, in their teenage years, to choose tattoos as their marks. This is shown in Ayik's case, a fan of underground music and former street punk. She felt unhappy at home as her family always took control of her life. As a way of solving her problems, she chose to be involved in the Punk community which led her to be tattooed for the first time when she was 17. She expressed her grief through the tattoo. The pain which evolved during the tattoo process made her emotions subside, and for a while she was satisfied. The tattoo was a black cat, which she called 'Hellcat'. The reason she chose the black cat was very interesting; she said the basis of her reason was not the image of the tattoo, but to express her disappointment in the form of a tattoo (Interview, 10/04/2013). This black cat figure represents the depressing situation in her family. Another underground fan, Anja, got her first tattoo when she was 15. She came from a high social class family, but she had similar problems to Ayik, which was family conflict. She had emotional suffering with her parents' divorce that was caused by a third party. Although she had psychological counselling sessions and therapy to reduce her depression, it did not help her that much, and then she found tattoos more therapeutic. She channelled her feelings of anger and despair onto her body through tattooing. The first tattoo was a black widow. For her, the nature of the

black widow which killed its male after mating was her personal representation. She was obsessed with becoming a *femme fatale*. Her parents' divorce apparently made her sexual orientation change as well so that she hated men. Interestingly, both Ayik and Anja said that the tattooing process released their anger and distress. As Anja said: "I had a tendency to self-abuse, but with this tattoo maybe I diverted it through other kind of pain. That's why I chose it, but not to any problem ...Tattoos are a diversion of self-abuse," (Interview, 15/05/2013). From situations of conflict, tattooing and tattoos emerged for them as the medium for emotional therapy. However, some members of the *anak underground* wanted a tattoo because they wanted to know how it felt to be tattooed. For example, Niz, an underground singer, said about her first tattoo: "Incidentally, at that time, I was at my friend's place who is a tattooist. I was watching (the tattooing process), I thought it was really pleasant to be tattooed. So I just tried it." (Interview, 22/04/2013). She felt shocked the first time she felt the needle puncture her skin, yet she realised that the physical pain while tattooing made her addicted and she wanted more. I asked about her feeling of pleasure during the tattooing, whether it was related to the releasing of pain or a bad experience in her life. She said that was true. She remembered that before having a tattoo she'd had a personal problem that probably encouraged her to be tattooed. Niz had the desire to go beyond the curiosity to find a form of pleasure through pain.

There is another example of how a tattoo can be used as a means of releasing a painful memory. On the left arm of someone called Gamble, there is an image of a 'flirtatious woman'. He said that this woman dumped him some years ago. As told by Gamble, once when he was a teenager, he lived in Yogyakarta as a street punk. One day, there was an older woman, a lady escort, aged around 30 asking him to marry her so they could live together. A few years later, when Gamble turned 20, she left him to find another young man. He was angry as he realised that the lady just wanted to exploit him as a 'toy-boy'. The tattoo sometimes made him feel more comfortable but at other times, it could make him feel angry. His feelings of love for her which were expressed through the tattoo gave him a hope that one day he could meet her again in a better situation.

6.1.2. Bravery and status symbols

Besides having a function of self-healing, the pain that is evoked through tattoos, for some of the *anak underground* can be seen as a symbol of being fearless. Atkinson and Young (2001) said that for some people, tattoos are considered as something that hurts. Therefore, some people use them as a means of showing off their physical toughness and courage. The pride and the self-satisfaction that is gained through the pain is a way to stabilise a sense of self-identity, and fulfil the sense of accomplishment and reflexivity (Pitts, 2003). It is similar in Indonesia. Marianto and Barry (2002) and Handoko (2007) found that some people are very proud of their tattoos as they are considered to have extraordinary physical strength. In the 1980s–1990s in Yogyakarta Prison, the *Brengos* or heads of the prison blocks were heavily tattooed people (Handoko, 2007). This issue can also be found among the *anak underground* who started tattooing at the ages of 14 to 17, and some even earlier. Bludz and Dhit Rats said that the tattoos fostered their self-esteem and pride especially when some of their mates showed admiration for their efforts to withstand the pain during the tattoo process. Yet, on the other hand, those tattoos made some *anak underground* get punished by their parents because they acquired tattoos too early for their age. At school, some of them were told off by the teachers for being considered disobedient.

In Indonesian society, tattoos sometimes put people under negative judgement (Marianto and Barry, 2002; Olong, 2006; Handoko, 2007). Thus, the tattoo that was originally made for pride and as an expression of showing physical strength, ends in regret because the wearers are labelled as bad people. Ari, one of the underground musicians, even tried to remove his tattoo by using chemicals that made his skin blister. This action was taken as he believed the tattoo on his fingers stopped him from being accepted for a prestigious job.³⁴

6.1.3. Trust

Another personal motivation aspect of tattooing practice among the *anak underground* is trust, which is very important as both parties must understand that the process is painful and permanent. Sanders and Vail (2008) and Fisher (2002) refer to this negotiation as a form of ‘mutual artistry’. Fisher (2002) had seen that, in this process, the clients entrusted their body completely to the tattooist and believed that the tattoos they had were worthy. Here, trust and risk ‘walk together’ side by side. My findings particularly related to how someone

³⁴ See Chapter 2: Tattoo Practice among the Anak Underground in Stopping Having Tattoos.

volunteered himself to be a training medium for the beginner tattooist. This kind of mutual practice among Indonesian music-based subcultures could be found some decades ago in the cities of Western countries. These “unregulated, unlicensed tattooists operating from shabby premises or from home” are called scratchers (Goulding et al., 2004).

Being a volunteer in tattooing practices, as shown among the *anak underground*, can also be found in France around the nineteenth century (Connor, 2004, p. 88). Connor wrote: “The abolition of compulsory tattooing of prisoners in the French penal service during the nineteenth century was followed by a huge increase in the activity of voluntary tattooing” and an exhibition in London in 2004 featured tattoos which had been created by some famous visual artists on the bodies of volunteers (Lodder, 2010). However, both examples from the West are sporadic tattoo practices, not continuous activities or habits. The reasons for the *anak underground* taking the risk of having tattoos voluntarily were not necessarily because they got free tattoos but as a representation of a good relationship that could not be measured by money, despite the risks of getting unqualified tattoos and infections because of the non-hygienic tattooing process. For example, Edoy, an underground music drummer from Sidoarjo, East Java, said that all the early tattoos he had were free from his friends, for being a learning medium. The inverted pentagram and cross symbols were his first tattoos. When I asked him the reason why he chose those symbols, he answered that he did not ask for those symbols to be tattooed on his body, they were chosen by the tattooist. (Interview, 03/07/2013). There is a point to be made here about trust and bonding arising within a shared subculture with a certain shared visual iconology which is meaningful to the members of that subculture. Possibly, the familiarity with these symbols is the answer, because the beginner tattooist was also a fan of the underground music scene. Such symbols are common among musicians and fans in the underground scene. Interestingly, although he has had tattoos on his body since he was a teenager, he did not really care about the details on the tattoos because they were located on his back. He sometimes saw them casually when he used a mirror. I discovered that most of the tattoo wearers, especially among the less educated groups and the ones from lower social and economic classes did not understand or did not want to understand the meanings of their first tattoos and so for these people it was the act or activity of tattooing which was paramount. It was the communal aspect of this that was the important thing.

6.1.4. Personal and group identity

As noted by Kosut (2015), Mun et al. (2012), Sanders and Vail (2008), Pitts (2003), and Atkinson (2003) the body modification practice is related to personal selfhood and identity. However, this identity is not permanent. It opens up the possibility for change and negotiation. The narrative surrounding tattooing is one that inherently changes over time as the person, as well as social conventions related to the self, change (Lodder, 2010). Psychical, cultural and political elements have a role in this construction. Thus, body modification is a negotiated act of identity and impression management. This can be seen with Dhit Rats, one of the respondents, who has two symbols of religion, namely a tattoo of “Allah” in Arabic letters and an image of Jesus on his back. The tattoos show his shifting beliefs from Christianity to Islam, not just once, but over time. He is now choosing Islam as his religion. This example illustrates that the tattoos are a means of self-identity as well as a means to display stories of the lives of the *anak underground*, including their beliefs.

Swami, et. al. (2012), in his research on British adults who obtained tattoos, found that one of the tattoo's functions was to project identity. In addition to identity, Schildkrout (2004) found in her research that, across cultures and history, the skin is a canvas on which human differences can be written and read. This identity has a function of differentiating people from each other. Among the *anak underground*, the ownership of their own bodies is a strong reason for them to show the idea of ‘difference’ to the wider community outside the underground scene but at the same time, some of their tattoos are to show their affiliation to the underground music scene. Of all the informants in the case studies, Bludz had a different experience about why he decided to get tattooed for the first time. Aside from being fond of drawing since he was a child, the environment in which he lived, near the harbour, made him feel accustomed to seeing tattooed people. His interest in tattoos was influenced by his social environment. Even his brother had tattoos. Familiarity seems to be a factor in why Bludz had a tattoo when he was 11. Bludz's close friend, Rasta³⁵, had another reason to have a tattoo for the first time. It was because all of his friends in the group had tattoos, and at the same time he felt that the tattoos made him stand out among the non-tattooed people. He gave the example of a group of ten people, where two people had tattoos. These two guys definitely

³⁵ Rasta's name derives from his profession as a dreadlock hairdresser in the Metal music and merchandise store, which was also the place where Bludz opened his tattoo studio on the riverbank of Jagir, Wonokromo, Surabaya. I met Bludz and Rasta for the first time on 14/04/2013. Two years later, Rasta had disappeared from the underground scene due to illness.

had a story of their own of why they got tattooed. From what he revealed, it seems there were two main reasons why he got tattooed. The first was his interest in tattoos because of his social environment. However, his motivation was also because he wanted to be 'visible' or unique among the crowd, he wanted to be different.

For teenagers and adolescents, a 'unique self-image' is a common reason to get a tattoo (Tate and Shelton, 2008). From Rasta's expression there appears to be a sense of inferiority in being different, such as feeling shunned or put down. Rasta tried to present his identity through his tattoos. This meant his tattoos were used as a source of identity construction (Swami, et. Al., 2012; Atkinson, 2003). Rasta also represents a person who wants to achieve enjoyment from admiration as well as involvement in certain groups (Atkinson, 2013). Rasta faced challenges from his social environment by having full-body tattoos. But he did not care about it when the social environment rejected his life choices, instead, Rasta tried even harder to show that his choice of tattoos and working in the underground community suited him. This supports the view of Gelder (2007) and Levine (2008) that in social-class activity this is seen as a way to show a 'subculture spirit', in which tattooed people modify their body to stand out from other people around them.

Oksanen and Turtiainen, who observed people's motivations to have tattoos also found a similar reason where one person got their first tattoo because their peers also had a tattoo, confessing, "My body didn't feel right without ink" (2005, p. 14).

Another example of tattoos as identity can be observed from MS's reason for tattooing the Javanese letters on his chest, Suwarno, the name of his father. Besides this the tattoo had a function as admiration for his father, and also to identify him as a Javanese descendant. Likewise, AJ's tattoo showed him as a Muslim by having a tattoo of Arabic letters, Ayik had several tattoos of Christian icons to confirm herself as a Christian, and Edoy had an inverted pentagram and cross symbol – although those symbols were chosen by his trustee tattooist – generally associated with the underground scene. The same thing was also found on AM who had tattoos of the brass knuckle and baseball bats accompanied by the words HCS Family Crew, a symbol of the Hardcore community in the Sidoarjo region. Another example of the first tattoo being a way to represent the identity of *anak underground* can be found on

Jambul's arm. His first tattoo was the Arabic script “Rude Boy”. “I was a Rude Boy.³⁶ I am a Ska music lover, and I am a rogue.” stated Jambul regarding the tattoo (Interview, 24/03/2013). However, there is also a tattoo image that does not relate to underground music, but the owner claimed it was a symbol that represented the scene. This is shown in Bay's first tattoo, a Samoan tribal tattoo which typically is full of blocking ornaments. He said that the tattoo had no meaning for him³⁷, except for expressing himself as belonging to the *anaka underground*, and because he liked the Samoan motifs. In the era of the 1990s and 2000s, tribal motifs were the trend. This could be what triggers someone to tattoo tribal motifs on their body, in following the trend. Among some prisoners, the trend of tribal tattoos could also be found in those eras (Handoko, 2007).

6.1.5. Tattoos as an aesthetic practice

Dewey (in Lodder, 2010, p. 66) explained that an aesthetic practice means “to restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doings and sufferings that are universally recognised to constitute experience”. There are important keys to seeing an activity as an aesthetic practice, namely: “experience”, “works of art”, “everyday events” and “suffering”. Tattoos and tattooing practice fulfil three of these four aspects. What might be debatable is the notion of “work of art” and “life as art and the act of tattooing as the artistic expression”. As everyone has a different view of something considered as a work of art, the measurement can be from the individual's personal assessment of taste or by conventions which are imposed by internal and external factors. As noted in the current literature on personal motivation, to have tattoos is ‘getting a piece of art’ (Atkinson and Young, 2001). Nevertheless, as expressed by McCabbe (1997), the choice of presenting objects on the skin can be seen as an aesthetic practice, considering how people nowadays are copying and reinventing the style of classic tattoo images such as the eagle, snake, anchor and heart using more advanced tools, techniques and materials.

³⁶ Wildman, who examined the history of Jamaican music and the rude boy culture of yesterday and today, explains the term *Rude Boy*: “It simply means that you're a dedicated member of the ska scene. If you have a good ska collection, if you dress up in a way that indicates that you like ska, if your style and taste make it obvious to others that you're in with the ska, you are, therefore 'rude' by the definition of ska crowd.” Retrieved from www.rootsworld.com/rw/feature/rudeboy.html

³⁷ This could be an example of the effect of globalisation and the sharing of visual motifs beyond their original 'meaning' and cultural origins.

AJ had a different reason for his first tattoo. He got it because for him a tattoo was a work of art. This was related to his enthusiasm for graphic design stuff because his profession was as a graphic designer. AJ assumed that people who loved art would be able to find the right medium to express it, including using the body. For comparison, some of the *anak underground* who I met during my field research mentioned a similar reason to AJ's, such as Bay, a Hardcore musician and the owner of an underground music store. He admitted that since he had decided to live and work in the underground community, he had decided to get a tattoo in 2012 to express his identity as one of the *anak underground*. He said, "Basically I like arts, any arts... I think I will continue here, Brother. So essentially, I will exist in this path forward. It is my world. If I was a public servant, it is likely I would not have tattoos" (Interview, 29/03/2013). For some people, tattoos do not need to have any special or particular significance. Tattoos for them are just something cool, merely body decoration. There is a young, clean and bright-skinned girl who is a Metalcore guitarist. She got her first tattoo when she came to an anniversary event for a group called *Tattoo Heroes*, a group of Surabaya and Sidoarjo tattooists. Initially, she had no plans to have a tattoo that night. There had been a desire for a tattoo as a teenager, but she had not decided when she would be tattooed. Then it happened. At the event, there was a tattooist who approached her and offered to tattoo her. He showed her some tattoo flashes. Tania was confused as she had not planned to have tattoos but she decided that she wanted one. Finally, the tattooist proposed a picture of an owl in black and grey. In her opinion it was a nice tattoo: "I am a person that ..., if others (tattoos) should have a history, actually, for me, no, that does not make sense. It is so cute. I love it as it will attach to my life forever. So yes, it is not a problem." (Interview, 30/08/2015)

From Tania's statement and experiences, it can be seen that tattoos are seen as fashion, 'interaction' as well as 'transaction'. Tania and her tattoos are the imagery of today's society as it is developing in Indonesia. This is similar to society in the West. Turner (in Follet, 2009) said it was an example of "a regular aspect of consumer culture" that the tattoo has a role as an optional object to function as body decoration which is impermanent and narcissistic. Tania's example shows that this is increasingly true in Indonesia. Tania also said that since she got her first tattoo, she has become very popular among the tattooists. She has become a model for them. She has already had three tattoos, and she has had them all for being a model. It is interesting to note that this is another kind of mutual relationship between underground musicians and tattooists. For some in the *anak underground*, it can be very

difficult to get a good quality tattoo, but for Tania, the tattoos are free as, according to the professional tattooists, she was seen as beautiful as a model.³⁸ As discussed previously, there were many early tattoos among the underground musicians that they earned for being a medium of training for beginner tattooists, so the tattoos they obtained had a lower quality compared with Tania's tattoos. Even her one tiny tattoo depicting a Palestinian boy carrying an AK-47 won a prize at a tattoo competition.

The question is whether the majority of underground musicians and fans used street tattooists or offered their bodies for tattoos (as a medium of learning for beginner tattooists as described in Chapter 2). Of course, the answer is that it is not always the case. Based on my observations and visits to some of the houses of the musicians and fans of underground music, I found that some of them were from middle-class families. For instance, someone I will refer to as Berry, whose father was the head of department in a district in East Java, lived in a very big house with many rooms. When I met him in 2013, he was an active promoter of small music groups around Surabaya and later he was involved more actively in organising underground music performances in the area of Banyuwangi, East Java. His communication skills, especially English, were pretty good. Recently, he has been managing a guest house in the Banyuwangi area and also working as a tour guide for foreign tourists who visit East Java. He is still active in the underground music scene as well. Regarding tattoos, in general, musicians and fans of underground music who come from the upper-middle class and are well educated (with a diploma or university level degree) have certain concepts at the beginning of collecting tattoos for their bodies. The concept represents the life events they have experienced. They also normally use a professional tattooist. I often encountered among underground musicians that before they became famous or popular, they were tattooed by street tattooists who set prices economically or they even got a tattoo for free because their bodies were used as a training medium by novice tattooists. But along with their growing popularity, they chose tattoo artists who already had a name for tattooing them. Sometimes they also got a tattoo for free because they became an endorser for the tattoo artists or studios, and even for a merchandise shop by using the logo of the shop as the tattoo. That phenomenon is what Hebdige (1979) describes as the process of commodification of tattoos and tattooing. In this sense, tattoos originally used as a means of social interaction among the *anak underground* and free in the sense of no economic return, have been transformed into

³⁸In Indonesia, for women in particular, having light skin is dreamt of as it is one of the measures of being considered pretty, which is why many cosmetics on the market consist of or are labelled as whitening.

commodities which have economic value because they can be profitable when used as products of artistic service. What is interesting is how this is possible; how can a small tattoo be considered a promotion? It is not too difficult to answer. I had been wondering about that until I met AJ, on 27/04/2013, and saw a tattoo with initials on his arm. He explained to me that it was the name of a merchandise store. He also told me about where the store was located along with the variety of products it sold. Here the owner of the tattoo uses the tattoos as a trigger, as well as the attractiveness of the product. When people ask about the tattoo, the promotion occurs. This is a unique marketing strategy. The status of the tattoo and the body here can be said to be a commodity display. This is an example of tattoos as a social commodity being transformed into an economic commodity. From this point of view, there is a story of social-economic and social standing/ success which is also expressed in the nature and source of the tattoos which are collected over time.

6.1.6. Religious/spiritual and cultural traditions

Mayo (2009) proposes that art is known as a vehicle for deep emotional expressions, a medium for self-exploration, self-recognition, and the search for the transcendent in an effort to be creative. Jankowski (2002) said that spirituality was conceptualised as a multidimensional idea consisting of cognitive, metaphysical and dimensional relations. He said that spirituality was found in the experience of joy or in the ability to overcome and change conditions during difficult and challenging times. Jewell (2004) proposed that spirituality was a human need that related to the mind of each person and gave people continuous meaning and purpose in life and the power to continue to live. She added that spirituality tends to be found in the difficult times in life, which made life more than just a human awareness of relationships or connections that go beyond sensory perception.

Some of the *anak underground*, after experiencing various conflicts in life, said that they found a way to a more peaceful and orderly life through studying religious teachings. In addition, in the Indonesian or Javanese context, religion, spirituality and religious identity, and affiliation are important (Dahlan, 2014; Bauto, 2014). The importance of these transcendent aspects presenting tattoos as a spiritual medium is shown in the tattoos of Ayik, AM, and AJ, in Chapter 5. It is an interesting phenomenon that, to some degree, the tattoos are used to remind the wearers to pray at a certain time or visit worship places. The tattoos

also have the role of a guardian angel for the wearers. They feel safer by having God or angels on their bodies. The tattoos in some respect are also used as a repentance expression; a reminder to live in a good way and leave the bad habits as well as bad manners behind. The *anak underground*, in some cases, also mentioned their religious and spiritual journeys in their lives. Everybody seemed to deal with it as the projection of social concerns.

Although religion is personal or private, it is also practical, showing the mixture of tattoo functions as part of an individual identity as well as a means of expression of a religious group. This means it functions as a social expression. I described previously in a case study that there are some underground musicians and fans that have tattoos that are closely related to their personal identity as followers of a particular religion and are a representation of their faith in the teachings of their religions.

In the case study of Ayik, she described a trip to the island of Bali which changed the faith that had been attached to her since birth. Formerly she was a Muslim, until one day she dreamed of meeting Jesus. She saw it as a sign that she should make a decision to become a Catholic. From her perspective, the dream seemed to be the way of God speaking to her and convincing her to follow Jesus. Ayik, as a Javanese person, still believed that dreams have an important meaning. Further, it can be seen that Ayik's tattoo is a representation of the intercultural symbolism in which the Virgin Mary, tattooed in Western-style iconicity, has a relation to local beliefs (Javanese and dreams). Ayik's body also represented a linkage between classical and modern styles represented by tattoo machines and discourse on tattoos as part of the recent urban lifestyle. Jimmy also seems to have had the same pattern as Ayik. It can be seen in his tattoos, which he said were written in ancient Greek letters, spelling "Yahweh". Uniquely, the basic idea of the tattoo was not derived from his dream but came from his uncle's dream, who had just graduated from the priest school (Interview, 18/08/2015). One time, his uncle had a dream of being visited by Jimmy's deceased father who showed him a tattoo marked *Yahweh* in his father's hand. Jimmy felt weird because his father did not have a tattoo. Incidentally, during his stay with his uncle, he talked a lot about the deity. Then he linked his uncle's dream with the resurrection of Jimmy's faith in God. This is an example of the relationship between spirituality and religion in the Indonesian or Javanese context as well as the use of international icons to represent 'local thoughts'.

From both Ayik and Jimmy's tattoos, we can see that the practice of tattooing can be related to their affiliation to the *anak underground*, but as in other cases, the actual iconology of the tattoos is more personal and not connected to a specific subcultural iconography such as the gothic typefaces or other Western imported symbols accompanying the musical genre or scene's styles. Another example is shown on GT's body who I also found during my research besides those who I mention in Chapter 5.



Figure 34 GT's Saint Mary tattoo under the words "Gentong Jahanam". (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

"Gentong Jahanam" is Indonesian, meaning 'Devilish Gentong'. This tattoo represents Gentong's dark days (Gentong is the nickname of GT) while living on the streets as a street Punk. His days were full of adventures that were sometimes filled with violence and drunkenness. One day, he turned his bad habits into a new life by taking repentance. Then he had the tattoo of the holy Mary, the mother of God, and now spends his life devoted to God's will which is symbolised by the Mary tattoo. Since then, he has gone to church with his brother every Sunday. His brother also has a tattoo of Jesus on the right side of his chest.

Melinda (2015) said that from her observations about the distinctiveness of Javanese culture, the most prominent was the use of symbols in all aspects of people's lives. Symbols are used as a means or medium to entrust or convey messages and advice to people. She added that the use of symbols had become very important, as a medium of the union between God, man and nature. The meanings of symbols could be interpreted by men when they have had a sense of *tanggap ing sasmita* which means that humans have the ability to read between the layers of

the phenomenon. In other words, the symbol is a communication medium to express the inner turmoil and spiritual experiences that are difficult to express in the literal language. Melinda (2015) gives an example of Javanese *Kejawen* which is still believed in *primbon* and ancient symbols that have meanings or mystery in human life. The Javanese use the symbols to find meanings for wedding days, dreams, and even any marks on the bodies of humans that could be interpreted as signs. Ayik and Jimmy's religious tattoos which are based on their dreams are a kind of localised explanation as to why (at least in part) Javanese or Indonesians may be motivated to be tattooed, which may differ from Western motivations in certain respects. This aspect of the motivation for tattooing through dreams has the potential for research in the future, as outside of the underground community, I have found two cases so far.

The urban youth's interest in cultural or spiritual and local traditional values that has emerged recently is also one of the triggers for the rise of spiritual and cultural tattoos (Jeffreys, in Wohlrab et al., 2007). It apparently emerged among the underground musicians and fans particularly and some urban youngsters in various cities in Indonesia. This happened with MS, who honoured his father by tattooing the father's name using Javanese script and placed some local symbols of Dayak, Balinese and Mentawaian on his body to express himself as a multicultural person of Indonesia. A phenomenon such as MS is one of the examples of the movement to revive the culture of the *Nusantara* as tattoo objects. The effort to use local themes in tattooing practice can be observed from some tattoo exhibitions in Indonesia that accommodated and promoted local images, symbols, and tattooing techniques as the themes of the venues. In the *Festival Tattoo Istimewa 2016* (Extraordinary Tattoo Festival 2016) held by the Java Tattoo Club on 30 July 2016, at the Jogja National Museum, the local logo of the Yogyakarta Palace of Sultan, called 'Haba', was used as the competition theme in the 'Tattoo War' session which was followed by approximately 60 participants. As a result, 'Haba' was represented in many styles of tattoos in accordance with the style and character of each tattooist.

Alfi, a post-hardcore musician, had an interest in getting a tattoo when he saw a cultural exhibition featuring tattoos of various origins with their distinctive shapes and motifs. However, he did not choose a traditional tattoo motif for his first tattoo, but an owl that reflected his life principles (Interview, 13/04/2013). Tattoo exhibitions provide a discourse for their visitors to reflect on the experiences and concepts of life in the form of visual alternatives. Alfi, who at the beginning had no desire to have a tattoo, was then influenced by

what he saw. Dhit Rats, before being active in the underground scenes, was a sailor. He worked for a coal mining ship in Kalimantan (Borneo). He earned a local tribal tattoo on his right hand as a remembrance of his experience of living in Kalimantan, the land of the Dayaks.

Idea-based experience tattoos seem to be a common phenomenon for some people. This was experienced by Tamat, a Ska-Punk musician who was also very fond of Reggae music. He has a tattoo expressing the music he likes. There is a tattoo that reads *Jah Rastafara* (in English: My Lord Rastafari). It was inspired by Bob Marley's expression before starting a concert he saw (Interview, 24/03/2013). At that concert, Bob Marley said the words “Jah Rastafara”. When I asked Tamat if he professed a faith that Rastafari was a God, he said that this tattoo was an artistic expression, not his own belief representation. As a big fan of reggae and Bob Marley, he said he liked the words, no more than that. This is why Tamat put the tattoo on a covered body area as it was just his private expression of someone he liked a lot, Bob Marley. Contextually, this illustrates that icons, images or symbols which are used by some people cannot be used as signifiers that the wearers are followers of particular beliefs or religions. It could be that they only like the symbol because of its artistic value. Therefore, the meaning of the symbols can be arbitrary. Thus, many aspects or contexts of cultural, social, political, and even economic backgrounds should be explored or investigated before defining the proper meanings and the use of visual objects. As with the *Jah Rastafara* tattoo, as I mentioned, in my first impression, I interpreted that the wearer was a believer of Rastafara. But after going through the discussion, he acknowledged that it was just an artistic expression of his identity as a fan of Reggae music.

Among the people in Indonesia, especially on the island of Java, the value of combining elements of various symbols of religions in works of art is commonplace historically. It is then adapted from generation to generation. Sucitra (2015) explains that for several centuries, the fusion of artistic traditions in the classical era of Buddhism and Hinduism, syncretising with local beliefs in Islam and Christianity, has been animating Indonesian art and music.

Proof of this syncretic adoption can be observed in another example of someone wearing tattoos associated with religious symbols, such as Jambul had on his left arm which was covered with tattoos of Saint Mary and an Arabic script meaning “Rude Boy”. There was also a tattoo of the Star of David, known in Hebrew as the Shield of David or Magen David,

which is a commonly recognised symbol of modern-day Jewish identity and Judaism. Its shape is a hexagram, the compound of two equilateral triangles. Jambul revealed that the “Rude Boy” written in Arabic represented himself as a Muslim; the Virgin Mary represented the woman he admired the most in history, and the Star of David represented Jewish beliefs. Those symbols put in the same area show respect for differences in religious life and represent *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity, a slogan written on Indonesian’s *Garuda Pancasila*). This is interesting at a number of levels as it shows a creative syncretic appropriation, although Jambul never explained to me that these symbols intentionally depicted syncretism.

What has been shown by Jambul is a common thing in Indonesia, as various architectures of places of worship, such as mosques and churches incorporate Hindu-Buddhist cultural elements with Islam, or Hindu-Buddhism with Catholic. One example, according to Hashim (2011), is Pakualaman Mosque in Solo, Central Java, that is loaded with Islamic cultural architecture, alongside Hinduism, Buddhism and animism. This is apparent in the mosque's *mustaka* (the element on the top of the roof) that resembles a phallus that is a sign of the Hindu and megalithic civilisation. Pradisa (2017) gives an example of a tower building at the Mosque of Menara Kudus, in Central Java, where the bottom of the minaret is carved with Hindu motifs, the roof section of the tower consists of two-tiered Hindu-style roofs that are applied in the tower construction and the proportion and shape of the Holy Tower also displays a dominating Hindu element. A Catholic Church building in Ganjuran, Yogyakarta, also shows a combination of Hindu/Buddhist and Catholic styles. Based on my observations, the main building where the prayer takes place resembles a *Candi* (temple). If in the niche of the temple there are generally statues of Buddha or the Hindu statue, Lingga Yoni, then in the niche of this temple there is a statue of Jesus who is sitting. The statue of Jesus is in a Javanese King style, with Javanese traditional dress, and with hair like a Hindu priest with a crown on his head.

Seen in the local context, the symbols that appear on tattoos are similar to Javanese society arts, values and meanings, expressed in the form of symbolism (Wiryomartono, 2016). Yet, there is a difference in the application and use of symbols by the Javanese descendants; some of the *anak underground* do not use Javanese symbols, instead they use Arabic scripts to show their identity as a Muslim and the images of saints and angels to identify as Christians.

It is a fact that they adopt Western symbolism, although in principle they have adopted the nature of previous generations which used certain symbols to convey a particular message.

Interestingly, most of them put their tattoos in the covered areas of the body. The reason is that, for them, beliefs or religions are private and some tattoos also have the personal meanings. It means that not everyone can see them. For AM and Dhit Rats, their religious symbol tattoos have just been seen by their family members or colleagues in the underground scene, such as when they are undressed because of sweltering environments or deliberately open their shirts during musical performances on stage. Tattoos on their bodies will automatically be visible to others in the scope of the musical performances. These two men, AM and Dhit Rats, had the same tattoos of the crucifixion of Jesus. There are times when they did not need to communicate to others that they were Christians because the tattoos have already meaningfully explained the religion or beliefs of the owners of the tattoos. These tattoos for them, in some respects, have functions like emblems that identify someone with a particular affiliation or religious group. But if analysed further, the symbol of crucifixion tattoo of the Christ on the musicians and fans of underground music has three functions. First, it is the owner's identity as a Christian. Second, it is to remind the wearer of the spirit of sacrifice through the suffering of Jesus (selflessness). For example, AM admitted that the tattoo is an expression of his feelings that deeply appreciate Jesus who will take the responsibility to sacrifice for the redemption of human sins. This tattoo will always remind him to be sincere in helping other humans. Thus, this tattoo is a representation of the concept of the self, at the same time projecting the relation between the self and the social environment. Third, tattoos of religious symbols tend to be an expression of spirituality and a form of religious observance. Significant numbers of my respondents, such as AM, AJ, GT, Ayik and Dhit Rats, were more concerned with religious teachings and an increasing concern to pray and visit houses of worship,

In Surabaya, there is a popular Christian underground music community worship group whose name, in English, is the 'Crossline'. It was founded in 2014 by three local Hardcore musicians, principally Jack, who was then supported by Baron and Mares. One of their activities is to hold a weekly mass. They sing and praise God while doing moshing and pogo dancing, etc. They said that they hoped the underground music performances could be offered as a present for Him and by doing this religious activity, they wanted to minimise the assumption that Metal music is the music of the demons and that underground musicians and

fans are bad people. It also seems to be an example of the characteristic of syncretic practices over a longer period of time. The Crossline community holds a *Rock for Jesus* event which is usually held to coincide with Christmas and New Year. This worship group, Jack said, was founded to thank God for His kindness in his life, as a manifestation of his repentance. He said that he used to live on the streets. He tried to change his life and he managed it with God's help (Interview, 18/09/2017). Now he is working as an employee in one of the private banks in Surabaya. As he never forgot God's blessing in his life, he went back to the streets to share God's love. He said that Jesus died on the cross for all mankind without exception for those who live on the streets. So this is a kind of 'Hardcore' evangelism.³⁹



Figure 35 The third edition of *Rock for Jesus* event poster in 2017. (Image: www.theimgrum.com/share/BX5kDEcFc3o)

For Muslims, like AJ, who has a tattoo that depicts verses from the Quran, he has become more solemn about praying five times a day and overnight, and is more driven to read the Quran frequently and understanding its teachings. Nevertheless, the spirit of fanaticism remains at the periphery of appreciating differences. The situation is that religious or faith issues in the underground music scenes have not been apparent through my research, whereas outside this community, there have been several occurrences of acts of hostility among religious adherents in Indonesia. The religious tattoos 'bind' the wearers as part of particular religious groups outside the underground music group. The tattoos show others that the tattoo-wearers are followers of particular religions. The tattoos then have a function as an overlapping group of affiliations and identities.

³⁹Moberg (2015) in his book, "Christian metal: history, ideology, scene." defines Christian metal/hardcore as:

1. Having music conveying some form of Christian content or message.
2. Metal that is made and produced by people who are themselves professed Christians and lead Christian lives.
3. Metal that is produced and distributed through various Christian networks guided by Christian principles and an evangelistic agenda.

The tattoo of the crucifixion of Jesus on the back of Dhit Rats is unique and cannot be described as syncretic in the same way. The tattoo of 'Allah' in the Arabic script is on his shoulder. The tattoos represent the personal narrative of the wearer. In this sense, it can be seen as a 'paradoxical narrative'. Those tattoos reflect how the owner had exchanged his beliefs, twice being a Christian and twice a Muslim. From childhood until his twenties he was a Christian. At this time neither of the religious symbol tattoos existed until he married a Muslim girl and converted to Islam. In Indonesia, it is often found that marriage is a driver for religious conversions. As an illustration, in my family, both my sisters who were Catholic converted to Islam after their marriage. As for Dhit Rats, during his first marriage, he got a tattoo that read 'Allah' in Arabic script at the base of his right arm. To him, this tattoo was a sign that he was already a Muslim, as well as convincing himself that the choice of becoming a Muslim was the right choice. But unfortunately Dhit Rats' first marriage did not go well and they decided to divorce. In this difficult time, there was a Christian woman who entered his life. One day, this woman asked him to become a Christian. He agreed, and this moment was manifested in the tattoo of the crucifixion of Jesus. At the edge of the tattoo, he embedded the name of the girl he loved. But the journey of their love ran aground because the girl's parents did not approve of their relationship because, in addition to the Dhit rats' physical appearance, being covered with tattoos, he was considered less promising for the future. Finally, they separated. At the end of 2016, he met a conservative Muslim girl. Apparently, this girl and her family were willing to accept Dhit Rats unconditionally. Finally, they got married in early 2017. Once again, Dhit Rats converted to Islam.

As a visual researcher, I had guessed from the first time I met him that both tattoos were the representation of his spiritual journeys, in addition to revealing the personal identity of Dhit Rats which had repeatedly experienced shifts and changes. The crucifixion tattoo just became a commemoration of the past that once he had lived as a Christian. From the case of Dhit Rats, it becomes evident that the meaning and function of the tattoos may change according to the context of life-changes. Thus it proves as well that the meaning of tattoos are fluid and flowing in their context. For Dhit Rats, it seems that he has retained the tattoos in order to retain the memories and he also carries quite visibly an acknowledgment of change as a characteristic of his life rather than his ultimate final commitment. This shows that the functions and meanings of tattoos are not fixed; there is also a change under the context of

time. These findings were obtained through using a personal narrative approach that put forward the aspects of life experiences retold (Banks, 2001).

The religious tattoo is also used as a symbol of caring. Jesus amid his disciples reminded Sony of his family. He chose *The Last Supper* as its concept, as it related to his feelings of longing for his family (Interview, 24/03/2013). In Javanese families, the tradition of eating together is usually done during *Lebaran* or big religious events as well as other family activities as an expression of gratitude to God. This is called *selametan* (the word *selamet* means “safe” or “celebrate” in English). In this event, all the relatives from various places gather in the home of the elders or the eldest brother or whoever at that time is holding the *selametan*. After praying together, the food is eaten together. This is a symbol of togetherness and intimacy in families in Indonesia. The closeness of relations between siblings or between children and parents is manifested in this eating together. There is even an area of Kulon Progo, Central Java where the villagers do a meal together known as *Kembul Bujana*⁴⁰ as part of the tradition of *hadeging* memorials or their village anniversary. After the food has been prayed over by the local religious leaders, the attendees are allowed to join the meal. The food is usually referred to as *tumpeng*, a cone-shaped array of rice. Presetiyo (in Agmasari, 2016) says that the cone is a representation of a mountain top or a divine concept. *Tumpeng* has seven side dishes. In Javanese seven is the 'pitu' acronym of *pitulungan* or help. They also represent natural resources, especially the produce of the earth. There are side dishes from the sea, land, and also air. They also include sour, sweet and bitter tastes, just like life in the world. This is similar to the meaning of the last supper based on the biblical study. As explained by Amzha (2010), eating together is a sign of intimacy. Only those who are close will sit down to eat together. Therefore, eating and drinking together has a high social significance.

From Sony's perspective, the image of ‘the Last Supper’ represents missing the togetherness that he always got while he was at home. Recently, he had rarely spent time at home and only went home when he needed some money and clean shirts. For someone to live with their parents until they decide to get married is a normal and common thing in Indonesia. Even in some cases, after marriage, they still live with their parents or their extended family. If

⁴⁰ See Zebua (2018) at <https://travel.kompas.com/read/2018/04/18/131600227/kembul-bujana-tradisi-makan-bersama-di-kulon-progo>.

someone does not come home to see their parents over a long period of time, people will think that the family has a less harmonious relationship. Adhitya (2015) said that in the Javanese family, relations between members are expected to be based on love (*tresna*). In the communities in Indonesia, social or economic status is important as well as the imagery of the atmosphere of the family's intimacy. This is an example of the importance of outward appearances among families in Indonesia.



Figure 36 *The Last Supper* tattoo on Sony's chest. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

6.1.7. Political expressions

The final aspect is the tattoos that symbolise resistance towards certain political points of view. The tattoos that can be found among the underground musicians and fans (*anak underground*) are the Illuminati. In the wider context, it means enlightenment. Its personal interpretation among the *anak underground* is freedom of thought, without being limited by rules and systems. To some degree, they equate the meaning with the symbol of *Anarchy*. In its history, the Illuminati symbol has had many meanings such as terror, devils, antichrist, and so on. It was designed by Adam Weishaupt in 1776. This is something which has been adopted from Western 'underground' tattooing culture.



Figure 37 Tattoos using the Illuminati symbol. (Photo: Cons Tri Handoko)

An interesting thing I found was a student who had a Munir tattoo. This tattoo of the human rights hero of Indonesia was his source of inspiration in writing a song with the theme of humanity and the struggle against social injustice. Under Munir's face tattoo, he put a slogan of "Revolusi" (revolution). In front of the word "Revolusi" there is a symbol of peace. The position of the tattoo on the left arm has a socialist connotation, as was noted with the clenched fist tattoo of AY, which represented feminism. Munir himself, as Indonesian people remember, had to face death on his flight to Amsterdam to demand the disclosure of human rights cases of violations, such as *Talangsari*, *Tanjung Priok* riots, violence in Aceh, the *Santa Cruz* massacre in East Timor, and the assassination of *Marsinah* and other activists.⁴¹



Figure 38 Tattoo of Munir, a late Indonesian human rights activist.
(Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Another interesting tattoo that has a local meaning but is wrapped in an image that has associations with Nazi ideology was found on DK, one of the Punk vocalists in Surabaya.



Figure 39 A Nazi soldier tattoo as a representation of Punk Nazi in Surabaya. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

⁴¹ See (December, 2014). *Munir Dibunuh karena Sejumlah Motif, Apa Saja?* Retrieved from <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/627887/munir-dibunuh-karena-sejumlah-motif-apa-saja>

DK has two stages of understanding the meaning of the swastika symbol that he uses. The first was in the early period when he joined the punk community. In the first stage, around the end of the 1990s, he understood the symbol of swastikas as a form of racism. In the second stage, he felt that the symbol was just a part of his past. He no longer considered the symbol to represent him because he no longer supported racism. At that time, around the end of the 1990s, there were two punk communities in Surabaya and Sidoarjo: Anarcho-Punk and Punk Nazi. He chose to take part in Punk Nazi because it was in line with his aspirations that were ethnic Madurese and Chinese, who were perceived as economically defeating the Javanese. The main idea of the Nazi tattoo creation which was put on his left foot depicting a Nazi holding a flag was hatred. As a Punk Nazi, he admitted that the ideology of his scene was a spirit of racism. Yet he took his own perception to be adapted to Chinese people who economically dominated some areas of Surabaya city.

Punk music movements in England in the 1970s–1980s also brought the seeds of neo-Nazi everywhere. Kidd (2011) reveals that during the 1970s, the Punk Rock subculture in the United Kingdom, followers, and musicians were fond of clothing and other items embellished with Nazi symbols, especially the swastika. At that time, this symbol became very popular with Punk as part of their visual identity. According to Kidd, the young men did not view the swastika with the same revulsion as their parents and grandparents. For them, swastikas were an outward symbol of their rejection of the post-war society, the British culture, and the political and economic climate of the 1970s. The symbol is of the Hakenkreuze, with the characteristic connected crosses. Brown (2004) notes that London's Skrewdriver was the earliest and most influential of the "Nazi Rock" bands which forged connections with right-wing rock music, the skinhead scene, and the radical right.

Kidd (2011) reveals that from the UK, this continued to spread even to Asia, for example to Korea, Japan, Singapore and its surroundings. They adopted the Nazi-style of appearance and emblem as part of fashion rather than ideology. This became the phenomenon or trend of Nazi chic. In Indonesia, in the city of Bandung, there was a restaurant called the Soldaten Kaffee café, decorated with Nazi military knick-knacks, complete with the Hakenkreuze symbol, which opened in 2011. But after being criticised from the international world, this cafe was closed in 2013, and then reopened again in 2014. The cafe, which became a place for a routine rendezvous for fans of Nazi accessories, had decreasing numbers of visitors and finally closed for the second time in 2017.

On 02/05/2018, I contacted DK again after seeing him on a Facebook page. Then exchanged WhatsApp numbers and continued our communication that had ended five years previously. I asked him whether he still hated the Chinese and Madurese. Surprisingly he replied that after he found out that his grandmother was Chinese, he gradually realised that he had to stop hating other people based on their race or ethnicity. He said:

“Of course, my age is increasing, even though we maintain our idealism. We live with various people of various ethnicities. When we die, who brings and leads us to the graveyard for sure are not just from one race, but from various ethnicities. That makes me change my idealism, hahaha.” (Interview, 02/05/2018)

The tattoo, which had initially been done to represent racial hatred, in a couple of years had changed, not visually, but in its essence. The owner of the tattoo was no longer probing racial issues. DK said that the tattoo now functions as just a sign that he is a punk, not a Nazi anymore. It is just fashion, an ornament on his body, not a political statement. I remembered, when we had first met on 06/05/2013, I asked him about the idea of the tattoo. He said it had been given by his friend but he'd forgotten to store the picture. I asked if it was a beast, monster or human? He said it was a soldier. When we got in touch for the second time, he gave me this picture:



Figure 40 The 'Bulldog' Nazi Soldier illustration. (Image: DK)

The image is a bulldog that was personalised as a Nazi soldier. His friend who had the idea of this picture said that DK was like a bulldog, very strong, so the tattoo could represent DK's physical characteristics. Another thing was, as a Punk Nazi, the picture also could represent the spirit of *senggol-bacok*, the Javanese words for 'touched/offended-slashed'. This slogan is commonly used by people in Central and East Java and means a situation where if you offend others, they will become angry and hurt you at once. DK said that this was the ideology of local Punk Nazis who liked being violent or punishing those who bothered them. But DK said that this was his past. Now he wanted to live peacefully, working and playing music without any violence surrounding him. He had been changing his lifestyle and manner to become more religious. For almost five years, he had been working as an employee at a mosque dome maker. Time had changed him as well as his bulldog tattoo's meaning.

At this time, Punk Nazis in Surabaya were still dominated by *anak Punk*, from the late 1990s to the early 2000s. There was no regeneration. It could be said that the Punk euphoria era was over. Its members were preoccupied with making a living for their families. Yet they still played music. According to DK, they still often met and gathered, but what they discussed were general matters such as work and hobbies, but they no longer discussed the issue of racism. They still used Nazi symbols, like the swastika tattoo on DK's body, but the symbol now only functioned as an expression of past beliefs. It no longer reflected the ideology of racism, but continued as a symbol of affiliation, connection and brotherhood.

From examples previously discussed, such as Ayik's argument that her tattoos were symbols of 'victory' against the mainstream local (Javanese) culture that prohibited women from having tattoos; Dhit Rats finally revealing his tattoos to colleagues in the warehouse despite his worry about being bullied; the clenched fist and feminism tattoo of AY as well as the image of Munir; and lastly, the Illuminati and Nazism symbols; these tattoos can be interpreted as examples of counter-culture expressions as they contained the concepts of freedom to treat their own bodies in the way they wanted (body authority) and the tattoos functioned as forms of social resistance and political protest.

6.2. Ritual of tattooing practice

Bell (2009, p.19) defines ritual as "thoughtless action – routinized, habitual, obsessive, or mimetic – and therefore the purely formal, secondary, and mere physical expression of

logically prior ideas”. In the Indonesian context, in general, the word ‘ritual’ is interpreted as the procedures for spiritual or religious activities, such as *selamatan*. The spirit of *selamatan* in Indonesian ritual is *ikhlas* and *rukun*, as expressed by Geertz (in Bell, 2009). In this sense, *ikhlas* means sincere and willing, which is an attitude of being patient, accepting whatever happens in life, while *rukun* means harmonious and peaceful. This is a principle of a Javanese ideal. The meaning of the words *ikhlas* and *rukun* from the viewpoint of the *anak underground* are interpreted as 'collective life' and, in their life activities, *gotong royong* or cooperation is the principle of social interaction, without too much thought about individual benefits from the collaboration. For example, as stated by Ayik and Jimmy who organise the gigs, all underground music groups make contributions so that the gigs can be held successfully. Other experiences, as revealed by Bludz, are for example when one of the *anak punk* was involved in a traffic accident and needed help in funding for surgery, the *anak underground* then raised donations for the fees.

The implementation of *ikhlas* and *rukun* can also be found in tattooing activities. There is a pattern of tattooing with a ritualistic dimension that can be observed. Tattooing is not only done in the studio but also in the yard, porch, house, or during a gig. The main thing that is most noticeable is the presence of liquor. Tattooing and the use of alcohol are common (Stephens, 2003). Yet, through this research, it was revealed that there is a habitual dimension of tattooing practice in the scene which involves alcohol. Sinung, an ex-underground musician who is now a tattooist, said that sometimes his friends brought him bottles of alcohol. After the tattooing process finished, he and his mates would consume it together (Interview, 03/12/2016). One of his first clients was Dhit Rats who admitted that he liked to hear Thrash Metal music and consume alcohol before the tattooing process to reduce his tension. From this, it can be seen that tattooing from the perspective of the *anak underground* is a medium of intimacy or friendship. It is symbolised by giving/exchange, and the value is more than money. This is the implementation of *ikhlas*. This intimacy is complemented by drinking alcohol together.

In this perspective, tattooing and alcohol are a sign of *rukun* or closeness to others. Bludz said the same, that often before and after the tattooing process, he and his clients would consume alcohol, which then continued with chatting until the morning (Interview, 29/08/2015). This is an interesting illustration of the lives of the *anak underground* with strong feelings of trust and a bond between them. The example of *ikhlas* and *rukun* can also

be found in the tattoo of the local Hardcore principles in Sidoarjo, namely “Friendship, Loyalty and Respect”. This slogan talks about how the spirit of the ‘collective’ can be achieved by *ikhlas* and *rukun*.

6.3. Tattoo locations and the reasons

Even though tattoos’ popularity is starting to grow in Indonesia, negative views on tattoos still exist, as is the case in the West, as indicated by research, that tattooing is often seen as negative behaviour (DeMello, 2000; Armstrong, et.al., 1991). Therefore, the choice of tattoo placement is also still related to avoiding the stigma, seen among the *anak underground*. However, for some people, the placement of the tattoos is sometimes based on the tattooist’s advice and, for others, to show their identity.

Gender-related issues are also a concern, as shown in the international research. Atkinson (2003) found that many of the young women’s tattoos were placed in hidden or sexualised areas of the body such as the shoulder, hip, or lower back. The images were also traditionally feminine, such as animals, flowers, and hearts. Men are more likely to place the tattoo in an uncovered area, such as the arms and shoulders (Manuel and Sheehan, 2007). Thompson (2015) figured that tattoos on women would not be an issue in the social environment, as long as they remain small, ‘cute’ and easily hidden. Her study revealed that tattooed women still experience stigma and social sanctions if their tattoos look large, visible and shocking. Mifflin (1997) found that some people cover their tattoos while either looking for work or already in work. Broadly speaking, there are three aspects of tattoo placement: the first is the social and cultural aspect, the second is the thematic aspect, and the third is the size and technical factors. Some of these aspects may intersect with each other.

6.3.1. Social and cultural contexts

In this category, the placement of tattoos is based on whether people can accept the presence of tattoos or not. In this context, the placement of the tattoos is divided into two categories, on the covered areas of the body (under the shirt or trousers) or on uncovered body parts. Both categories have reasons relating to the social and cultural perspectives, which involve the interactions between the *anak underground* and their social environment. When there are options that have a firm consequence, usually the tattoo will be covered. That is why the tattoos are hidden from public view at certain times.

6.3.1.1. Covered tattoos

This aspect is closely related to the negative views towards tattoos, which still remain to this day. There is so-called stigma and the second aspect is religiosity, which results in tattoos being placed on covered areas of the body (under clothes). They become private and only certain people are allowed to see them. The stigma makes some tattoo owners worried about receiving negative treatment by people outside the underground community, such as at work, in the neighbourhood, place of worship or school, or to avoid the anger of their parents.

The biggest social environments that have become the scourge for tattoo owners are the office and school. Dhit Rats (Interview, 23/03/2013) revealed that when he was working, he wore a long-sleeved shirt that covered almost all the tattoos on his right and left arms. At first, he did it to avoid the negative views of his fellow employees and also his boss at the office. Then, after a few of his office friends caught him having tattoos but ignored his tattoos, he was relieved. But his habit of covering his tattoos at the office is still done now, to respect the feelings of others who may dislike them for some personal or socially constructed reasons.

This is similar to what Haris expressed (Interview, 20 April 2013). He is a graphic designer and also on the promotion staff of *Surabaya Bising* (*Bising* in English is Noise), a website that accommodates all activities related to underground music in Surabaya and the surrounding areas. In his work activities at the communications company, he tries not to show his tattoos to his colleagues. Most do not know that he has tattoos as he could not assume others' perspective regarding his tattoos. He wanted the situation in the office to remain conducive. Indeed, he is not sure of his managers' perspectives on his tattoos. It is better, he said, that he prevented people from misjudging him because he liked his job and did not want to lose it. That is why the tattoos on Haris' body are located only on the covered areas.

Another reason is that the tattoos for him are private issues, that others do not need to know about. Haris told me that he showed me the tattoos only because I am a tattoo researcher. One of them is a black goat head tattoo. Haris explained that this tattoo is based on his life, that he had experienced being a scapegoat, which made him feel like an unwanted person. He is always being blamed by his family for any problem that occurs in the family. Because of that, Haris tries as much as he can to cover his tattoos in the office to minimise being judged as a

trouble-maker, as happens in his family. He is afraid that the tattoos will trigger discomfort among others.

A similar situation happened to Dhit Rats when he tried to cover his tattoos in his workplace. One day he was moved to a warehouse area. Due to the warm and stuffy conditions, and because his work required him to lift and place things manually, his body felt uncomfortable and sweaty. Finally, he had to open his shirt. It was the first time his colleagues had seen that his body was covered in tattoos. He was surprised that his colleagues did not make a fuss about his tattoos, some of them even followed him in not wearing their shirts and he was shocked that some other workers in the warehouse also had tattoos. What Dhit Rats did had encouraged others to uncover their secret tattoos. They said that for so long they had always worried about negative judgement from other employees, therefore, they tried to hide the tattoos. Finally, since then, in the warehouse, all the tattooed employees have felt free to show off their tattoos to each other.

This is an interesting story, of how the tattoo subculture was formed in a working-class community. They initially felt fear of being considered negatively by one another. It turned out that after one person began to uncover his tattooed body, it triggered the others to do the same. There was no more sense of inferiority or worry, even other workers who did not have tattoos appreciated the difference. Over time, tattoos were considered as a natural thing in Dhit Rats' workplace. He also said that in the warehouse, he seemed to rediscover the social life that he had in the underground community, which was full of tattoo owners. It also indicated that tattooing was more widespread than it appeared in 'normal life' in Indonesia.

However, the opposite was experienced by SPTR. In our meeting around August 2013, this fan of underground music and father of two children, whom I often encountered in a coffee shop behind the MK hospital in the Waru-Sidoarjo area, revealed that he would not allow his son to be tattooed as, in his opinion, the tattoos would cause him to have trouble in getting a job. SPTR said that after his contract was terminated because the company suffered losses due to the financial crisis, he found it hard to get a new job because the tattoo on his neck was visible, even though he tried to cover it with his collar. He sensed that the tattoo might have caused him to be rejected at the interview. Finally, he decided to work in odd jobs. SPTR's tattoos may have carried a message at one point in his life when he was young, but as he grew up and became more mature, the message of those tattoos was not as he expected before, and

he developed tattoo regret. In this respect, we can say that SPTR's experience was the inverse of AJ's. Similar to Haris, he put his tattoo in an invisible area to avoid negative judgement from others who may disagree with him.

There is an interesting story, as told by AJ (Interview, 27/04/2013), where he passed the admissions test at a port as a container operator even though he had tattoos on his body. One of the tests he went through was a physical health test. In this test, the committee examined the health of the prospective employee. For that, all participants were required to undress. AJ was worried that he would not pass the test because his body was full of tattoos. One of his eye-catching tattoos is the Muslim prayer in Arabic letters of "*Bismillahirrahm nirrahim*" which means "By calling on the name of Allah the most merciful and the kind-hearted". Unexpectedly, although he has a lot of tattoos, he passed the test. He considered the success might have been because he had the capability to do the job and also because of the "*Bismillahirrahm nirrahim*" tattoo which reminded him to always mention it before he started doing anything every day, he said.

AJ is an example of the latest phenomenon of how a tattooed person has the same opportunity as a non-tattoo user to be accepted to work in a bona fide company. However, based on my meetings and interviews with many tattoo owners, many of them had the opinion that they were rejected for the job interview process because of their tattoos. Although, looking at this issue in a broader context, it could be caused by an assessment of body hygiene, which is one of the points in employee recruitment in some companies. In the Netherlands, Dillingh et al. (2016, p.21) found some indications that "the employment status of those with a (visible) tattoo is more vulnerable". In Indonesia, the possibility that tattooing becomes an important issue in job acceptance is possible in sectors such as government, the military, police, and the like. In areas of work such as art or design, having a tattoo is a normal thing. Thus, looking at the facts, tattoo owners should be able to seek job opportunities in various areas without worrying about whether tattoos on the body will be questioned. For example, at my university in Indonesia, in the design department, there are several lecturers' assistants who, although they are tattooed, are accepted for work. Uniquely, the institution where I work is a Christian-based educational institution. I think it could be because what is needed is the skill and their attitude, not the appearance of the body. As long as they abide by the rules to act and behave accordingly, they are welcomed to work there.

In the state of Kalimantan, the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) made a breakthrough that allowed local residents in Borneo who have tattoos and piercings to register as soldiers, especially those who live in border areas with Malaysia. This is a progressive step because TNI is an agency that initially prohibited its members from tattooing. There were even periodic check-ups among soldiers to ensure that they were not tattooed. The TNI's move to accept tattooed and pierced youths should be appreciated because the basis is the condition of the geographical environment and local wisdom that makes youths on the border with Malaysia mostly have tattoos and piercings. As a result, in the past, only a few of them, who had no tattoos, became soldiers when TNI in the border area required people who understood the local geographical, social and cultural conditions to apply for jobs in the army.⁴²

In the educational environment, tattoos also have a certain resistance. The renowned underground musician in Surabaya, BRN, revealed that once, around the early 2000s, when he was taking a diploma course at a university in Surabaya, he experienced discrimination (Interview, 25 March 2013). Indeed, his appearance and style was not like most students. He dressed up in Punk style with Mohawk hair and tattoos on his body. The lecturer and his friends thought he was weird. In certain educational environments, tattoos are still regarded as part of an anti-social culture.

Communities in religion-based schools or higher education institutions are likely to challenge their tattooed students. This was Ayik's experience⁴³, as she revealed that she experienced unpleasant things when she was at an event at her children's school, and had to take off her jacket which meant all the tattoos on her arms were seen by the teacher and some students' parents. They were shocked and then looked at her in a strange way. If I could compare it to how it is in England, especially in Sheffield, where I and some of my friends from Indonesia saw, in the summer of 2017, that there were some teachers in this city being seen to have tattoos. Although the tattoos were located on the upper arm, I could still see them. It is unlikely that in Indonesia school teachers would be understood by other colleagues if they chose to have tattoos. I have observed that tattoos are commonly found among art academy students in Indonesia, especially since the 2000s. I often find some lecturers have tattoos as well, and they are often visibly displayed. But at the school level, they are likely to be

⁴² See Badan Bertato dan Telinga Bertindik Bisa Jadi Tentara. Retrieved from www.korankaltim.com/badan-bertato-dan-telinga-bertindik-bisa-jadi-tentara/

⁴³ In Chapter 4: Case studies (Case 5).

unidentified or not exposed. Perhaps this issue of tattoos among educators in Indonesia is an interesting case to be investigated in terms of social and cultural aspects, and also associated with their role and function as the main figure in the learning process at a school or university.

Another reason that tattoos are sometimes resisted among some musicians, fans of underground music, and other members of the tattoo community, is generally related to the religious aspect of rituals. For example, in Islam there is a thing known as *wudlu*, the ritual of washing some parts of the body performed by the Muslims before practising *shalat* (prayer). Muslims must be clean and wear good clothes before they present themselves before God. Muslims start with greetings in the name of God, which is then followed by rinsing and washing their mouth, nose, face, arms, front part of the hair, ears, and lastly their feet to the ankles, three times each. AY suggested that tattoos might tarnish the body's purification process. That's why her tattoos are only on her back, not on her arms and feet. For Muslims, as in Christianity, the ban on tattoos is still a debate because, according to Honeycutt (in Mitchell, 2015), the Holy Bible did not forbid Christians from having tattoos per se, but the act of scarification, which was the act of cutting images or words into the skin, as the word 'tattoo' only entered the English language during the late 1700s – which was too distant from the biblical times.

6.3.1.2. Uncovered tattoos

The aspect that determines a person's confidence in showing their tattoo is if the environment in which they socialise or live is familiar with the presence of tattoos, such as in the art or performing arts community. Otherwise, facing opposition from the social and family environment is a consequence. Therefore, they are ready to face criticism and prejudice from others. The social environment that can accept the presence of tattoos is the underground music community itself. Beyond that is the community in the *terminal* (bus station), nightspots or red-light areas. In sports venues, such as gyms or fitness centres, swimming pools, skate parks, and such, tattoos are also acceptable because in such places, as I have observed, the presence of tattooed people is common. In the educational context, the presence of tattoos can be observed in schools or art colleges. An art student from the Indonesian Art Institute in Yogyakarta (ISI) named Athonk was the pioneer of tattoo shows for the first time

in Indonesia. Athonk, a punk, tattoo artist, and art student, staged a tattoo convention in Yogyakarta at the Gamma Fair event in 1996.⁴⁴ It was followed by a tattoo exhibition entitled 'Gampingan Tattoo Expo' at the former Faculty of Art at the Campus ISI Yogyakarta on 15–21 November 2000. From this art institute, the presence of tattoos in urban communities, especially among students began to emerge after about 17 years of marginal status and negative perceptions towards tattoos after the existence of Petrus (Penembakan Misterius or Mysterious Shootings), that hunted down identified tattooed criminals.⁴⁵ According to Laine Berman (2006), tattoo revival began again because of the powerful influence of globalisation:

“The 1987 was the release of the first Guns and Roses cassette, *Appetite for Destruction*. The cover of the cassette featured a Gothic cross with five skull caricatures of the band. The music was received with such phenomenal support that suddenly young Indonesian males demanded that image be tattooed on their bodies.”



Figure 41 Rock 'n Roll inspired tattoos (left) and the first tattoos exhibition in Indonesia, Gamma Fair, 1996. (Photo: <https://laineberman.net/2016/03/30/style-and-lifestyle-through-indonesian-tattoos>)

6.3.2. The positions of tattoos based on themes.

6.3.2.1. Horror/dark life and violations

Commonly, tattoos use illustrations related to the world of darkness like the devil, ghosts, skeletons, and 'spooky' faces. There are two main reasons why they choose the images. The first is that the images are widely seen and familiar. For example, they were seen on the Metal music group album's covers and posters, both national and international, as well as on

⁴⁴ See Berman (2006).

⁴⁵ See Olong (2006), Marianto and Barry (2002), Siegel (1998)

T-shirts and merchandise. Sipit, AJ, Bludz, and Dhit Rats claimed that horror references could be seen as the identity of universal underground music.

Nevertheless, it is for musical expression, not as a Satanist identity. So it can be perceived as a visual appropriation, which is reinforced by the fact that the lyrics of the songs do not have a relation to the devil's cult as well as the tattoo owners being Muslims or Christians who still believe in God, not Lucifer. They use the imagery but detach it from its original associations and intentions. The second reason, according to GT, why horror tattoos were used was a representation of the bad things he had done in the past. This moral self-judgement being made here may relate to previous religious education/conditioning. This association correlates to the placement of the tattoos on the left side of the body, for example on the left arm. So far, there have been no findings in other tattoo research about the placement of tattoos regarding 'good and evil' values. I think this is because the concept of the right and left sides connecting to positive and negative perceptions, is strongly embedded in Indonesian culture. In Javanese culture and generally in Indonesia, using the left arm to perform activities such as giving or receiving, for eating and shaking hands is bad manners. This association is also used when putting a tattoo on the body. However, it was also found that there was also a horror tattoo put on the right hand. In the case study of MS (*Barong* and *Leak* imagery), The *Rangda/Leak*, representation of Evil, was put on the right side of the body as it was understood to often do evil acts in human daily activity. A similar issue of local belief can be seen in Dey and Das's (2017) research; there is a belief in India that if people tattoo their body with Satan/Devil images, they will come into people's lives as those people are inviting them. Yet on the other hand, if people put *Mahamritunjaya* or *Gayetri* Mantras, these spells work very positively in people's lives.

According to Prilly (2013), devil visualisations are referred to as 'Metal artwork' which means the image and/or typography is a representation of the lyrics of metal bands that tend to have creepy nuances. The lyrics that mostly contain hatred, anger, resistance, dissatisfaction and violence are poured or visualised into an image on various media, one of them being on the body in the form of tattoos. Prilly notes that Metal artwork is closely related to Metal music culture, which developed into many forms of underground musical styles in Indonesia.



Figure 42 The skull is one of the most famous symbols among the *anak underground*. (Photo: Jandoko)

6.3.2.2. Groups/Affiliations

Placements of tattoos based on this theme vary. There is no standard system, except for *anak Punk*. As shown in the previous description, in some respects, the *anak underground* have faced rejection and questions, and others have been disrespected by the wider community. Besides the “Punk” tattoo, an ‘A’ symbol of anarchy is one of the most common tattoos in the underground scene, as seen on the back of Alif’s right hand. However, although Alif knew that the symbol meant a spirit of resistance to the system, he never fully implemented the spirit of the symbol in reality. He is, unlike Adt, a former Punk member who later left the punk community to choose the life of a preacher among the Muslim youth. Adt said that he was a member of the Anarcho-Punk scene. During the reformation period in Indonesia (1998) and afterwards, he was very active in demonstrations. Using a face mask, dressed in a black shirt, trousers and boots, he stood in front of the police and military forces. In his hand, he held a black flag with the symbol of ‘anarchy’, a monogram consisting of the capital letter ‘A’ surrounded by a capital ‘O’. The letter ‘A’ was taken from the initial letter of ‘anarchy’ or ‘anarchism’. The letter ‘O’ meant Order. The black colour itself was a symbol of an unyielding spirit (Interview, 25 August 2015). Adt told me that by holding the flag he felt his spirit was so great, he felt heroic despite the tear gas bursting in front of him.

According to what I found on Anthon’s arm, the tattoo of the word “Punk” is usually placed on the fingers (right or left). Its function is as the identity of the *anak Punk*. In addition, when the fingers of the fist are clenched, the association will become the spirit of resistance against the system or anything that will stop them living life as an *anak Punk*. I also discovered a

“Punx” tattoo placed on a person’s left eyebrow, while the word “Drunk” was on the right. The tattoo owner (who called himself a Punk) stated that he, as an *anak Punk*, liked to drink alcohol (Interview, 04/12/2012). It was one of the social behaviour characteristics of *anak Punk*, he said. Indeed, among musicians and fans of underground music, alcoholic beverages are common. One day I went to an underground music gig in the area of Surabaya, where I saw a music fan carrying his baby up to the stage to share the alcoholic beverages with the musicians, then they drank together. This is also a rebellious act in an Islamic and common moral context. In various print and online mass media, it was also often reported that the police had to disperse Punks who were binge drinking.⁴⁶ Whether they are just claiming to be Punks or indeed really are fans of Punk music, this kind of situation often happens. Among some of the underground musicians, I have seen tattoos in the form of bottles of alcoholic beverages. The shape of the bottle is similar to the bottle shape of the *Topi Miring* brand. I observed that this brand is very popular among alcohol enthusiasts in the lower economic social groups at this stage of their lives because of its cheap price.



⁴⁶ Putra, E.H. (2018) wrote that at Mal Season City, Tambora, West Jakarta, dozens of *anak punk* who were drinking alcohol were dispersed by the police. Retrieved from <https://jakarta.tribunnews.com/2018/11/18/tim-pemburu-preman-polres-jakbar-bubarkan-belasan-remaja-karena-pesta-miras-dan-tawuran>.



Figure 43 The “Punx” and “Drunk” tattoos (top), a skull and liquor bottle tattoo (bottom left), and a cheap Indonesian liquor brand, *Topi Miring* (bottom right). (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

Tattoos of a music community or a favourite band name are generally located in various parts of the body. A tattoo on the chest or back generally represent pride in the group or band; a tattoo on the forearm is usually to show others their preferred musical genre so it can also be used as a self or group identity to express proud feelings of becoming fans or members of the group; a tattoo on the upper arm has the same function as one on the chest. In previous research conducted by Dey and Das (2017), in India, there are some people who acquired tattoos of their idols in music and art, such as Kurt Cobain, but they did not mention tattoos as part of affiliation to the music scene.

However, there was also a tattoo of the brand name of a merchandise store that sells products related to the underground music, seen on the forearm of AJ. This tattoo functions more as brand promotion and, in a sense, AJ is the brand ambassador. The placement of the groups/band tattoos reminded me of the same function of bands’ logos on T-shirts. It suggests that these tattoos have a similar function to the T-shirts, which communicate their liking of the band, and also show their identity as fans of one of the musical genres and/or members of a group of music fans. However, this is a much more permanent endorsement. It is also possible that the tattoo contains a message that the wearer is a particular ideological follower according to the genre of the underground music they like. I noticed one tattoo of a band named ‘Crucial Conflict’, one of the famous underground music bands in Surabaya. This underground music band’s musical style is influenced by the Dead Blue Sky, Morning Again, Unearth, Sylosis, Killswitch Engage and Lamb of God. On 17 August 1999 (Indonesia Independence Day), ‘Crucial Conflict’ was born. The name of this group was given by a local

Surabaya rapper, *Brampy*. Initially, this was the name of a rap group in the US, but they had disbanded. According to some of his colleagues, the name ‘Crucial Conflict’ seemed to fit the Indonesian chaotic situation during the Reformation era. The tattoo itself is on the chest of its singer (Interview, 16/04/2013). The tattoo explains multiple aspects of its creative ideas which came from the Indonesian political background, the Western music group name, and the nuance of the metal artwork/aesthetic. This is a kind of adoption and adaption practice among the underground community.



Figure 49 “Crucial Conflict” tattoo. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The tattoos’ visual elements consist of the ‘underground styles’, such as seen in the ‘Crucial Conflict’ tattoo which uses the *Blackletter (Gothic)* typeface, the most common typeface that can be found on underground music posters, cover albums, and other media materials in the underground community. To emphasise the horror situation, red flames are depicted surrounding the ‘Crucial Conflict’ tattoo. The word ‘Angel’ uses a decorative typeface. Sharp pointed decorative elements can be adapted from the tail (ended point of the typeface stem) of Gothic/Blackletter. Another Metal aesthetic expression is a bone that connects the two eyes, in between which there is a dark lightning symbol. In the logos of some famous metal bands such as ACDC, Slayer, and Kiss, symbols of lightning are used as part of the logo.





Figure 44 World-famous Metal band logos, which use the lightning symbol. (Image: Google Images)

As commonly seen, the skull, bones, or skeletons are also graphic elements of underground music tattoos. From the tattoo of Crucial Conflict, it can be seen that the visual elements such as the logo and others such as the colours, lines, shapes, and forms represent an atmosphere of horror, suspicion (represented by the eyes), and turbulent situations represented in the form of a blazing fire. This is particularly relevant from an Indonesian historical point of view describing the cultural and psychological impact of the situation in Indonesia in the period before and after the Reformation era (1998).

The most striking moment was the emergence of turmoil or social problems with conflict between groups of people. The riots occurred in the form of mass looting and mass destruction in various cities in Indonesia, attacks between community groups, and some accompanied by burning buildings including places of worship. One of the most tragic incidents was in the May 1998 Riot Case in Jakarta. In this incident, 1,217 people died, 85 were reportedly raped and 70,000 were displaced. This incident lasted for 3 days from 13–15 May 1998, with a material loss estimated at Rp 2.5 trillion. The trigger was because of the kidnapping of activists, the shooting of *Trisakti* university's students and the deterioration of the economy at the time. Most people with Chinese ethnicity became the target of *amuk massa* or mass assault.⁴⁷ During May in Jakarta, Chinese people lived in desperation. According to one of them, Ray Indra Nugraha:

“At that time I saw the worst, as well as the noblest. At that time I was living in Gajah Mada, and the shops on the street were looted. (Some people) were invited to loot,

⁴⁷*Lima Kasus Konflik Sosial Terburuk Pasca 1998*. Retrieved from <https://news.detik.com/berita/2125635/lima-kasus-konflik-sosial-terburuk-pasca-1998>

there were still some people who said firmly, 'no, it's a sin'. In the afternoon my wife's office was attacked ... Amid of shouting of Kill Chinese, Burn Chinese, the *Bajaj* driver where my wife was riding asked her to bow and covering my wife with plastic he said "Whatever happens do not get off" then he broke through the crowds of invaders. Indeed in the midst of the disaster, a heroic will emerged ..."
(www.dw.com/id/tragedi-mei-98-saat-itu-saya/a-19251698)

6.3.2.3. Expressions of respect, affection, and love for the family

Among the *anak underground*, tattoos of family members function as expressions of love for the family. The forms of the tattoos can vary, including self-portraits of parents (father or mother), children, wives, husbands, and family members' names. Some tattoos are in the form of objects that represent the individual identity of the family member, such as their favourite objects and/or metaphors. For example, AY has a robot tattoo on her upper right thigh. She said that the tattoo reminded her of her son who loved the movie *Transformers*. Her son also knew about the tattoo and he loved it very much. Anja, the female musician, has a tattoo of an anchor, which represents her father who is a sailor. GT, a former underground musician and now a tattooist, has portrait tattoos of himself with his mother at the base of his right arm, combined with a tattoo of Jesus' face. He revealed that his mother was the one he loved deeply for understanding and helping him in times of troubles and guiding him to leave life on the streets. In this sense, the mother's tattoo is the highest form of honour as it is placed in the part with the Jesus face image. GT stated that his mother and Jesus, to him, were two important figures in his life.

Tattoos as a form of dedication to parents are generally dominated by the expression of affection for the figure of the mother. This is common in the West as well as in other parts of the world, as disclosed in the study of Day and Das (2017) in India, that to remember the loved ones, people tend to tattoo them. They are embodied in the forms of portraits and words. Among the *anak underground* we can find expressions of love (most of them in English), such as:⁴⁸ "I Love You, Mom" and "Mum and Dad, I am Coming Home." I also found tattoos of mothers in the form of angels or saints. This is the expression of the love of a child who is very respectful and loving towards his mother. Mothers' tattoo positions are

⁴⁸ Slogans, among the underground scene, are mostly in English. For tattoos, English slogans might be considered as cooler (*keren*) than the ones that use Indonesian words.

generally on the chest, which represents that the mother is always in the heart. Another common position is on the right arm. Some of the owners of the tattoos acknowledged that the right side of the body was the perfect place for the tattoo portrait of their mothers because of the positive impression of the 'right' in Indonesian culture. My findings related to a mother figure as a tattoo is really unique because the tattoo of a mother so far has only been found among male respondents. I have never found a mother's self-portrait tattoo on females. It may be because most of my respondents are male, or probably, the mother figures among the *anak underground* females are less popular. Of the five female respondents, none had a mother figure tattoo even though they acknowledged honouring their mothers. The popularity of the mother figures among the *anak underground* males showed a unique relationship.

6.3.2.4. Women figures

The theme of women is also an interesting one to observe. Several males among the *anak underground* had one or more female figures on their bodies. The styles of the tattoos varied, ranging from portraits to cartoon styles, whose meaning was sometimes personal and could only be understood in a private context, to a popular actress like Marilyn Monroe. The placement of the tattoo sometimes has a specific purpose, such as a Janis Joplin tattoo on Njet's right chest, expressing respect, loyalty, and love to the singer. She will always be in his heart. The placement is like an explicit representation of "I am a big Janis Joplin fan". If it is linked to Njet's style of music, the tattoo also represents the style of music he plays, which is Blues, similar to Janis Joplin's musical style. Once, Njet even thought of wanting to die at the same age as his favourite star, around 27 years old. Another celebrity that I found on a tattoo was Marilyn Monroe, on Gamble's right chest. I asked whether he knew her or not. It turned out that he knew her, but he just liked her because she was so famous. It was nothing to do with his daily identity as a Punk, and it illustrates the international pervasiveness of certain imagery. On his right arm, there was a tattoo of a woman holding an umbrella. It was his wife who left him when he settled for a while in the city of Yogyakarta. The tattoo is actually the medium of his anger and disappointment expressed towards her.

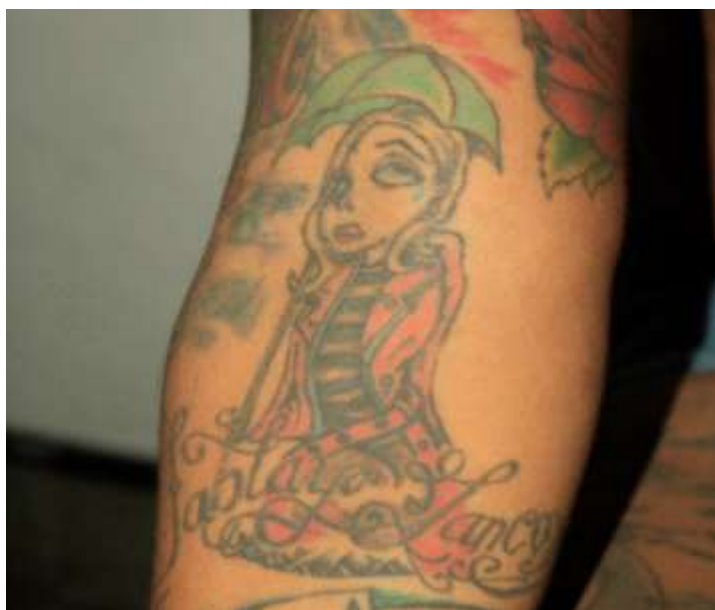


Figure 51 Gamble's tattoo of his ex-wife. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

The above tattoo (in Figure 52) reminds Gamble of his wife, whom he married when he travelled with the street Punk groups to Yogyakarta in his teenage years. The memory of living in this city was one of his worst journey stories. The image itself is not exactly a likeness of his ex-wife, it is just a symbol that represents her. Yet, if we look at the tattoo, there are interesting words that accompany the image, namely “*Jablay Jancok*”. This quote is based on an Indonesian slang expression. *Jablay* means "rarely caressed" and *Jancok* is taken from a Javanese word *Jancuk*. If it is related to the image on the Gamble's arm and to his life experience with the figure, the “*Jancok*” could have a negative meaning similar to "son of a bitch." *Jancuk*, however, in the local Surabayan social and cultural contexts or if it is seen from the wider context, such as Javanese culture, can have both positive or negative interpretations, although it is widely known as a swear word. *Jancuk* in this culture functions as an expression that natives use to express their feelings. So its meaning will depend on the context rather than the concept. However, conceptually or epistemologically, according to Mustiawan (2016), *Jancuk* has a negative meaning:

“The word *Jancuk* comes from two basic words namely 'Jan' (*Jange*) and 'cuk' (*encuk*). 'Jange' means 'will' while 'encuk' itself means copulation, raped or have sex. So that *Jancuk* epistemologically can be interpreted as 'will have sex'. This word in some areas is prohibited because it contains a value that is less ethical, very rough and negative connotation. There are many variants of the word *jancuk*, such as *jancok*,

dancuk, dancok, damput, dampot, diancuk, diamput, diamput, diancok, mbokne ancuk. jambu, jancik, hancurit, hancik, hancuk, hancok.”⁴⁹

The word *Jancuk* can be positive when it is understood in the context of a conversation between close friends. Often, when I am in a coffee shop or public places, I hear people saying hello to their friends with phrases like, “*Cuk*, who's a going? I haven't seen you, recently”. *Cuk*, from *Jancuk* here, means ‘you’. In the context of the conversation, the word *Cuk* contains feelings of longing and a sense of deep happiness when meeting with his best friend. Later, when I met Gamble once more, in August 2015 (our first meeting was in early May 2013), he said he still missed his ex-wife when I asked him again about the tattoo of the woman and the umbrella. Thus, the tattoo may contain negative and positive values in a single object. On one side, it signifies a bad moment, yet on the other hand, it is a longing expression. In some respects, the *anak underground* also demonstrate the concept of a world that splits between good and evil, or heaven and hell in their tattoos by using women figures. The stereotype of naughty girls is depicted in nude or topless and/or seductive gestures. As I had seen, Anthon has a tattoo which uses the Virgin Mary's figure on the right arm as a symbol of repentance. On the other hand, a topless girl holding marijuana, dice, a billiard ball (with the number 13 on it), and a sand glass is on his left arm. These objects represent his dark past life. The depictions of the mother Mary on the right side of the body also apply to the mother figures. In this case, the right position means respect and expressions of gratitude.



Figure 45 The figures of women as tattoos to represent good and evil. (Photo: Cons. Tri Handoko)

⁴⁹ www.kompasiana.com/mustiawan/makna-di-balik-kata-jancuk-gathel_56f26969f29273c10825104f

There are other things that affect the placement of tattoos such as technical aspects and pain. For larger tattoos, they are generally placed on the back because it is wider and easier to manoeuvre on when making tattoos. The chest is also an area wide enough to be a place for relatively large-sized tattoo objects, in addition to the abdominal area. Nevertheless, some respondents said that they sometimes chose a position for their tattoos to avoid pain. So they put the tattoos on the area that felt less painful when the tattooing process was running. Being tattooed on the abdomen and chest felt more painful than on other areas of the body, admitted several people. Yet, these arguments tend to be relative or subjective because I generally found many examples of tattoos placed on the chest and abdomen.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

My research approach is more on the aspect of *emic perspectives*, which emphasise the narrative approaches that accommodate personal narratives as well as external narratives based on social, political, cultural and economic contexts, in order to understand the meanings and functions of tattoos among the *anak underground*. This *emic perspective* analysis has the advantage of bridging the interpretation of tattoos which tend to focus on the tattoo owner's perspective and the surrounding phenomena that could also affect the meaning and function of the tattoos which may not be noticed by the owners of the tattoos. Here, the role of the researcher is to construct meanings by synthesising the *anak underground's* perspective corridors and the contexts where the phenomenon occurs, which are then strengthened by the researcher's knowledge and data relating to the issues.

By using these approaches, this research has revealed some factors that shape the motivation of the *anak underground* in the Surabaya region to have tattoos. Some of them acquired tattoos at an early age, around 14–15 years old. Some factors are affected by internal conflict in the family. In this case, the tattoos become an expression of rebellion. The other function of the tattoos relates to the parents-children relationship issue, with tattoos sometimes being a grown-up statement for the kids, even if they are not allowed by their parents to have tattoos. They insist on having the tattoos without their parents' permissions as they feel legally responsible for their own life. A common measurement of being grown up is if they can support themselves and live separately from their parents.

Relating to some internal conflict in the family, in some respects the tattooing practice becomes the channel of diversion from potential self-abuse, which means that some *anak underground* use them as a kind of self-therapy. This kind of motivation can also be found in the Western tattooing practice. Stirn and Hinz (2008) hypothesised that some people used tattooing as a therapeutic practice to reduce anger. In other cases, the tattoos are body adornments, being put on the body for fashion reasons, instead of to express certain specific emotions, such as anger, sadness, or joy.

Tattoos as symbols of a spiritual journey may reflect the religious-social context in Indonesian society. In *Pancasila* (the five principles), the official and foundational ideology of Indonesia, belief in the Almighty God (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*) is placed as the first principle, followed by the other four. These principles are taught in schools from primary school. Therefore, religious beliefs have a fundamental constitutional and cultural position in Indonesia. Generally, it is also common to find people deeply holding their local or traditional spiritual and superstitious beliefs and practices. The influence of the *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* principle is represented in the practice of spiritual and religious culture among groups in the underground scene. It can be related to more formal religious manifestations such as the emergence of prayer groups or communities in the underground scene such as Metal Satu Jari, Underground Tauhid (Islam), as well as The Crossline (Christian). For traditional beliefs, *Kejawen* is also practised by some *anak underground*.

The tattoos' positions on the body follow the local preferences of religious, social and cultural values, which may not be found in the modern Western culture of tattooing. Good and evil, negative and positive concepts are widely used in the tattoos' positioning on the body. It represents a balanced world as seen in the Javanese or Indonesian traditional macro cosmos theory and belief. The positioning of tattoos in the covered or uncovered areas of the body also explains about the local social and cultural values, even psychological expression. In this respect, those who do not want to be judged as bad individuals have to hide their tattoos. This also relates to certain religious beliefs, especially for Muslims, that they should not put tattoos on the arms and feet as they will hinder the prayer ritual of *wudlu*. Also, in relation to Islamic values, some *anak underground* tried to avoid tattooing animate living creatures on their bodies. Besides being forbidden, it is perceived that the figure will then ask for their soul in the afterlife. This is an example that, although they embrace Islam, they do not try to find the most appropriate proposition to justify the prohibition of the use of living things for tattoos.

In addition to relating to religious values or local expressions of belief, tattoos are also related to aspects of communication. Some tattoos show the link between the wearer's life concepts, future expectations or hopes, as well as their feelings about life. Thus these tattoos, from the perspective of communication, tend to be more personal or intrapersonal communication, a manifestation of the bearers' inner dialogue, which conveys the relation within the self.

There have been constant global influences on Indonesia over the years as waves of settlers, invaders and colonisers have necessitated syncretic practices and thinking. Inventive hybrid cultural practices are normal and commonplace in Indonesia as a result. The forms of symbols which appear on the *anak underground* tattoos, come from the 'international' graphic conventions relating to the various music scenes and forms, such as the anarchy symbol, the clenched fist, the Illuminati's all-seeing eye, as well as the upside-down star and cross, and horror-themed objects such as skulls, demons, Baphomet and other creatures from hell. The languages used in tattoos are mainly expressed in English, with some others in German and ancient Greek. The Gothic or Blackletter typeface is also widely used in artworks and tattoos. In this case, there are global influences that are absorbed and copied then combined with local touches. This is an example of syncretic practices in Indonesia as various cultures entered *Nusantara* around the VIII century which came together with some religions from the Hindu-Buddhist era, including Islam, Christianity, and so on. These have created a rich mixture of elements of local-global culture for centuries in Indonesia.

There is enormous cultural diversity in Indonesia with regard to visual traditions, specifically in tattooing practices. Many people have Dayak, Javanese, Sumbawa, Mentawai and Balinese motifs and symbols as tattoos, such as Javanese Scripts Hanacaraka, Balinese's Hindu Barong and Ragda, Dayak's *Bunga Terung* and Mentawaian's simple line tattoos. Other local images and symbolism that can also be found among them are, for instance, fried catfish (*lele goreng*, typical roadside food stalls), Inul Daratista (a local Dangdut Singer), Munir (a local political activist), *Garuda Pancasila* (the legendary bird Garuda with a shield on its chest and a scroll gripped by its leg bears the national motto "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*", a Sanskrit text meaning "unity in diversity") and so on.

Another unique local element which doesn't have prominence in the contemporary tattoo research is how some people get the desire to have tattoos after they have experienced dreams. From the Indonesian perspective, such as among local Javanese people, dreams have been seen as a sign of events or a supernatural message. During my field research, I also found a similar phenomenon outside the underground community that people acquired tattoos after experiencing a certain kind of dream. This could be a potential research topic to be explored in the future. The creative process of translating dreams into various tattoos can be significant and may lead to specific social modes of representation and states of reality in Indonesian contemporary tattoos. It has also been found that tattoos can help progression on

one's spiritual journey, which is noteworthy, and may reflect the religious-social movement among youngsters that also happens in the wider communities outside the underground music communities.

The underground music scene can be said to be at the forefront in the rise of Indonesian tattoos after the era of mysterious shootings (Petrus). One of the promoters is Atonk, who tried to introduce tattoos from a different perspective in Yogyakarta city. His background as a fine art student brought a new perspective among the youngsters that tattoos were an expression of art. Moreover, Atonk has international experience and extensive knowledge about tattoos because he had settled in Melbourne, Australia around 1997–1998. In this city, he was active in tattooing practice by offering tattoo services. Then he continued his journey in 2001–2003 to visit and live in Hawaii where he also became a tattooist (Olong, 2006). To legitimate their existence, some local tattooists in Yogyakarta established the first Indonesian tattoo community called the Java Tattoo Club around September 2003. This is also evidence that shows the influence of the Western tattoo subculture on the development of Indonesian tattoos, where the experience of Indonesian tattoo artists abroad has improved, regardless of the technical aspects of tattooing and their discourse and knowledge. Yet, in some respects, the acceptance of audiences of local tattooists has also increased.

As a part of the subculture's symbolism, the tattoos, to some degree, were acquired as a collective solidarity expression shown by some of the *anak underground* who used their bodies voluntarily for tattooing practice for their fellow tattoo apprentices. I call this phenomenon the 'social body event' as I suppose the event that occurred was a means of joy, a party, a celebration of togetherness and unity which was poured into the production of tattoos. This unique relationship also shows how tattoos and tattooing practice in the contemporary era in Indonesia, in some communities, is still based on co-operation which represents Indonesia's collective value of *gotong-royong*. It is a common thing that the *anak underground*'s tattoos were acquired from beginner tattooists who started to learn to tattoo by self-teaching. Some tattooists in this community still use hand-made tattoo machines that were also widely used in Indonesian prisons as shown in my previous tattoo research (Handoko, 2007). Regarding the 'social body event', the nature of the relations is quite unique due to the long-term and enduring nature of the act and the relationships involved which are dependent upon trust, liking, and pleasant experiences. It is also closely linked to symbolic representation, self, and group identities as these group identities position themselves in

opposition to a more conventional culture in which the cleanliness of the body represents positive values and tattoos are considered contrary to this principle (Olong, 2006).

This research still has weaknesses because there several issues that emerged during the study period that could not be accommodated in more detail. One of these was the representation of women and the attitudes towards them which are shown in the imagery and the attitudes of the participants. The fact that women are part of the research sample indicates that I have not yet explored women's issues in a way that makes the most of my mixed-gender sample and the range of visual material collections. It could be material for a future paper regarding tattoos and gender issues in Indonesian contexts that are visually explored in different ways, as I also found during my research that some *waria* (transgenders) also acquired tattoos from tattoo studios. However, in my research, it can be seen how the underground community scene uses tattoos as self-expression, community and social interaction mediums, representations of aesthetic values and local ideology as well as visual culture. Despite having a local uniqueness, it has also been influenced by global culture. This is a discovery that I hope can be a reference for further research on the world of tattoos.

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Appendices

A.1. Consent Form

PERNYATAAN KESEDIAAN SEBAGAI NARASUMBER/RESPONDEN

Dengan ini saya,

Nama :
Usia :
Pekerjaan :
Email :
Facebook :
Twitter :
Alamat :

Bersedia menjadi narasumber/responden penelitian bertema “Tato di Kalangan Pemusik dan Penggemar Musik Underground: Fungsi dan Maknanya” di wilayah Surabaya dan Sidoarjo. Penelitian ini untuk melihat seperti apa tema-tema tato di kalangan pemusik dan penggemar musik underground, motivasi kenapa bertato, serta informasi lainnya seputar tato dan musik underground. Informasi dan data (verbal maupun visual/foto) yang saya berikan diperbolehkan untuk dipublikasikan dalam disertasi dan publikasi lainnya oleh peneliti, Cons. Tri Handoko.

Demikian surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sadar dan informasi yang saya berikan adalah benar menurut pengalaman hidup saya.

.....,.....2013

Yang membuat pernyataan,

(.....)

LETTER OF CONSENT
AS INFORMAN / RESPONDENT

I hereby,

Name:

Age :

Job:

Email:

Facebook :

Twitter:

Address:

Willing to be an informan / research respondent with theme "Tattoos amongst the Musicians and Underground Music Fans: Their Functions and Meanings" in Surabaya and Sidoarjo. This study explores the tattoo themes amongst musicians and fans of underground music; motivations behind tattooed; as well as other information about tattoos and underground music. The information and data (verbal or visual / photograph) I provide are allowed to be published in dissertations and other publications by the researcher, Cons. Tri Handoko.

Thus this statement I make with conscious and the information I give is true according to my life experience.

..... ..,2013

Who make a statement,

(.....)

A.2. Questions

Pertanyaan Pokok

1. Sejak kapan anda menyukai atau bahkan terlibat aktif dalam pertunjukkan musik underground?
2. Aliran musik apa yang anda ikuti?
3. Kenapa anda memilih aliran musik tersebut?
4. Apakah tato anda berhubungan dengan kesukaan anda pada musik tersebut? Kalau tidak, kenapa anda bertato? Kalau iya, tato anda yang mana yang berhubungan dengan musik yang anda sukai?
5. Kapan pertama kali anda bertato (usia)?
6. Apa yang mempengaruhi anda bertato?
7. Bagaimana pandangan keluarga, teman, atau lingkungan anda ketika pertama kali anda memutuskan bertato?
8. Bisa dijelaskan setiap tato yang anda punya. Apa fungsi dan artinya?
9. Menurut pandangan anda, apakah tato mendongkrak gaya penampilan atau performa di panggung?
10. Apakah ada keharusan bahwa pemusik underground harus bertato?

Main Question

1. Since when do you like or even actively engage in underground music performances?
2. What music stream do you follow?
3. Why did you choose the flow of music?
4. Does your tattoo relate to your liking to the music? If not, why are you tattooed? If so, which tattoos are related to the music you like?
5. When was your first time to be tattooed (age)?
6. What was your reason to be tattooed?
7. How did your family, friends, or environment look at you when the first time you got the tattoo?
8. Can you explain every tattoo you have? What is each function or meaning?

9. According to your experience, is the tattoo boosting your confidence while doing performance on stage? (Question to Musician)
10. Is there a need that underground musicians should have tattoos? (Question to Fans)

Note:

That is the interview guide (in English), however all of the interviews were conducted in Indonesian. During the fieldwork, the questions had been expanded to probe deeper insights and seek further comparisons between cases.

A.3. Interviews transcript in Indonesian which have been used in this thesis.

Handoko	AM, 29 Maret 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapan anda terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan musik Underground?	<p>Terlibat aktif tahun 2004/05. Mulai membuat acara dan main band. Seusai SMA. Ikut the Santoso tahun 2008 akhir. The santoso sendiri berdiri dari 2005. Saya didaulat vocalist karena yang sebelumnya mengundurkan diri krn pekerjaan. Aliran musiknya hardcore punk. Punk dan hardcore punk hampir sama. Perbedaan pada movement, straight X gak minum, drugs, dan gak free sex. Secara umum sama sebagai bentuk perlawanan dan kebebasan. Perlawanan pada lingkungan sekitar atau tempat yang dihuni aja. Intinya kebebasan pada porsinya masing-masing. Untuk di scen punk dan hardcore liriknya lebih ke arah-arrah politik, kehidupan pribadi, pertemanan dan apa yang dirasakan riil. Kritik ke pemerintah, sosial atau hal-hal yang kurang sejalan, tentang sistemnya.</p> <p>Contohnya lagun kami berjudul Give My Life Back. Intinya tentang sebuah keluarga, jadi</p>

	<p>anak yang broken home, kekerasan dalam keluarga. Cerita tentang bapak yang alkoholik setiap pulang ke rumah mabok dan mukuli ibunya. Orang pikir perceraian adalah jalan terbaik namun dampak dari perceraian adalah anak. Intinya keindahan hidup anak yang terenggut.</p> <p>Lagunya ini bahasa Inggris. Setiap band biasanya berorasi dahulu tentang lirik lagunya jadi lagu bahasa Inggris bisa dimengerti.</p>
Kapan anda pertama kali bertato?	<p>Bertato pada th 2006. Saat udah bergabung dengan Bak Pecah (Romantic in Black) grup band hardcore punk Bojonegoro. Saya vokalis. Awal tato yaitu Yesus. Dari kecil ingin punya tato Yesus sebagai gambaran masih ingat Yesus. Yang kedua tato salib sebagai representasi religi.</p> <p>Tato di tangan mulai bertato tahun 2010. Tato yang berkesan buat saya ada di lengan kiri yakni gambaran Ibu yang meninggal. Tato yang lain adalah tato komunitas HSC 'We stand, We believe, We proud'. Simbolnya pemukul bisbol dan brass kenakel, yang bukan merupakan simbol kekerasan. Simbol ini tren di luar (luar negeri).</p>
Apa reaksi keluarga saat anda bertato? Teman atau lingkungan juga?	<p>Pertama kali tato saat saya tinggal tidak dengan keluarga. Pada awalnya ada rasa marah, keluarga kecewa, saya jelasin tato bukan simbol kriminal. Keluarga tidak suka itu saya anggap lumrah. Teman saya tidak masalah. Dia bertato tidak dipengaruhi teman atau siapapun.</p>
Mas bertato karena pemusik UG?	<p>Tato bukan menjadi bagian dari aksi panggung buat saya. Namun sebagian orang berpikir dengan banyak tato bisa kelihatan keren di panggung. Yang penting pembawaanya asyik.</p>
Bisa dijelaskan makna tato-tatonya secara lebih detail?	<p>Di lengan kiri In loving memory mom, gambar malaikat memegang rosario. Gambaran mama yang sudah tenang di sana. Gambar di dada kiri gambar Yesus yang terpejam sesudah kematian. (tato 1) dan ada</p>

	<p>tulisan Friendship Loyalty and Respect tentang prinsip pertemanan, persahabatan, loyalitas, dan menghargai sekitar sama kolektif.</p> <p>Tato logo tour bulan November grup 'Clear Summer', kenang-kenangan tur Jawa 12 hari dengan band Australia tsb. Kepala bebek dan usus, arwah bebek adalah logo tour. Tato iblis di lengan kanan sebagai gambaran bahwa hidup ada sisi positif dan negatif. Malaikat sisi positif (kiri) setan negatif (kanan). Tato bola baseball terbakar dengan tulisan 'hardcore sex'. Ini judul lagu kami yang bercerita tentang kolektif komunitas, pertemanan dan kota Sidoarjo. Tato berungkapan 'sex' bukan ke arah negatif, tapi sex adalah semua golongan, laki2 perempuan (jenis kelamin). Tato the Shantoso Stay With Your Pride, merupakan judul lagu. Tentang apa pun bentuk kebanggaanmu, tentang apa yang kamu yakini tetap setialah.</p>
Ceritakan tentang The santoso?	<p>Band ini adalah kesenangan dan buat jaringan koneksi pertemanan. Tour tidak dibayar, patungan buat merchandise. Uangnya dipakai untuk transport. Namun kalau penyelenggara itu pakai sponsor biasanya keuntungan dibagi. Bisa bertahan karena masih ada kesadaran untuk berkolektif (ciri UG). Istilah UG sebenarnya sudah tidak pantas, karena sudah ada publikasi. Era 60-70an itu benar-benar UG.</p>
Catatan:	<p>Anca bersama teman-temannya memiliki grup Indo DIY tour, yang mengkoordinir tour grup band LN di Indonesia. Pekerjaan tour guide band-band LN yang datang tidak dibayar. Nemenin dari akomodasi dan transport. Menjual merchandise tour.</p>
<p>Mas Anca, selamat malam. Boleh minta tolong, Mas. Saya cari lirik lagu 'Hardcore Sex' nya the Shantoso tidak ketemu. Apa bisa saya dapat dari Mas?</p> <p>Sama lirik yang Stay with your pride, Mas. saya mohon bantuannya agar bisa menjelaskan di tesis saya S3. Terima kasih.</p>	<p>(02/07/2017 14:48)</p> <p>Sorry mas lama balas soalnya saya keluar kota terus mas:</p> <p>On The streets we burn our flag Bring a fortune for your life You know youre not alone Don't be afraid someone besides you take all And That make you pride</p>

	And coming out together STAY WITH YOUR PRIDE Damn All Of Human Going By
	Wanna be sacrificed on the war
	Living out now before we die
	And give it on my face i want you to know Before we go to walk alone Before we die to change a distance
	Before we can take a step inside to your fucking pride STAY WITH YOUR PRIDE Itu mas liriknya stay with your pride
Itu konsepnya masih tentang komunitas atau kritik sosial, mas?	Masih tentang komunitas ama kadang yg ada dan dialami aja mas bisa juga soal kritik sosial
Saya mau tahu dari sudut pandang the Shantoso	jg.
Itu bendera yg dibakar maksudnya bendera apa? Apakah simbol tertentu? Poin nya disitu sepertinya.	Bendera yg dibakar akan membawa keberuntungan... Bendera yg dimaksud sih biasanya kl kita datang ke tongkrongan dan komunitas kita awalnya bawa bendera masing2 nah keberagaman itu sih maksudnya Bendera itu Soalnya pada dasarnya semua datang dari background yg beda beda.

Handoko	AJ P , 27 April 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapan anda terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan musik Underground?	<p>Tertarik musik metal sejak SMP.Sekitar usia 13 tahun. Karena ayahnya suka sama Deep Purple, Bon Jovi, Gun's and Roses, Led Zeppelin, Rock-rock klasik. AJ sendiri mengakui bahwa dia awalnya bukan penikmat musik underground, lebih suka mendengarkan musik-musik rock lama. Prinsipnya music itu indah, nyaman. Dia tertarik untuk menekuni musik underground awalnya karena ajakan teman-temannya sewaktu di sekolah dasar. Teman yang lain adalah teman kuliah. Sebagai musisi, dia merasanyamandenganpersonil yang sekarang karena rasa kekeluargaannya yang tinggi. Dia menjelaskan bahwa saat ini bermain music hanya untuk mengisi waktu luang karena mereka mempunyai pekerjaan tetap di luar bermain musik. Kalau mau total di musik, mereka akan kesulitan keuangan karena pendapatan dari bermain music itu tidak begitu besar. Umumnya, dia memaparkan bahwa mereka menyisihkan sebagian dari pendapatan mereka untuk membiayai grup musiknya tersebut.Semisal untuk kebutuhan traveling keberbagai kota di saat mereka libur bekerja.</p>
Kapan anda pertama kali bertato?	<p>Pertama kali mempunyai tato pada tahun 2007, tahun pertama kuliah. Di bagian punggung, kecil tulisannya Death Guy. Saya merasa pilihan kata ini seolah asyik dan kesannya abadi."Pria yang mati tetapi tetap hidup, jalan beriringan sama orang-orang masih punya nyawa, mungkin karena dia mati menyemangati orang yang masih hidup tadi supaya, hai jangan menyerah". Tato tersebut tidak merepresentasikan hal 'metal'.</p> <p>Alasan saya bertato karena saya seniman, desainer, saya suka gambar makanya saya abadikan di tubuh saya. Di tubuh saya pun ada tato band saya 'nematoda', nama kedua orang tua saya, nama kedua adik saya ada. Sama yang di dada untuk agama saya. Kata 'Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.' Kuncinya kenapa saya tato bismillah, karena jika saya ingin memulai sesuatu hal, apapun bentuknya, mau kemana saya awali dengan bismillah dulu</p>

	supaya selamat dan lancar.
<p>Terdapat gambar seperti kepala kambing, tengkorak, dan setan. Maksudnya apa? Apakah berkaitan dengan music metalcore?</p>	<p>Memang untuk hardcore ada, tapi gak wajib kita menampilkan seperti itu. Ada band yang untuk cover albumnya, band influence kami ya Parkway Drive (Australian band). Judul album terbaru Atlas, gambar bumi. jadi gak harus seseram itu, sih.</p> <p>Gambar seram itu mungkin menggambarkan kita ini underground. Kita hidup di bawah tanah, berkaitan dengan iblis, dan lain-lain. Tapi saya rasa gak karena disana ada aliran Holly Metal seperti Asley Dying, Devils wear Prada, jadi liriknya kayak menyemangati hidup, menyebutkan kebesaran sang penciptanya.</p> <p>Too sick sickness, sangat sakit sakit sekali. Ya memang, tato sangat sakit.</p> <p>Tato Bio mechanic karena lihat punya orang, keren asyik. Dia tidak menyukai realis, foto-foto tidak suka. Bintang, tengkorak, initial NM (Nematoda):</p> <p>Artwork, seni. Bukan focus ke logonya ada tengkorak, ndak. Fokusnya lebih ke font-nya sendiri Nematoda. Bintang bersegi itu mengadaptasi slipnott.</p> <p>Mata di uluhati. Menyibolkan suara hati.</p> <p>Dead End tato adalah endorsement dari Distro. Tatonya gratis. Pemiliknya minta dipromosikan distro-nya. Tubuh sebagai media iklan. Saya membantu promosi melalui media sosial.</p> <p>Nama orang tua di kanan, adik di kiri: Konsepnya, saya menghargai keluarga saya. Jiwa raga saya untuk keluarga saya. Sakitnya, permanennya sampai dibawa mati. Bismillah ini adalah Arab modifikasi. Saya searching font Bismillah, keluarnya macam-macam. Saya pilih yang menurut saya keren. Arab Gundul.</p>
Mas apakah Underground itu anti Kristus, anti Tuhan?	<p>Ndak, ndak tahu kalau aliran yang lain kayak Black Metal. Saya suka musiknya, bukan apa yang mereka sembah. Dan tiap negara aliran black metal berbeda. Kayak wilayah Malaysia mungkin Black Metalnya bertentangan</p>

	dengan muslim, menghina muslim. Kalau negara lain anti-christ.
Apa reaksi keluarga saat anda bertato? Teman atau lingkungan juga?	<p>Awal tato di punggung mereka tidak tahu. Kedua di tangan tidak. Kanan kiri ndak. Waktu di dada itu tahu karena kerah baju sini agak bengkak. Ayah bilang kamu tatoan? Iya. Udah gitu aja. Terus selang beberapa bulan, ibu mulai tahu. Keduanya bilang kenapa kamu tatoan? Gak papa. Terus gimana kerjamu? Bisa karena ini gak di luar. saya buktikan, oh ternyata bisa. saya sudah buktikan 3-4 kali pindah kerja. Kepindahannya karena ketidaknyamanan kantornya bukan karena tato. Jadi kalau saya kerja harus lengan panjang. Memang bukan untuk pamer sebenarnya tato saya. Untuk tampil pun kadang saya tidak pamerkan.</p> <p>Saya ingin tato sampai ujung tangan. Nama istri, nama anak, tapi nanti kalau saya punya mobil sepuluh, rumah lima. Jadi hidup sudah nyaman, tapi gak tahu juga sih. Tergantung istri. kalau gak ngijinin ya enggak.” Berselang 2 tahun sesudah wawancara ini, AJ memutuskan untuk tidak bertato lagi dengan alasan agar bisa beribadah dengan lebih baik. Dia istilahkan bertobat. Pilihan itu merupakan perjanjian dengan istrinya yang berhijab setelah pernikahan mereka.</p> <p>Pacarnya tahu, mamanya juga tahu tapi ayah dan kakeknya belum dikasih tahu. Takut saja. Tapi saudara-saudara dari mamanya sudah tahu semua. Mereka tidak masalah, yang penting tanggung jawab atas apa yang dilakukan.</p>
Jelaskan lebih mendetail Mas tentang tatonya. Apa mewakili musik Underground? Seperti beberapa di wilayah dada.	<p>Menurutku, tato tidak sepenuhnya mewakili musik underground karena banyak juga pemain musik underground di scene hardcore dan metalcore tidak bertato. Bahkan AJ bilang bahwa di grup musiknya, hanya saya yang bertato. Jadi tato lebih pada kesukaan pada seni bukan karena musisi underground. Jadi tidak ada hubungan yang mutlak.</p> <p>Alasan saya berpakaian tertutup ketika bekerja karena saya tidak tahu pola pikir bosnya. Saya khawatir pemikirannya tidak terbuka dan mengasosiasikan tato di tubuh</p>

	<p>sebagai representasi sifat kriminal. Kadang orang mengaitkan, wah tatoan kriminal, dan lain-lain. Toh dia gak ngapa-ngapain. Masak tatonya bergerak, berjalan, mengambil pisau bunuh orang. Lak parah, tatonya ada apanya, hahaha. Pemikiran tersebut masih ada, kenapa itu saya tertutup untuk bekerja karena saya gak tahu pola pikir bos saya. Beda mungkin kalo di luar negeri sana.</p> <p>Saya jarang menunjukkan tato di panggung. Yang penting adalah mulut bukan tato untuk menarik massa. Namun saya melihat sebuah fenomena menarik yakni banyak, sepertinya bukan hanya tato sih. Banyak yang muda-mudi bikin band hanya untuk cari wanita. Dia bertato, punya band, keren, wanita. Jadi itu. Makanya yang, sedih ya yang bener-bener music itu lho yang susah. Anak band banyak memanfaatkan untuk cari wanita. Gampang cari wanita melalui band karena pola pikir wanitanya juga pengen nge-top. Wuih keren, aku sama anak band.</p> <p>Motifasi bertato saya tidak hanya karena dorongan dirinya sendiri karena suka akan tato namun juga karena pengaruh lingkungan dan juga rasa/efek dari bertato yang bikin ketagihan. Sakit saat ditato, ketika mau sembuh gatal, tidak boleh digaruk. Sensasi ini yang membuatnya ingin bertato.</p> <p>Saya menato nama adik-adik karena mereka akrab, kumpul berempat di rumah. Dulu ketika belum kuliah atau bekerja, sering juga cangkruk atau menghabiskan waktu di jalanan, kumpul-kumpul. Namun semenjak bekerja, hal tersebut lama-lama hilang. Saya lebih focus untuk mencari uang dan menyisihkannya sebagian untuk bikin album dan merencanakan menikah.</p>
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Handoko	AY DH, 22 April 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapan anda terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan musik Underground? Aliran musiknya apa?	Saya bisa bermain beberapa jenis musik. Saya tidak mau masuk dalam kotak-kotak, gitu saja. Saya dulu pertama main musik Grunge, terus transisi lagi saya main musiknya Ois, Skinhead. Musiknya kaum pekerja di Inggris sana itu. Kalau dari sejarahnya. Kalau sekarang saya lagi senang mainin Blues aja, sih. Slow.
Kenapa ada transisi bermusik? apa ada alasan tertentu?	Iya, ada emosi tertentu di setiap aliran yang saya mainin itu. Itu jelas ada emosi tentunya. Kalau Blues itu bikin lebih tenang saja. Soalnya saya pengen terapi anger management juga. Buat diri saya sendiri karena saya orangnya emosian. Jadi itu tujuannya, hehe.
Sejak kapan suka bermusik?	Sejak kecil, sih. TK. Dari TK sudah sering bernyanyi ² . Udah sering ikut festival di TK dari kecil kok. Waktu itu Brit-Pop. Diajarin sama papa.
Jadi punya latar belakang musik?	Gak ada. Papaku seniman, tukang pahat patung.
Kata teman-teman punya tato. tatonya apa itu?	Tatonya ada 6. yang pertama itu tulisan Ibra dalam lambang bintangnya itu. Apresiasi buat anak saya sih. Itu ada sejarahnya, kenapa bikin tato. Nyimpen foto anak di komputer itu gak boleh sama mama. Jadi mau nyimpan dimana, ya? Terus sempat tanya-tanya kalau tato muka boleh gak sih? Katanya gak boleh, kalau hari kiamatdiminta, minta nyawa. Ya udah, sekarang sekarang bikin tulisan Ibrah aja, ya Ibrah artinya amanat. Jadi ambil kata depannya saja. Namanya khan Ibrahimovich.
Itu menarik, kenapa ada larangan menyimpan foto di komputer?	Soalnya itu, hasil anak di luar nikah. Anaknya hasil di luar nikah.
Masih bersama mbaknya sampai saat ini?	Nggak, sekarang ada di rumah Mamah. Alhamdulillah sudah ditrima setahun ini. Udah kebuka hatinya mama.
Terus?	Tato yang ke-2, Nada. Berhubungan dengan kesukaan saya sama musik. Berikutnya

	simbol feminisme.
Apa itu?	Itu, itu khan berhubungan sama prinsip yang saya anut. Gerakan keperempuanan melawan hierarki.
Itu gambarnya apa?	Itu lambang tangan begini, jenis kelamin perempuan. Terus ini permen lolipop. Iseng aja sih.
Itu idenya muncul darimana kok tiba-tiba permen lolipop?	Senang permen. Terus kartun saya saya suami. Saya bikin dari asesoris pin yang ada di komputer. Ya itu biar komitmen saja seumur hidup.
Posisi tato apa ada hal yang khusus? Atau nyaman aja pada posisi tersebut?	Pertimbangannya sih, nanti kalau saya kerja tidak bisa pakai kemeja pendek. Terus kedua, menghargai itu, ritual berwudlu. Jadi ini jangan dikenai tato. Sama kaki. Buat berwudlu.
Ini khan anda punya background pendidikan S1 bidang ilmu komunikasi. Kenapa tertarik kes situ? Khan dari keci sukanya music?	Malah tadinya pengen teknik industry. Gak ketrima, larinya ke situ. Pertama seneng nulis, coba deh ke komunikasi. Biar bias ngomong. Bagaimana bikin pesen dan umpan balik. Beda kepala beda isi. Ngobrol berdua saja bisa salah persepsi. Ya itu tujuannya. Ternyata ada ilmunya, komunikasi itu.
Pertama kali bertato keluarga tahu?	Mama sih tahunya pas tatonya di punggung dah penuh. “Anakmu itu apa2an? Siapa yang ditiru? Tahu2 kok tatonya banyak?”. Terus katanya papaku: “Gak papa, seniman itu pastinya kayak gitu”. Kalau adik2 biasa gitu. Gak tahu, di dalamnya gak seneng atau gak tahu. Kalau teman2 biasa sih, karena memang lingkungannya kayak gitu juga.
Kalau pas di kampus bagaimana?	Mereka gak tahu karena tatonya di tempat tersembunyi semua. Menjaga juga, hehe.
Apakah anda takut penilaian tertentu selain berkaitan dengan wudlu?	Saat sholat, saat Idul Fitri juga, itu khan menghargai orang juga. Jangan sampailah nyolot2 di tempat Sholat. Cuman gara2 idealisme.
Tatonya didapat dari mana? Surabaya?	Nggak. Itu satu tattoo artist, satu gambar. Beda2. Iya, ada yang dari bogor, dari Yogya, dari Malang, dari Surabaya, dan dari Temanggung
Anda seperti pengusaha saja, kesana kemari. Memangnya peristiwa apa itu bias kesana kemari?	Kesatu, performance music. Kedua, tujuannya khan pengen pendekatan personal ke perempuan2. Kalo dibilang kepo, ya kepo.

	Kaya ingin tahu aja gitu. Tuh cewek hubungannya dah sejauh mana. Tapi kalo gak dikurek2 gitu khan gak terbuka. Kalau gak mau hamil ya dibantu KB gitu sih. Dianterin ke bidan. Itu sih tujuannya, itu.
Mereka anak-anak UG	Iya, soalnya khan permasalahannya sama. 1001 masalahnya sama, hamil. Ada yang ditinggal pacarnya, masih bertahan, gitu.
Kenapa anda tertarik ke hal2 semacam itu?	Gak ada sih. Buktinya saya bertahan sampai anak saya lahir. Mau itu hukumnya social, itu sudah pastinya. Cuman saya sedih saja, waktu itu ada berita di percetakan ditemukan janin-janin bayi yang hancur. Ya itu, jangan ngurangin angka aborsi tapi juga bukan melegalkan seks bebas. Gak itu privasi orang. Mau nglarang ntar dibilang sok suci.
Tema-tema lagu anda apa?	Isinya gak jauh-jauh dari kehidupan pribadi, lingkungan, sama tema keperempuanan. Aborsi jangan ada lagi.
Apa anda bias merasakan impact dari pesan2 moral tsb?	Sebagian nrima, sebagian gak mudeng. Saya gak ngerti juga sih. Makanya saya perkuat lagi lagu2 saya itu, saya bikin zine, semacam media perempuan, supaya mereka baca.
Nama grup musikny?	Still Dekil, dibentuk tahun 2001. Dari saat masih SMP kelas 3. Note: Misi Still Dekil adalah meracun cewek2. Alasannya, dia punya pacar anak punk. Dia dicuekin. Dia berpikir bahwa pacarnya itu suatu saat yang nonton dia main di panggung.
Apakah tato di kalangan pemusik UG misalnya anda sendiri bias meningkatkan rasa percaya diri ketika tampil?	Gak jugalah. Soalnya muak juga saat lihat orang tatonya sampai full gitu. Berlebihan khan gak bagus juga. Justru kualitas performnya itu bagaimana? Bukan masalah penampilannya.
Anda sering mendapati nih, perempuan di komunitas UG bertatonya lbh banyak atau lbh sedikit dari Anda?	Lebih banyak, lebih berani malah sekarang ini.
Fenomena itu kenapa, Mbak?	Kebangkitan tato itu sekitar tahun 2010. Di Jakarta. Makanya lahir Indonesia Subculture. Itu sih, satu gengsi. Soalnya teman2 lainnya tatoan saya gak. Itu kalau saya baca. Kedua, ikut2an, hehe... Yang bener2 dia bertato dan ngerti tatonya itu apa, itu bisa dihitung ama jari.
Kalau menurut anda, pemusik UG bertato apa nggak?	Gak usahlah. Kalau menurut saya. Orang kita masuk ke UG aja dianggap miring,

	bagaimana sampai tatonya kliatan gitu?
Ini pernyataan menarik. Itu anda melihatnya dari sisi mana? Orang tua?	Ya, karena khan, dari orang tua saya sendiri. Suka ngatain, kamu itu ngapain? Kayak gitu2. Sukanya pakai celana robek2. Pake sepatu boots. Perempuan kok pake sepatu boots. Gitu. Dari orang tua saja sudah memandang miring. Gimana masyarakat? Makanya UG itu punya juga gerakan positif. Itu namanya Food not Bomb. Itu setiap acara music mereka bagi2 beras ke semua tetangga di dekat venue itu. Jadi itu mulai bergeser. Mereka mulai mengubah image dari gerakan seperti itu.
Dananya dari mana?	Dari kolektif. Dari misalnya saya main band, band lain main. Itu patungan. Satu buat menyewa alat music, nyewa tempat, ketiga beli beras.
20/03/2017 Mbak, simbol apa yang bisa dihubungkan dengan sifat diri, Mbak?	Kalo dihubungkan sama tato saya paling ya simbol feminis aja yang bisa merefleksikan diri. Tapi karna simbol tersebut pengertiannya luas dari banyak cara pandang pelaku feminis itu sendiri, maka bisa jadi simbol tersebut saya hubungkan sama lirik lagu "aborsi jangan ada lagi" karna saya menentang aborsi yang dilakukan tanpa alasan medis yang jelas. contohnya hamil diluar nikah. hamil korban perkosaan. menurut saya setiap janin berhak punya kehidupan. berhak lahir. meskipun stlh lahir diberikan ke panti asuhan atau diberikan kpd sepasang orangtua yg membutuhkan, minimal perempuan sebagai penyedia kehidupan mau melahirkan. persetan sama hukuman sosial masyarakat. soalnya bbrp perempuan bilang : Aborsi itu lebih menyakitkan drpd melahirkan.
19/06/2017 Mbak, papa nya masih bikin patung sampai skrg? Pernah lihat patung loro blonyo gak? Patung pasangan suami istri Jawa.	Skrng udah gk bikin patung lagi. Nanti klo udah pensiun dia akan bikin lagi katanya. Tapi kedua patung ini memang gak asing. Di kawinan.

Handoko	DK F, 2 Mei 2018
Tanya	Jawab
Mas Deka, apa kabar. Maaf, mas. Saya mau tanya tato yg perwira Nazi bawa bendera Nazi (sama golok ya?), itu ide dasarnya darimana ya? Kurang ini aja sih aku menjelaskan tato. Habis itu selesai tesisku. Thanks, Mas.	Ntar pas dah pulang kerja aku inget2 lagi alasan tato iti kenapa. Agak lama juga soale tatonya.
Untuk alasan sampeyan khan punk, gak suka sama orang China dan Madura, hehe. Mirip Nazi anti Ras. Yang paling penting Mas, ide gambarnya tadi darimana sumbernya. Stiker atau apa itu?	Kalau aku mengenal Punk dari Nazi itu mas, bukan anarko. Kalo ide gambarnya seingatku dulu pernah ngobrol sama temen yang suka Nazi juga, terus aku minta tolong dibikin desain gambar tato Nazi yang hamper gak pernah ada yang punya gambar tato itu. Akhirnya dibikinkan gambar anjing bawa bendera Nazi. Secara gambaran, anjing tadi itu katanya mirip sifatku. Dalam tanda kutip, yang temenku maksud, anjing khan tipe yang gak pernah punya rasa lelah, suka menghibur. Jadi seperti itu ide munculnya gambaran anjing tadi. Kalau bawa bendera Nazinya, sampeyan tahu sendiri khan maksudnya.
Iya, paham. Jadi itu anjing bukan manusia toh, hahaha... Salah berarti saya.	Bukan, anjing bulldog kalo gak salah.
Itu awalnya aku piker bawa golok yang diberi bendera Nazi. Ternayat tiang bendera. Stick.	Hehe...Bukan. Yang bener tiang dikasih bendera Nazi itu. Tapi yang pegang anjing Bulldog. Bulldog khan terkenal kuat, Mas. Jadi mungkin maksud temenku kasih desain gitu disamain sama sifatku.
Oh...Masih aktif di Punk Nazi?	Kalo aku untuk soal Punk Nazi itu cuman seragamnya saja. Tapi yang penting idealis nya yang kita perlu, Punk khan cuman fashion saja. Dan ada Anarko dan nazi itu khan karena perbedaan idealis saja. Semuanya ya tetap Punk ujung2nya. Cuman pola pikirnya aja yang berbeda.
Menarik, Mas. Bedanya dimana?	Yang aku tahu, kalo anarcho masih menggunakan akal, meskipun sama2 mengandung unsur kekerasan. Aracho khan berarti anarchy...Kalo Nazi mgkn yang aku tahu lebih ke diktatorannya yang ujung2nya juga sama ke unsur kekerasan yang dipakai.
Mas itu kekerasannya dalam ristme musik atau kata2 kasar dalam lagu, atau tindakan? Misal kasar sama orang lain	Kalo anarcho lebih ke musik dan kata2, dalam arti kayak orasi2 gitu...Tapi kalo Nazi mungkin lebih ke senggol bacok kalo orang Madura bilang...

	Nazi itu kalo di Indonesia sama seperti kayak PKI mas, asline wong pinter2 yang pingin mendirikan negara sendiri
Iya2...Punk Nazi emang masih ada di Surabaya dan sekitarnya?	Untuk saat ini punk ya Cuma punk, gak ada Nazi gak ada anarcho, Mas...
Mas kerja apa?	Aku bikin kubahnya masjid, udah 5 tahun ini.
Sampeyan masih gak suka orang China sama Madura?	Aku sudah merubah pola pikir Mas. Indonesia kan beragam suku, dan ternyata nenekku sendiri juga orang China, jadi ya sedikit demi sedikit sudah gak seperti dulu. Hahaha. Idealis e luntur wis an.
Wis luntur...Dimakan jaman	Ya khan usia gak semakin muda tapi tambah berumur. Sampai kapan kita harus pakai idealis. Hidup dengan berbagai suku dan bermasyarakat. Kita besok mati yang antar jenasah kita ke liang lahat juga pasti bukan dari 1 golongan 1 ras melainkan berbagai ras. Itu yang bikin aku sedikit berubah arti makna dari idealis tadi.

Handoko	Dhidit Ratt, 29/03/2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapan anda aktif di musik underground	Sejak awal 2006. Januari tepatnya.
Apa yang menyebabkan anda tertarik gabung di musik underground?	Mungkin dari segi musik dan kata2 nya itu, Mas. Tentang lirik2 nya masalah kehidupan, agama, social, budaya. Memperjuangkan juga secara individu bahwa musik underground itu tidak negative seperti anggapan orang.
Intinya musik yang mas bawaan lebih ke arah politik dan kritik social? Aliran musik anda apa, mas?	Ya, begitu. Brutal Death Metal.
Misalnya jika berkaitan dengan musik itu sendiri, tatonya apa saja, mas?	Inia da motif2 setan, juga iblis2 gitu, Mas. Tapi bukan berarti kita hehe...Setan berkonotasi negative sudah pasti...Cuman aku sukanya itu, gimana yo...Setan aja tidak bikin kita terjerumus ke alam negative. Nah ini aku membuka pikiranku sendiri khan, setan bisa menjerumuskan ke arah positif, secara kehidupanku mas. One by one orang bisa menerima musik kita secara positif. Jangan menilai dengan style apa gitu.
Mas kenapa setan selalu di tangan kiri?	Karena tangan kiri gak baik untukku.
Anda mempelajari darimana mas, kok yang buruk itu yang kiri?	Kebiasaan masyarakat, kata orang tua.
Kapan pertama kali anda bertato?	Sehabis lulus sekolah, umur 18 tahun lah...Tato berupa badut atau clown dan bunga. Yang buruk atau aneh dan yang berbau wangi. Maknanya ada yang baik dan jelek.
Apa yang mempengaruhi anda pertama kali bertato? Media ataukah teman?	Teman, khususnya. Biar dipandang kayak macho, gitu. Dulu, waktu pemikiran masih remaja.
Pandangan keluarga bagaimana?	Ya pasti, marah banget karena posisi kita khan belum bekerja.
Teman bagaimana?	Teman di kampung, di komunitas gak masalah. Ini khan tubuh2 kamu sendiri. Ngapain aku urusi?
23/11/2016 Mas, tanya secara pengalaman pribadi, mas pilih tukang tato berdasarkan apa? Misal pertemanan? Iklan? Kualitas atau kehebatan dia menato?	Dari 1 orang aja mas pertemanan tepatnya..tpi yg pean sebutin tdi sudah mencakup semuanya soale dri aku berteman sma tukang tatto ku yg masih amatir smpai dia skrg sudah profesional dalam Menato mas.
Oh, jadi sampeyan ditato oleh cuman 1 orang? Yg nato ganja Di tangan itu? Menarik ini mas.	90% tato ku di satu orang aja.
Itu khan dia main musik juga. Kapan hari	Iya cuma skrg dia berdomisili di Bali dan

ketemu kita.	tatonya semakin sukses skrg mas.
Dia aslinya tato atau main musik mas? Awalnya	Asli dari awal nya dia main musik.
Wah joss. Info menarik. Yang nato salib di punggung dia?	Bukan mas. Kalo yg tato salib tuh orang e sudah RIP mas.
Kecelakaan? Teman akrab juga?	Teman sekolah dan meninggal ditembak polisi kasus curanmor.
Dia aslinya tukang tato nyambi curanmor atau sesama pemusik?	Yg tato salib tuh tukang tatto semenjak dia masuk bui. Sering keluar masuk penjara soal curas curanmor gitulah..Tapi terakhir nyawa e gak tertolong mas pas mau ranmor di daerah Kalibokor. Ditembak polisi juga Aslinya dia pekerja reklame gitu mas..Bikin platnomer+spanduk+neonbox usaha sendiri gitu lah di daerah Wiyung, mas.
Oh, dia belajar tato di penjara...Wah hebat. Terus yg nato ganja belajar otodidak atau ikut orang misal di studio? Terakhir ini mas hahaha	Otodidak, mas.
Thanks informationnya.	Oke mas.

Handoko	Alfi, 13 April 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Boleh tahu latar belakang anda?	Nama Alfian usia 25, editor video, pendidikan DKV. Saya suka musik tapi saat remaja kurang tahu sekolah musik di Indonesia. Saya masuk DKV karena suka seni khususnya branding. Saya juga buka usaha sama teman bikin logo.
Sejak kapan anda terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan musik Underground? Aliran musiknya apa?	<p>Musik aliran ke arah musik Indie. Lebih ke arah genre underground. Bukan berarti harus bawah tanah. Bukan hanya aliran musik tapi juga eksplor sendiri apa yang dimainkan. Post Hardcore.</p> <p>Awalnya saya tertarik pada distorsi musik underground dan luapan nyanyi dan ekspresinya yang bebas.</p>
Bagaimana tato2 anda?	<p>Tato pertama tahun 2009. Dia pernah punya rekan bisnis saat tender dia melihat orang bertato namun tetap rapi. Bertentangan dengan pandangan umum kalau bertato tidak berkelas atau punya masa depan.</p> <p>Pilihan bertato karena saya suka gambar yang berkonsep tertentu dan pas dengan konsep hidup saya. Konsep tersebut diaplikasikan pada tubuh. Misalnya Burung hantu, memiliki sejarah dan konsep bijaksanaan, pintar, dan penjaga. Hidup itu harus bijaksana, mendengarkan orang. Planet dan roket temanya kehidupan bahwa manusia itu tidak hanya hidup sendiri tapi ada juga makhluk lain di luar sana.</p> <p>Tato konsep warna black and grey dan campuran warna saya pilih karena Lebih menarik daripada full warna karena lebih jelas. Pilihan lokasi tato di dada berdasarkan konsep bentukan tato itu sendiri.</p>
Dalam kaitannya dengan aksi panggung, apa menambah rasa tertentu dengan tato?	Tato dan performance di panggung itu dulu mendukung akan kesan keren seperti band di LN tapi harus bersinergi dengan skill. Namun saya lebih tertarik tato karena media bercerita. Yang lainnya karena saudara juga bertato.

<p>Anda khan Kristiani, bagaimana dengan itu?</p>	<p>Saya merasa ada yang berpendapat bahwa tato itu tidak dilarang di gereja, namun buat saya hati ini yang penting percaya pada Tuhan.</p> <p>Pernah ada komunitas gereja yang menampung anak punk/UG tapi mereka beribadah. Ini ada di tahun 2008. Sudah bubar karena tidak ada wadah. Kegiatan ibadahnya spt Kristen, ada liturgi, nyanyian kidung jemaat sbkm ibadah, pengabaran injil ttg Yesus tidak membedakan siapapun, dan ada perjamuan kudus, uang kolekte, dan lagu penutup. Jenis lagu2 gereja yang diambil dari injil dan diaransemen punk serta ada juga lagu aransemen sendiri. Suasana seperti pertunjukan ada moshing dan head bang. Kesannya wow, menarik. Lokasinya di Ruko di bukit mas.</p>
<p>Reaksi orang tua dan keluarga tentang tato?</p>	<p>Papa kaget, mama biasa. Karena mamanya basicnya dalang dan melukis jadi gak masalah. Papa itu basicnya Islam yang taat, keturunan Arab.</p> <p>Teman kagum bilang Sangar. Teman2 jadi pengen tato tapi saya bilang harus terima konsekuensinya. Pacar tidak masalah karena dia bertato sbkm ketemuan.</p>

Handoko	Anja, 15/05/2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapan anda terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan musik Underground? Aliran musiknya apa?	Sejak SMA. Aku penggemar musik Drug pop alternative rock. Pertama kali dari aliran musik itu dinamikanya. Lebih suka alternatif grunk dan progresive.
Sejak kapankah bertato?	Tato 1 usia 15 tahun, dia tidak ijin dan difoto. Bunda gak masalah. Papa gak masalah. Tato itu buat keluarganya adalah seni dan meepresentasikan sesuatu yang berharga. Misal konflik internal di keluarga yang masif. Bukan hanya pertengkaran tapi juga keputusan yang mengubah mindsetku. Semua tato berdasarkan konflik, pelarian. Tato pengalihan dari self abusing. Saya pernah ke psikiater untuk masalahnya. Membuka topeng. Tato tidak berkaitan dengan musik yang saya mainkan. Tato ini juga untuk performace. Meningkatkan performa dan Pede.
Jelaskan tentang tatonya, Mbak.	<p>Laba-laba atau Black widow. Artinya Si betina makan si jantan. Semacam symbol dari Feme fatale. Saya ini memiliki tipe orang spt itu, tapi ada juga faktor internal, perpisahan keluarga.</p> <p>Tato itu menggambarkan peristiwa perceraian. Tato itu sebagai representasi kurang menghargai kaum adam yang meletakkan posisi wanita sebagai kaum marginal. Dia ingin jadi femimist. Dia agak meragukan mereka yang dewasanya susah, banyak menyakiti. Pria itu kind of wasting time. Papanya gak bener, berhubungan dengan pihak ketiga.</p> <p>Tato Mawar memiliki makna bunga yang sensual, cantik, rapuh, tapi dia banyak duri yang melindungi dia dari jebakan. Mawar memiliki banyak topengnya dan punya banyak sisi. Ramah, terbuka, namun dia juga bisa sangat destruktif.</p> <p>Tato Jangkar menggambarkan sosok ayahnya. Dia sangat menghargai ayahnya tersebut. Namun dia tidak rasional/logis. Papa adalah dokter kandungan, AL. Dulu saya sempat main ke tempat kerja papa. Papa</p>

	<p>lebih fokus pada pekerjaannya daripada kepada anaknya atau keluarga.</p> <p>Tato kata Belle, yang bermakna Cantik dalam bahasa Prancis.</p> <p>Pulitudines (Inggris, SAT), Sangat-sangat cantik.</p> <p>Lengan kiri Los Muertos, Mexico: Peringatan untuk the death People. Memperingati orang2 mati, sugar skull. Dikaitkan dengan nenek yang sangat saya idolakan. Khas Manado, sangat ceria, fashionable. Suka dansa, dandan. Saat papa melakukan kesalahan dia membela mantunya, yakni Mama. Saya sangat berkesan pada kebaikan nenek.</p> <p>Nama orang dalam huruf Arab, nama orang yang sangat berperan dalam membantunya melupakan masa lalu dan melangkah terus maju.</p>
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Handoko	Jambul, 18 Maret 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapankah terlibat aktif dalam musik Underground?	2006, saat Ska punk awal masuk Indonesia. Anak Ska bertato juga, saya lebih suka dipanggil rudeboy bukan ska sebagai genre musik. Kemudian bikin band Reggae 'Gold Monkey' pada 2008. Sekarang aku lebih ke dirty reggae. Dirty reggae lebih ke roots reggae, sebuah early reggae yang mana para skinhead menceritakan tentang permasalahan social, menceritakan tentang terminal, cewek, dsb. Kehidupan sehari-hari para remaja kalau di Indonesia.
Rude Boy itu apa, Mas?	Ska ada di Surabaya tahun 1997 atau 1998. Yang terkenal saat itu adalah Heavy Monster. Oh iya, Rude boy sebutan buat preman disana. Kerjanya ngrampok bank, memperkosa, membunuh. Musisi Jamaika th 1964 bermigrasi ke Inggris dan beralih image menjadi penikmat musik Ska. Rudeboy istilah untuk penikmat musik ska.
Kapankah bertato itu pertama kali?	Di tangan kanan ada arab gundul rudeboy dari kanan ke kiri. Warna hitam dan merah. Tato dibuat th 2011. Motivasi pertama tato aku adalah seorang rudeboy, penikmat musik ska, nakal krn tidur malam, minum minuman keras. Minumnya cukrik dr fermentasi tape. Aku suka minum cukrik karena murah, original.
Selain itu, apa lagi tatonya, Mas?	11-11-11. Tgl even ska today di Pacarkeling. Aku adalah pemain trompet, punya tato trompet. Posisi tato di lengan dalam karena agak putih biar kliatan. Ada juga tato Siti Mariam, seorang wanita yang setia pada Tuhan, perintah-perintah Tuhan, dia tidak menikah tapi punya anak atas kehendak Tuhan. Ibu dari Isa Allahisallam. Tato Maria itu adalah keinginan untuk mempunyai istri seperti dia. Aku sholat 5 waktu atau lebih. Kadang tato dikatakan dilarang dalam Islam, apakah tato dilarangkah di agama Islam? Di kitab belum pernah aku temukan atau dengar larangan bertato tapi entah ada atau tidak. Tato Maria tidak berhubungan dengan musik Ska. Skabanton liriknya bercerita tentang cinta, pada teman, hewan, lingkungan, Tuhan, nabi dan kitab suci. Lagu-lagunya malah lagu gereja diaransemen Ska, judulnya Olinmalen,

	<p>musisi erick montimoris. Liriknya tentang spirit berikan aku minyak untuk lampuku biar tetap menyala.</p> <p>Lagu bertema Indonesia instrumen tentang Tan Malaka, pahlawan terbang dan dari lagu itu mereka kalau ditanya orang bisa menjelaskan. Instrumental biar orang lebih berimajinasi pada sosok Tan Malaka. Grup main band kadang diundang, atau daftar, bayar kolektif, kadang dibayar kadang tidak. Intinya bermusik. Support acara bermusik karena dana kurang. Ini kadang2 dilakukan oleh komunitas, kalo ada laba next band2 tsb dibayar pada acara selanjutnya.</p>
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Handoko	Tomat, 18 Maret 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapan aktif di musik underground?	Sama dengan Rizky.
Bisa diceritakan tentang tatonya, Mas?	<p>Tato 1 Tribal tahun 2009, suka bentuk tribal. Kedua oldskull bercerita ttg gambler ada dadu dan kartu. Saya suka main kartu dan bilyard namun bukan penggemar judi. Hati tertusuk pedang ada tulisan Desta. Simbol patah hati, mengenang peristiwa tsb. Ini untuk membuktikan juga ada cinta yang mendalam, hatinya yang sakit teriris. Tato Desta (mantan pacar), putusnya jaraknya 2 minggu dengan pembuatan tato.</p> <p>Bintang merupakan pelengkap bagian dari gaya oldskull yakni tato perahu, mawar di jangkar, kompas dan sarang laba2. Jangkar simbol hidup yang tidak terombang-ambing. Tato secara garis besar adalah untuk gaya hidup dan ekspresi seni, dan gambaran hidup. Posisi di lengan kiri full tribal, kanan oldskull.</p>
Tato di punggung itu bagaimana, Mas?	Tato tulisan di punggung bertuliskan Jah Rastafara artinya Tuhanku Rastafari. Milih ini karena saya suka reggae, Bob Marley yang menyebutkan kata Jah Rastafari sebelum konser. Saya asli muslim tapi tidak 5 waktu. Tato ini hanya sekedar tato seni suka banget pada reggae suka pada Rastafari bukan keyakinan juga.

Handoko	Edgar, 27 Maret 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Sejak kapan menjadi fans musik Metal/Underground	Saya suka sebagian musik underground. Contohnya Slip Not, In flame. Dia kurang menyukai band Indonesia karena lebih sukar didengar (syairnya). Aliran musik yang dia tidak suka adalah heavy metal.
Apakah tatonya ada kaitannya dengan musik atau tidak? Kapan ditato pertama kali?	<p>Ini berkaitan dengan hidup saya, bukan musik.</p> <p>Pertama kali ditato usia 19. Awalnya pengen coba-coba lama kelamaan cari rasa sakitnya. Disakiti tapi menghasilkan sesuatu. Melepaskan emosi. Saya ditato saat lagi marah, namun ada juga tato saya itu pada</p>

	<p>kondisi saya biasa saja.</p> <p>Saya buat desainnya sendiri lalu tukang tatonya yang memperbaiki. Dipengaruhi teman awalnya, terus saya tertarik sendiri pada tato.</p> <p>Temanku mengajakku bertato. Tato ini berbahasa Jerman yang artinya 'Dalam hidup berjuang mencari kehormatan'.</p> <p>Posisi di punggung karena lebar dan fontnya besar.</p> <p>Tato mata reptil di bahu kiri ttg kemarahan. Marah pada teman. Posisi emosinya marah dia gambar di kertas, terus konsultasi ke tukang tato dan nemunya mata reptil.</p> <p>Mata di bahu kiri depan ttg kesedihan patah hati. Intinya maksud dari tato2 tsb adalah dalam hidup itu ada suka ada duka. Tato biomekanik lebih ke eksperimental.</p> <p>Dia tidak suka tato yang kelihatan orang lain karena dia posisinya di Timur yang memandang tato sebagai simbol orang jelek/jahat. jaga image. Dia juga takut nanti tidak dapat pekerjaan dengan bertato yang kelihatan oleh umum.</p>
Tanggapan lingkungan bagaimana?	<p>Keluarga kaget lihat saya bertato. Teman tidak masalah.</p>

Handoko	Ayik, 10 April 2013
Tanya	Jawab
	<p>Aktif di punk th 2005 selulus SMP (15). Aku pilih komunitas krn pingin merdeka. Saat SMA aku makin aktif. Ditato usia 17 tahun, setelah 1 tahun DO dari SMA dan aktif di dunia punk. Antara 2005-2010 aku nomaden. Jadi anak Punk jalanan di Malang, Jakarta, Kediri, Lumajang. Pekerjaannya ngamen dan mabuk. Kmd aku mencoba mendalami makna Punk dan esensinya. Di Blitar tahun 2008, aku tinggal dengan komunitas punk belajar menyablon dan desain serta mengelola sampah untuk kepentingan daur ulang.</p>
Bisa cerita tentang tatomu, Mbak?	<p>Tato pertama, karena emosi. Akumulasi kemarahan selama bertahun-tahun krn keluarga broken home. Ketidak puasan terhadap pilihan dan aturan keluarga. Dia meluapkan lewat tato gimana sih rasanya. Rasa sakitnya membuat emosinya reda, puas (tato pelepasan rasa jengkel). Tatonya adalah gambar "hell cat". Tidak ada makna secara gambar, Cuma menarik saja. Pundak belakang sebelah kanan.</p> <p>Tato yang paling berkesan di sebelah kiri Bunda Maria, 2 malaikat, dan monster sebagai gambaran keburukan diri. Tulisan Eibee dan gambar perempuan. Dulunya dia muslim, akhirnya dia memutuskan menjadi seorang Katholik dan menatoken gambar di lengan kirinya tsb. Secara narative tato ini bercerita bahwa Tuhan menurunkan 2 malaikatnya untuk melawan keburukan dalam dirinya denga cara Aibee (pertarungan). Ada salib juga di lengan kirinya. Tuhan menurunkan mukjizatnya lewat kasihnya untuk melawan keburukan dalam dirinya, caranya dia harus bertarung dengan diri dia sendiri waktu itu. Akhirnya dia menemukan dirinya yang sekarang.</p> <p>Ketertarikan menjadi Katholik momennya ketika ada pertanyaan dari gurunya saat SMA kenapa kalian menjadi muslim, jawab temannya karena ortunya Islam. Itu menimbulkan pertanyaan pada dirinya dan merasa setiap orang punya hak sebagai</p>

	<p>manusia untuk menentukan pilihan agamanya sendiri bukan diturunkan. Saat di Bali dia sempat mimpi dibaptis sama Yesus. 2 hari kemudian dia sms ke layanan doa CBM. Dibalasnya Tuhan ingin menolong anda dan Tuhan ingin memakai anda sebagai alatnya. Kemudian aku mengalami byk mukjizat yaitu merasakan damai yang belum pernah aku rasakan sebelumnya. Usia waktu itu 18 tahun.</p>
Tanggapan lingkungan bagaimana?	<p>Ibuku bertanya kenapa aku bertato, jawabku, aku bertato krn faktor turunan krn bapak bertato dan kedua kakak laki2 juga bertato. Ibu kmd diam. Setelah bertato semangat kristianiku bertumbuh dengan pesat. Awalnya aku kurang dekat dengan Tuhan terus menjadi lebih dekat. Tato di lengan kanan belum selesai krn tato artisnya masih di Kalimantan. Rencananya akan ada gambar Yesus untuk menyempurnakan narasi matahari, bintang, bulan sebagai gambaran Tuhan menciptakan matahari, bintang, bulan dengan hati, dengan keindahan (ada tato jantung). Jadi Tuhan menciptakan semua itu termasuk diriku dengan keindahan, kasih sayang, dengan hati.</p>
Tato ada kaitan dengan anak underground?	<p>Aku lebih suka melihat pemusik UG bertato krn yang tidak bertato aku anggap munafik krn dengan bermusik mereka juga bergaul dengan komunitas. Aku merasa kurang macho, kurang seksi, aneh. Mereka ingin tapi kurang berani mengambil keputusan. Tato itu bagi aku adalah kemenangan. Bagaimana dengan pandangan sosial? Ini badan-badan aku sendiri, aku nyaman dengan tato. Cantik buat aku adalah bahagia menjadi diri sendiri. Di jari? Ayik nama panggilanku. Gyga artinya kemerdekaan. Legitimasi bahwa aku merdeka, dan memotivasi diri untuk merdeka dalam hal pikiran dan tindakan (meskipun tidak 100%).</p>
Itu tato symbol Kristiani?	<p>Tato di lengan kanan dan kiri alfa dan omega nama kedua anakku. Sama artinya Yesus adalah yang pertama dan terakhir untukku.</p>

Handoko	Rasta (31 Agustus 2013)
Tanya	Jawab
Kalau dilihat dari karakter masnya khan kliatan rasta, apa sebenarnya rasta?	Rasta adalah gaya hidup. sabar menghadapi semua2nya
Kebiasaan sehari-hari dengan orang biasanya apa beda?	Beda, contohnya dia saat mengerjakan rambut rasta berdasarkan feeling. kalau lagi tidak enak dia gak mengerjakan. Orderan lumayan.
Klien darimana saja mas?	Dari Jawa Timur, kapan hari ada juga yang dari Jakarta, Jogja.
Promosi lewat?	Dunia maya, FB, BB
Ketika mengerjakan rambut dreadlock musik apa yang digemari?	Reggae sama metal, Sepultura, System of a Down, RATM,
Penggemar musik underground?	Iya, tapi gak banyak grup seperti Crack the Loving dan band-band lawas seperti yang beraliran Sepulturaan.
Sering khan melihat anak underground bertato. menurut masnya bagaimana itu?	Tato itu story, jalan hidup. Setiap orang ada ceritanya sendiri-sendiri.
Kalau masnya sendiri, tato itu menceritakan pengalaman hidup apa sih?	Kalau aku tato itu kebanyakan suka. Ngene pertama lihat orang bertato, kok apik. Sing dirasakno wong ternyata sama dengan yang kita alami.
Bisa diceritakan salah satu tato yang punya kisah?	Di kaki ada foto Boss.
Seorang perempuan, oh cowok ya? rambutnya ikal era-era 70an	Foto biasa tapi sama tukang tato yang diedit rambut.
Ini kenapa mas kok berkesan foto Boss-nya	Salah satu influence, yo untuk menjalani hidup itu. Di era-era saiki. Kalau versinya jalanono engkuk lak ketemu kabeh. Embuh iku enak gak enake sing penting dijalani ae.
Iki ketemu karo sampeyan neng endi mas?	Dimanukan. Tahun 2002. Aku sek elek gak keramut koyok saiki. Namanya Pak Rimba, pemilik Bom Track. Istrinya bule, anaknya satu.
Tato lain yang berkesan?	Tato lain yang berkesan adalah nama orang tuanya. Ridolana, Ibunya. Mau ditato fotonya tapi gak bolehin. Lalu minta KSK alasane kalau ditanyain RT/RW biar jelas. Langsung tak gawe tato. Pengennya wajah tapi gak bolehin.
Tato di tangan kiri dan kanan menceritakan	Tidak ada ceritanya, ini langsung ketemu

apa?	mesin (tato), gak athek sketch-sketch-an, gak athek nyonto-nyonto gambar langsung ketemu mesin.
Alasannya apa kok tiba-tiba pengen ditato tengkorak-tengkorak?	Pertama sing mempengaruhi lingkungan, Nontok wong tato kok beda sama yang lain. Soalnya wong sing tato sama yang gak tato itu, misalnya 10 orang gak bertato suruh telanjang sama semua anatomi tubuh sama semua. tapi nek 8 orang gak bertato, 2 orang bertato suruh telanjang ada ceritane dewe lah. Mbuh, sing orang itu tahu ceritanya bagaimana.
Jadi yang berkesan itu tato mama dan boss?	Tato pertama ini, tulisan mama.
Awal mula bertato gimana orang tua?	Kaget, tapi ya gimana. Jalan hidup namun kita tetep menghormati orang tua karena orang tua menanggung, melahirkan, membersarkan juga tapi selama wis iso mendatangkan uang sendiri lepas dari orang tua.
Sudah punya pacar sekarang?	Kapan hari sempat, bikin tato nih sepasang. 'My Wife' , si cewek 'my husband'. satu minggu kemudian putus. Akhirnya ditambahi kata 'weeds'
Artinya?	Mungkin anda lebih tahu...
Artinya kayak sampah, eh...Belukar.	Ya, weeds...
Gak merasa, ini harus tak hapus saja?	Enggak...Kalau aku dikasih pilihan, hapus tato atau benerin tato aku pilih benerin tato. Soale eman. Nek hapus, selain sakit juga lebih mahal.
Masnya sering nonton pertunjukan musik ska, reggae?	Ada-ada...Tgl 1 besok itu nek mas ada waktu di Garden Roof, Prapen. Itu acarane anak-anak ska surabaya. Dengan tema <i>surabaya skaking people</i> . Htm Rp 15.000 dari sore sampai malam.
Pertanyaan terakhir, kalau melihat masyarakat sekarang ini dalam menilai orang bertato, perasaan mas sebagai orang bertato bagaimana?	Kalau aku cuek om selama gak ganggu orang. Ini aku, dengan tato ini yo nek gak seneng yo gak popo sih.
Pernah dipersulit orang dengan tato?	Belum
Masnya muslim? Kalau dikaitkan dengan	Dulu, pas SMP atau SMA didoktrin, ajakan-

<p>agama bgm?</p>	<p>ajakan agama harus begini harus begini tapi nek dengan perkembangan waktu itu, wis bertambah dewasa juga. Kita jadi bisa milih endi sing apik endi sing gak apik. Kalau masalah agama khan keyakinan, kepercayaan jadi kalo aku sendiri sah-sah ae, sih. Selama gak ganggu wong, gak merugikan orang, kalau masalah keyakinan urusanku mbek Tuhanku. Wong-wong gak usah perlu tahu. Terus sik Tuhan gak mungkin lah langsung memarahi umate. Gak mungkin, gak onok.</p>
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Handoko	Syahrul Hafidin (22 Juli 2013)
Tanya	Jawab
Bisa jelaskan nama dan pekerjaan, Mas?	Nama saya sebenarnya Syahrul Hafidin, di kalangan band dan teman dekat saya manggil saya Sipit. Pekerjaannya jaga studio, umur saya 19 tahun. Asli saya sini, Sidoarjo.
Dalam kegiatan sehari-hari, di studio pekerjaan anda bagian apa?	Operator yang mengoperasikan semua kegiatan di studio ini.
Anda mengenal dunia underground sejak usia berapa, mas?	Saya mengenal dunia underground sejak TK. Di rumah yang diputar itu lagu-lagu metal, lagu-lagu hardcore, punk.
Yang memutar lagu itu siapa?	Bapak biasanya, terutama kakak.
Anda sudah tahu yang diputar itu musik underground?	Tahunya itu underground, belum tahu genrenya itu apa metal, punk atau hardcore itu belum pernah ngerti.
Kalau anak-anak kecil khan tertariknya lagu anak-anak. Waktu itu anda tertarik lagu anak-anak tidak?	Enggak sih, gak begitu tertarik. Soalnya pertama kali lihat kaset itu langsung lihat kaset itu (musik metal).Dulu itu lagu-lagunya Sepultura dan Metalica.Jadi sudah ada kaset-kaset itu.jadi yang tak setel ya lagu-lagu itu. Makanya dengar musik-musik yang biasa itu, pop, kurang tertarik.
Kalau melihat perkembangan musik underground di Surabaya, atau disidoarjo anda melihatnya seperti apa? Awal mulanya grup apa yang muncul atau siapa atau genre apa dulu?	Band pertama kali di Sidoarjo itu band kakaknya sendiri yaitu overdeath. Genrenya grindcore. Black metalnya itu sendiri ada Sacrifice, itu. Ada lagi death metal itu Goflesh.Tiga band ini yang paling terkenal pada waktu itu.
Perbedaan gayanya apa? Antara grind core, death metal sama...	Grind core itu tema-temanya,..banyak juga gendre-genrenya, tema-temanya sosial dan perang. Stylenya perang.Pakaiannya ala-ala perang.Blackmetal pun ada, Sacrife itu tema-temanya juga ada perang.Tapi perangnya bukan melawan dunia ini.Perangnya pakai hal-hal gaib itu.Death Metal itu temanya kekejaman dunia.
Yang paling melekat itu apa, mas?	Sebenarnya yang paling melekat itu black metal.
Kenapa?	Soalnya, musiknya itu lebih mudah biarpun orang-orang biasa gak berulang kali untuk memahaminya. Itu masih mudah untuk dipahami.Soalnya musiknya dari sisi musikalitas itu masih simple. Bagusnya pas waktu perform. Kalau di daerah Sidoarjo black metal itu dengan ciri daerah, budaya jawa. Black metal khan hubungannya sama dunia gaib, diaman dunia gaibnya di Sidoarjo. Misalkan pakai dupa, pakai

	menyan, ada kembang-kembang. Pokoknya sajen, lah. Sisi menariknya kayak gitu.
Itu di atas panggung?	Iya, itu di atas panggung. Itu ada ritual-ritualnya.
Kalau sekarang masih kayak gitu gak mas?	Iya, masih. Bahkan ada yang ritual itu minum darahnya kelinci. Disini itu ada, tapi kalau yang lain itu ikut-ikutan. Buat nyari sensasi. Kalau anaknya itu bener-bener, kelinci itu lambang kedamaian. Maksudnya gak ada kedamaian.
Apa dia benar menjiwai bahwa dunia ini tidak ada kedamaian. Itu memang ideologinya?	Iya, kayak gitu.
Di Sidoarjo, saat ini yang paling digemari musik apa?	Sekarang di Sidoarjo lagi booming-boomingnya black metal. Sebelumnya ada death core. Gabungan antara death metal dan metal core. Musiknya deadcore di modernisasi dan digabung dengan musik-musik sekarang. Sekarang itu responnya bagus-bagus. mau lihat event metal itu, di tahu 2003/04 itu harus ke Surabaya, Mojokerto, atau Malang. Itupun acaranya 2 bulan sekali, 3 bulan sekali. Kalau sekarang tiap minggu pasti ada, bahkan seminggu 2 kali pun ada sekarang. Soalnya anak-anak sudah bisa mandiri, buat kelompok sendiri, bikin-bikin acara dan kegiatan-kegiatan yang berhubungan dengan dunia underground.
Pengertian underground itu ke musik atau ideologi?	Itu kembali kepada individunya, kalau saya sendiri, saya itu penjiwaan pada black metal tapi bukan pada penjiwaan pada pola hidup. Aku penjiwaan pada musiknya. Ada lagi yang penjiwaan pada hidupnya dan dibawakan ke musik.
Kalau lebih ke ideologi apa yang dilakukan seorang black metal?	Pada awalnya, seperti punk, mereka sebenarnya adalah orang-orang beragama. mereka nentanglah, kayak ga mau ada agama. Sedikit begini ada peraturan sedikit begini diatur oleh agama. Mereka menentang Tuhannya. Gak mengakui adanya Tuhan. Mereka menganggap di dalam hatinya sendiri itu ada Tuhan. Mereka itupun menyampaikan semua, biar orang-orang itu percaya. Gak ada itu sebenarnya Tuhan itu lewat panggung itu tadi.
Kalau lihat lambang-lambang black metal itu ada Baphomet, bintang dibalik (pentagram), itu menjiwai atau gak?	Kalau menurut saya, misalkan pentagram yang di tengahnya ada gambar kambing itu dengan tanduk ke atas gini khan lambangnya setan, kaum satanic. Tapi itu beda dengan

	<p>lambangnya black metal. Kalau dari sudut pandangnya, itu simbol dari cerita peristiwa kurban nabi Ibrahim dan Ismail. Dia melihatnya influence nya dari situ, dapat pertolongan yang Ismail mau disembelih tapi digantikan kambing. Jadi seolah-olah Tuhannya itu adalah kambing. Padahal pertolongannya itu dari Tuhan.</p>
<p>Kemungkinannya kayak gitu, ya. Kalau di luar itu anti Kristus. Kalau disini anti apa?</p>	<p>Nah, itu persepsinya orang sini itu salah. Mereka pengen punya band black metal, mereka pengen menjiwai kehidupan black metal tapi masih mengakui agamanya sendiri bahwa agamanya sendiri itu bagus. Yang ditentang itu agamanya orang lain. Tetap memakai lambang salib dibalik, itu khan penentangan dari orang Kristen. Kita orang Islam malah ikut-ikutan memakai simbol salib dibalik.</p>
<p>Ada khan yang tatonya salib dibalik?</p>	<p>Itu sepertinya ngikut-ngikut saja, pokoknya gini. Biasanya black metal itu cirinya gini.gak pernah tahu artinya apa itu. Ya, seperti orang yang ritual makan kelinci itu tujuannya apa? Mereka Cuma ikut-ikutan biar gampang terkenalnya, gampang ngeksisnya.Ikut-ikut minum darahnya kelinci, padahal tujuannya bukan itu.</p>
<p>Tahu tidak siapa yang benar-benar melakukan ajaran black metal?</p>	<p>Iya, ada namun dengan budayanya sendiri, orangnya itu, maaf Islam. dia tidak mengakui agamanya namun memiliki agama sendiri yang dia katakan diturunkan dari nenek moyangnya. Dia kayak percaya pada iblis, aku bisa hidup kok tanpa Tuhan, aku bisa mencari agamaku lewat setan, lewat ini.</p>
<p>Kalau di kalangan anak remaja, penggemarnya dari usia berapa?</p>	<p>Kebanyakan anak-anak SMP. Mereka pengen buat band, buat lagu.Recordnya murah, disebarin.</p>

Handoko	Tania, 30 Agustus 2013
Tanya	Jawab
Awalnya tertarik pada metalcore bagaimana?	Berawal pada tahun 2010. Pada waktu itu saya sebenarnya sudah lulus sekolah. lalu saya dihubungi sama teman saya SMP. Temen saya SMP saya itu sebenarnya teman sekolah, temen band-band-an pop sih dulu, pop punk lah. Tapi waktu itu dia gabung disalah satu band namanya music phobia dan band itu braliran metalcore. Dia kekurangan gitaris pada waktu itu.lalu saya ditawari sama dia terus saya tanya, lho alirannya apa? Metal core,..Waduh aku gak bisa metal-metalan soalnya saya juga belum pernah di aliran itu.Gak papa kok ada yang ngajarin, katanya. Dicoba aja, soalnya apa, kekurangan gitar. Terus akhirnya, ya udah wis tak coba karena waktu itu saya hobby-nya nge-band, waktu itu saya juga gak nge-band jadi saya pengen nge-band-nge-band lagi.Ya udah saya mau, saya datang waktu latihan.Akhirnya ternyata lagunya enak, bisa, masuk menurut saya sih suka akhirnya saya bergabung pada 2010 itu.
Terus pandangan orang tua gimana, anakku biasanya bagusnya main pop?	Sebetulnya awalnya papa saya mendukung selama itu positif, saya tidak ke hal-hal negatif seperti narkoba atau mabuk-mabukan mama saya tetep mendukung, sih. selama itu baik.
Bisa diceritakan nih tato pertamanya apa itu?	Tato pertamanya, waktu itu sebenarnya saya pengen tato dari sejak SMA, cumak sekedar pengen-pengen aja. Cumak masih belum berani karena saya juga mikir, waduh aku gak bisa kerja, gini-gini khan gitu tapi waktu itu.Sekarang saya bekerja sebagai wirausaha sendiri ya, online shop.Lha, aktu itu saya gak kerja ikut orang jadi usaha jualan sepatu itu dan puji Tuhan sampai sekarang masih bisa berjalan dan bisa nyicil sepeda motor.Jadi ya saya berpikir saya sudah punya kerja ya saya pengen dan saya suka.dari suka itu saya nato.
Gambar apa? Bisa diceritakan tato-tatonya	Burung Owl, karena lucu sih sebenarnya. Tato saya, pertama itu burung Owl pada bulan Mei (2013). Karena saya ditawari oleh salah satu artis tato Surabaya. Saya ditawari untuk jadi model saat ulang tahun Surabaya tato Hero.Lha dia itu pengen mencoba kulit saya, jadi saya disuruh milih gambar. Coba dulu, aku mau tahu jenis kulitmu. Gambarmu apa, kamu mau minta apa? Apa ya, saya

	bingung. Akhirnya saya kebingungan akhirnya dia yang mengusulkan gambarnya. Black and grey. Menurut saya bagus ya udah...Gitu, lho. saya orangnya, kalo orang khan kalo tato harus history atau apa. Sebenarnya enggak sih, kalo aku sih lucu. Aku suka itu khan nempel seumur hidup ya. Jadi ya gak masalah.
Tato yang ketiga itu?	Yang ketiga itu ikut lomba. Itu khan, kalo lomba gak bisa kita milih sendiri. Gambarnya dari tato artist-nya tapi sesuai dengan persetujuan saya. Tapi ini bagus sih, artinya. Anak kecil palestina, bawa senjata AK-46, oh iya AK-47 lalu bendera Amerika di belakangnya. Khan gak ada anak kecil bawa senjata, tapi khan dia berjuang untuk melawan Amerika. Dan itu saya menang juara 1.
Itu idemu atau?	Idenya tato artisnya.
Tapi kamu suka?	Iya, saya suka. bagus kok, realis.
Menurut mbaknya, mbaknya bertato itu karena kaitannya mislanua beraliran scene tertentu atau karena pengaruh teman?	Kalo dikatakan berhubungan sebenarnya enggak juga sih, karena saya suka gitu.
Kalo mbaknya masih di dunia Pop apa juga bertato?	kemungkinan juga iya, karena saat SMA khan Cuma pengen-pengen aja. masih mikir belum kerja seperti itu.
Apa ada hubungannya antara tato dan pertunjukan panggung. Misalkan menjadi lebih pede atau seneng gitu?	Ya, mungkin iya sih karena khan kalo dari sisi lain tato itu sebagai style, seperti itu, iya. Mungkin sih, bisa.
Jadi bisa dongkrak rasa Pede-nya?	Iya, bisa.
Di antara 1 grup cewek semua atau bagaimana? Yang bertato hanya anda?	Iya, satu grup cewek semua. Iya, hanya saya hehe. Mungkin mereka masih mikir-mikirlah untuk bertato. Cuman yang saya tah mereka juga sebenarnya pengen menato di badannya.
Sekarang kuliah?	Saya Cuma kerja online itu, jualan sepatu. SMA saya coba melamar ke Surabaya TV jadi marketing. Itu delapan bulan saya disana habis itu saya keluar lalu kerja di Manulife, sekretaris. Waktu itu saya juga buka online. Lalu menurut saya online maju, saya tinggalin. Ikut orang soalnya gak enak. Jadi ya mending...
Saat di manulife sudah punya tato?	Belum, barusan khan tatonya.
Menurut mbaknya, ke depannya makin banyak cewek di scene undrground bertato atau malah berkurang?	Malah semakin bertambah.
Ada argumentasinya mungkin?	Argumentasinya sih, gak ada juga. Karena perkembangan jaman, modern khan? Tato juga sekarang dianggap sebagai style/gaya juga. Seperti itu.

A.4. Research Participants

No.	Name	Age	M/F	City	Music Scene	Musician/Fans/Other
1	Eddoy	20	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
2	Gopt	23	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
3	Fidel	31	Male	Surabaya	Trash Metal	Musician
4	Aref	41	Male	Sidoarjo	Punk	Musician
5	Fauz	21	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Musician
6	Ay	26	Female	Surabaya	Grunge/Blues	Musician
7	Nz	22	Female	Surabaya	Death Metal	Musician
8	DK	28	Male	Surabaya	Punk	Musician
9	Fz	-	Male	Surabaya	Punk	Fans/Tattooist
10	Adt	40	Male	Surabaya	Ex-Punk	Lecturer/Preacher
11	Gopel	31	Male	Surabaya	Metalcore	Musician
12	Kenn	24	Female	Surabaya	Alternative Rock/Metal	Fans
13	Rizsky	27	Male	Sidoarjo	Dirty Reggae	Musician
14	Anthon	24	Male	Sidoarjo	Alternative Rock/Blues	Fans
15	Rizk	22	Male	Sidoarjo	Hardcore	Musician
16	SPTR	35	Male	Sidoarjo	Punk	Fans
17	Haris	22	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Fans
18	Ayik	24	Female	Sidoarjo	Punk	Fans
19	Jambul	25	Male	Surabaya	Dirty Reggae	Musician
20	Rifk	23	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
21	Jimm	29	Male	Sidoarjo	Punk	Fans/Ex-Musician
22	Anja	19	Female	Surabaya	Alternative Pop/Rock	Musician/Manager

23	Alfi	25	Male	Sidoarjo	Post-hardcore	Musician
24	Bay	27	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Musician
25	Dhit Rats	28	Male	Surabaya	Death Metal	Musician
26	Keceng	25	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Musician
27	MS	21	Male	Surabaya	Punk	Fans
28	AM	29	Male	Sidoarjo	Hardcore	Musician
29	AJ	24	Male	Surabaya	Metalcore	Musician
30	Gundung	25	Male	Surabaya	Trash Metal	Fans
31	Njet	27	Male	Sidoarjo	Blues	Musician
32	Hr	32	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
33	Ari	30	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
34	Tania	20	Female	Sidoarjo	Alternative Rock	Musician
35	Tire-x	25	Male	Surabaya	Trash Metal	Fans
36	Sipit	19	Male	Sidoarjo	Black Metal	Fans/Activist
37	Paini	36	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
38	Jqo	30	Male	Sidoarjo	Hardcore	Musician
39	Rhez	24	Male	Sidoarjo	Dirty Reggae	Musician
40	Btr	23	Male	Sidoarjo	Metalcore	Musician
41	Brn	30	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Musician
42	Oleng	30	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Fans
41	Edgar	21	Male	Surabaya	Metal	Fans
42	Reza	30	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Musician
43	Adit	30	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Musician
44	Uncle Jack	49	Male	Surabaya	Rock/Metal	Fans
45	Darmaj	44	Male	Surabaya	-	Door to Door Tattooist

46	Berry B	25	Male	Surabaya	Hardcore	Ex-Musician
47	Anng	43	Male	Surabaya	-	Lecturer/Tattoo Observer
48	Tewel	37	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
49	Dana	28	Male	Sidoarjo	Death Metal	Musician
50	Co-mix	33	Male	Sidoarjo	Hardcore	Musician
51	Iwn	32	Male	Sidoarjo	Hardcore	Musician