Jakarta, as the capital city of the country, is a large place that brings not only the ethnic groups from Indonesia, but also people from all nations. In this city, the progress earned by Indonesia is reflected through various sectors of life. That is why, the Jakarta city gets the nickname as “metropolitan” and slowly leads to become a “megapolitan.” This situation occurs because of the influence of knowledge and technology that comes in the form of living equipment, communication devices, and transportation so that it has a direct impact to the lifestyle of the people. They continue to move to be more modern with the popular culture as its foundation. No wonder if the people who settle and live in Jakarta are more dynamic and flexible toward the lifestyle changes. No exception to the lifestyle of the Betawi people. As a native, the Betawi people cannot be separated to the development of Jakarta. As the host of the capital city of the country, the Betawi people inevitably live in the midst of various policy, planning, and targets that may be beyond the wishes of this ethnic group. All of them must be accepted as a consequence, even though the "disruption" on their culture is getting harder.

Even so, one positive thing that has been noticed in the Betawi society and culture is its flexibility in accepting outside influences. For hundreds of years, the history of Betawi culture is an instance of a long journey of acculturation before achieving its present form. Several aspects from the Chinese, Indian, European, and Arabic cultures that entered the archipelago were culturally absorbed by the Betawi people so that the results are clearly visible in various forms of culinary, fashion, decoration, as well as arts-culture. One among the many forms of acculturation is the existence of a pair of giant dolls called Ondel-ondel. These dolls, that can be controlled and driven by humans from inside, occupy an important position in the life cycle events of the Betawi people. Its presence is always awaited in every party, especially a party that requires a parade. Its big and eye-catching shape make it able to attract people’s attention so that it is appropriate if the DKI Jakarta government sets this big doll as the icon of Jakarta. Likewise, with the events organised by the Jakarta government, Ondel-ondel is always present and takes part.

Nevertheless, observing its development recently, Ondel-ondel seems to be in a "pathetic" situation; from the position as a part of various life cycle ceremonies and the icon of a city, it downgrades because it is used as a busking tool by a group of people on the streets. The question is, why does this happen? What is the underlying background? Based on a field research conducted and several interviews with the perpetrators, two conclusions can be drawn. First, the presence of Ondel-ondel with a high posture is big and eye-catching in terms of appearance to be a powerful ‘magnet’ in attracting the attention of the people who see it. Second, busking by including Ondel-ondel as a demonstration aid and music from Betawi as an accompaniment is proved to promise a decent income. This was stated by Ilham (11 years) and two friends named Intan (10 years) and Eko (9 years). These three Pulogadung residents are ones of the many "teams" who are active as Ondel-ondel buskers. Every day, they operate along a three-kilometer road, starting from the Pulogadung Terminal straight to the Klender Market.

Ilham, whose body is the largest, is in charge for carrying the Ondel-ondel to control, so it appears alive. Eko is tasked to push a small lorry containing simple tape radio equipped with loudspeakers, while Intan, is tasked to ask for pity from those around them. Equipped with a used, five-kilograms sized, plastic container of paint, the girl asks ‘sawer’ (donation) money to the people around them.
All of that is done by Intan in a way that is pleasing but with a little bit of force. Her thin body and dirty appearance seem to get a pity from anyone she asked for money.

When after the *isya* (evening), the container for money that was hours in Intan's grasp was spilled with its contents into the sidewalk floor by those three children. Immediately, coins of one thousand and two thousand were poured into the asphalt. With their little hands, they swiftly picked up the money and separated it into small piles based on their nominal value. This was done by them to ease the calculation and classify them at the same time. The amount of money collected at that time was Rp175,500, larger for Rp52,000 than the amount they got at the first count at five o’clock. So, in total, Ilham, Intan, and Eko got a total of Rp299,000.

After counting, Ilham was the most courageous among the three chattered that they would fairly share the same amount of money when they got home. Iwan also said that every day they get at least Rp200,000 to Rp250,000 if they are singing on weekdays, Monday to Friday. If the busking is done on Saturday or Sunday, the income can reach Rp300,000 because more people are on the road than on weekdays. They achieved that amount of income for five hours of busking, from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

When asked whether the *Ondel-ondel* used was their own, Ilham and Eko simultaneously replied that they rented it from a neighbour called 'Boss'. This person was their neighbour. He opened an *Ondel-ondel* rental business plus a portable sound system for busking purposes. He rated Rp30,000 for one-time rental. The period was five hours for one rental, from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. with a one-hour return tolerance. This policy was taken to provide an opportunity for the renters whose were far away to return the items. So actually, the rental time given by the boss was 6 hours. Intan said, the Boss had a lot of *Ondel-ondel* for rent. In fact, the renters can choose *Ondel-ondel*’s size; large, medium, or small, according to the size needed. A renter with a relatively tall body size will be directed to take on a large *Ondel-ondel*. Conversely, if those who rent are children, the Boss will give a small-sized *Ondel-ondel*.

Viewed from this aspect, it appears that busking activity involving *Ondel-ondel* and Betawi music is planned and coordinated business. Inside it, there is turnover of money, which is not few, if seen from the number of *Ondel-ondel* buskers on the streets of Jakarta, whether it is in the morning, afternoon, evening and night. In addition, a promising marketplace has also triggered the production of *Ondel-ondel* to supply the demands of the street buskers. That is why, various sizes of *Ondel-ondel* with various colours of clothes are increasingly roaming around in the streets of Jakarta.

The problem is, is this a positive or negative phenomenon? What is the attitude of the Betawi people to this phenomenon? What kind of cultural policy that is suitable for returning the *Ondel-ondel*’s essence to its original function? These questions will be answered if social, ethnographic, and cultural inheritance changes are examined in depth. All the three are important because the people of Jakarta continue to change, the Betawi people also change, while the Betawi culture requires heirs so that its cultural identity of the Betawi people is maintained.

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