

## Urban Church's Contextual Response to Urban Toxicity with An Intersubjective Approach

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### Abstract

The post-pandemic period is full of challenges for urban churches in Surabaya. While having to survive, he must also continue interpreting his presence as an extension of the mission of the Kingdom of God. Rumah Singgah is a manifestation of GKI Pregolan Bunder's participatory-transformative diakonia mission as an ecclesiological response to the urban context in Central Surabaya. This mission is based on the redemptive work of Christ. It runs on an intersubjective path where all parties are subjects who continue to actively participate in transforming life for the sake of shared well-being. Through this qualitative phenomenological research, the researcher wants to propose an intersubjective approach as a new alternative to the urban mission in Surabaya, especially in the new post-pandemic era. Researchers conducted interviews based on Ricouer's scheme regarding life events in Rumah Singgah. The results found that intersubjective relations are relevant for building interactive and dialogical encounters between the church and surrounding communities.

Keywords: Central Surabaya, GKI Pregolan Bunder, Rumah Singgah, Urban Toxicity, Intersubjective

## Introduction

Thomas and Hudson's research provides fascinating information that 4 billion of the world's population lives on the Asian continent, and almost half of that number lives in cities (Thames & Hudson, 2010). This research further explains that there are 194 cities in Asia with more than 1 million population, including 6 urban cities in Indonesia: Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, Medan, Palembang, and Semarang (Thames & Hudson, 2010). Regarding Surabaya specifically, data from local authority sources estimates that its population has almost doubled, namely 2.9 million at night compared to 5.6 million during the day (Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan Jatim, 2021).

UNICEF stated that Surabaya is moving to become one of the most important urban cities in East Asia (United Nation Children's Fund, 2018). According to UNICEF data, in 2030, around 30 percent of children in East Asia will live in cities. That means the life and future of a country will likely depend on how well its government manages the urban environment to ensure well-being for the development and qualitative growth of life. "The future for hundreds of millions of children in Southeast Asia will be in its big cities. This is a highly urbanized region with seven of the ten most populous cities in the world," said Karin Hulshof, UNICEF Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific (United Nation Children's Fund, 2018).

"Urban Metropolitan" is a term that describes the city of Surabaya today (Tamami, 2021). Some urban experts differentiate between "city" and "urban city" meanings. Based on Minister of Home Affairs number 34 of 1986, the term "city" refers to an administrative area with unique characteristics from physical and socio-economic aspects (Kemendagri, 2022). The physical factors include: first, occupied residential areas with a relatively higher number of buildings and building density than the surrounding area; secondly, the proportion of permanent buildings is greater in that place than in the surrounding area; third, it has more buildings in the form of socio-economic facilities (schools, clinics, markets, shops, government offices, etc.) than the surrounding area. Meanwhile, the socio-economic aspects include: first, the population is relatively large compared to the surrounding area; second, it has a population density that is relatively higher than the surrounding area; third, it has a higher proportion of the population working in the non-agricultural sector than in surrounding areas; fourth, it is a center of economic activity that connects agricultural activities in the surrounding area and a marketing place for raw materials for industrial activities.

What about the characteristics of an "urban city"? A city with an urban character has additional socio-economic characteristics. First, some of the population comes from outside the city, and second, residents from the surrounding area work or earn a living in the area at certain hours. This socio-economic pattern forms a new culture, namely urban culture; apart from that, it also forms sub-urban and peri-urban societies. Meanwhile, sub-urban is the population on the inner border of the city, while peri-urban is the term for residents of the outer border of the city.

In 2021, the Surabaya Central Statistics Agency (BPS) published a book entitled "Indicators of Surabaya City Welfare". In this book, there are at least seven dimensions that are indicators of the city of Surabaya's welfare: population, health, education, employment, housing and environment, consumption levels and patterns, and poverty (Badan Pusat Statistik Surabaya, 2021). These seven indicators are interconnected with each other. Therefore, the city government needs to involve all city components to take an integrated approach so that the level of prosperity can be achieved. All parts of Surabaya, such as city community stakeholders, including churches, need to encourage themselves as active subjects to help maintain and improve the prosperity of urban Surabaya.

The seven indicators of the welfare of the city of Surabaya indicate a substantial humanitarian problem, namely relationality. Even though Surabaya appears to be one of the cities considered prosperous, real prosperity seems far too far away for most urban residents in the Tegalsari sub-district. Moreover, when interacting directly with residents in their daily lives. General problems, such as the health of the elderly, unemployment of the productive age, environmental cleanliness, the ecological crisis, and lack of interest in education, are visible. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency, even though it is in the center of Surabaya, the number of people who do not attend school is quite high (BPS, 2020). Likewise, with the health dimension, a study states that slum settlements in Central Surabaya are prone to TB disease (Kurniati, 2014). All social realities align with the most fundamental problem of relationality, namely the fragile harmony in the family (Priscilla, 2019). These data show a contrast: Even though it is located in the center of the metropolis of Surabaya, it does not necessarily guarantee people's welfare. Instead of being a prosperous city, Surabaya is closer to an old city with social ills.

These notes show that Surabaya is experiencing a classic relational problem: alienation. If left unchecked, it will become an urban toxic whose destructive power is increasingly strong. Therefore, Surabaya's urbanites need not only personal but also social healing. Urban healing may help overcome urban toxicity personally, namely the existential alienation of each individual in interpreting their life, but urban alienation as socially toxic urbanism needs to be addressed systemically and in an integrated manner.

GKI Pregolan Bunder realizes that he is part of the city of Central Surabaya. So, he is trying to be present to work on one of the indicators of city prosperity, namely improving the quality of public education. However, researchers see that GKI Pregolan Bunder should present a mission approach relevant to current conditions and context. GKI Pregolan Bunder needs to contribute to improving community education, not just by improving academic quality through conservative and regular educational methods.

GKI Pregolan Bunder is located in Tegalsari District. Based on his research on Southeast Asian urban church models, Michael D. Crane (2018) classifies GKI Pregolan Bunder as a multicultural city center church because it is located in the heart of the city and demographically, its congregation members come from various ethnicities and various socio-economic levels. This model church takes a mission approach by embracing urban diversity to preach the Gospel and expand the discipleship values. GKI Pregolan Bunder needs to deepen its meaning through these questions as an urban church. First, "What is the phenomenon that occurs in the urban community of Central Surabaya around GKI Pregolan Bunder?" This question will enable the researcher to explore and interpret the experiences of the community around the GKI Pregolan Bunder Congregation Community in the events of life as an urban community. Exploring the subject's experiences around the church is ontological. Therefore, it is oriented toward the results and the process. This question makes theology a formulation of thought and the feeling and meaning of a particular life.

The second question is an axiological tool for finding existential conditions through a qualitative approach from urban communities around GKI Pregolan Bunder. The question is "Why can this phenomenon occur even though it is in the center of Surabaya City and the midst of many existing church communities?" This question contains an evaluation purpose, which is expected to trigger and spur researchers to discover dimensions, aspects, and variables so that they can later publish relevant theological novelties in that context.

Then, the third question is, "How can GKI Pregolan Bunder interpret its existence so that it can contribute to increasing the welfare of the community around the church?" This third question is a teleological trigger to build contributive awareness for the GKI Pregolan Bunder congregation community based on the meaningfulness of its mission. This is where it is important to realize that doing theology is a journey of life together to build prosperity for life together.

In this paper, the researcher wants to promote a new grayling mission approach carried out by GKI Pregolan Bunder, namely the Rumah Singgah program. This program embodies transformational Diakonia ministry based on Christ's redemption and uses an intersubjective approach. The intersubjective approach can be a solution to overcome alienation in the lives of urban communities in central Surabaya.

## Method

Researchers use Paul Ricoeur's social hermeneutic scheme to find the urban church community's response to urban toxicity (Ricoeur, 2006). Ricoeur's scheme moves researchers to conduct in-depth conversations, one of them at moments of interpersonal and communal encounters. The conversation aims to discover existential themes, which in turn become a starting point for formulating the navigation of the mission of the church's presence in urban society.

Furthermore, in this research, Ricoeur's scheme is combined with phenomenological qualitative research methods to explore the meaning of experiences from encounters at Rumah Singgah (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Deepening the meaning of experiences and discovering themes is achieved through conversations guided by general and in-depth qualitative questions. The researcher then managed the data in the form of meaning and themes resulting from the interviews into a thematic network based on axial coding analysis, producing an outline flow of this journal. General questions guide the subject in exploring the depth of the subject's experience of urban life. In contrast, follow-up questions direct the subject to find the meaning of the existence of a Rumah Singgah in the middle of urban life.

Researchers involved five participants as subjects. The five of them are Rumah Singgah collaborators with their roles. They are Andre (subject 1), Juni (subject 2), Agus (subject 3), Anneke (subject 4) and Diah (subject 5). Subjects 1 and 2 coordinate Rumah Singgah, while subjects 3, 4, and 5 are volunteer teachers at Rumah Singgah and members of the GKI Pregolan Bunder Surabaya congregation. Of the five subjects, only subject 3 and subject 5 are native Surabaya residents. All conversation processes occur in the Rumah Singgah during the activity. This conversation data received validation through the approval of two elders who oversee the shelter service as representatives of the GKI Pregolan Bunder congregational council.

Furthermore, the results of interviews with the five Rumah Singgah collaborators emerged in the form of specific themes, which became qualitative findings for this journal's research. All themes found are related to the profile of urban society, and then through the axial coding analysis process, they become sub-topics in this journal. Axial coding relies on new findings from the meaning network structure of categories and sub-categories and then places qualitative data into the discovered structure (Emzir, 2016). The following are sub-topics (subcategories) as a result of the interview: urban culture, urban sprawl, urban decay, urban healing, urban alienation, and urban toxicity. The final sub-category is this journal's climax and basic idea related to the urban church's response to the realities of life in Surabaya's urban society.

## Finding and Discussion

As the capital of East Java Province, Surabaya has implemented an advanced transportation system, including a network of roads, public transportation, and other transportation models. Population mobility within the city is greatly influenced by traffic congestion and transportation infrastructure development. Subject 3 confirmed this phenomenon. As a resident born and raised in Surabaya, he feels this progress directly even though he lives on the city's outskirts. He said, "The progress that I see includes improvements in city infrastructure for its citizens, especially for residents who live in suburban areas (interview, 03-11-2024; S3.3). This is in line with the thoughts of subject 1, who is not a native of Surabaya. He studied at a state university in Surabaya and later became a permanent resident. In the interview, he shared his observations in the form of a list of progress that has occurred in the city of Surabaya so far honestly and clearly, as follows (interview, 11-03-2024; S1.3):

Construction of public facilities; repair of water channels; increasing the number and maintenance of parks; maintenance of bicycle paths and sidewalks that are comfortable for pedestrians; construction of museums and community recreation areas; provision of burials for senior citizens and free transportation support; community empowerment and involvement through Surabaya Tangguh Cadres to reduce stunting rates; paying attention to residents' health and fast data collection; extraordinary efforts to make Surabaya a child-friendly city; Command Center services, one-stop services and various conveniences for public complaints; skills training for prospective workers, scholarship support for Resilient Youth from Low-Income Communities (MBR); improving the quality of Community Health Centers and Hospitals.

When people see Surabaya from the surface, they will pay attention to all the lists stated by Subject 1. However, this is not the real Surabaya, and it is like someone seeing the tip of an iceberg in the Arctic Ocean. Being an urban person in Surabaya can only feel like living at the top. Therefore, in this research, the researcher invites us to see Surabaya as an urbanist who enters the city's depths to the center and heart of Surabaya. Subject 5 tried to express the "inside" of Surabaya based on his experience, especially in education. He conveyed his testimony thus (interview, 03-11-2024; S5.4):

Apart from several areas being flooded, equal distribution of education is also a serious problem. Even though there are free schools, the teaching staff is still poorly controlled. The quality of the teaching staff is not evenly distributed, so what each child gets is not the same, so even though education is provided free of charge, children do not get the same rights, and this is due to the quality of the teaching staff. Free education is just a predicate. Even though the child is in school, his knowledge and emotional growth is different in all schools.

Van Peursen provides a new approach to looking at the above phenomenon. He called it the dynamics of culture. He stated that culture precipitates dynamic human need-fulfillment activities (Van Peursen, 1988). Therefore, Van Peursen (1988) describes culture as an unfinished story of a particular human group and must continue to be continued along with human needs that continue to increase. Furthermore, Van Peursen (1988) explained that in cultural dynamics, multi-dimensional tensions occur, one of which is between the dimensions of immanence and transcendence. Immanence is the internal part of humans, while transcendence is the external part of humans, such as God and nature. This tension will continue to occur as long as humans experience the process of self-meaning, especially as long as humans are tied to their needs. In this case, Van Peurseun (1988) groups the meaning process into three stages: the mystical, ontological, and functional. Van Peursen's (1988) premise is that the more humans develop, the more they experience alienation from nature and forces outside themselves.

Based on Van Peursen's (1988) notes, culture means a way of life that continues to develop to fulfill human needs through three stages, is then shared by a group of people, and is passed down from

generation to generation, forming many complex elements, including religious and political systems, customs. Customs, technology, lifestyle, habits, etc. This means that the more modern people are, the more alienated they are from external factors and become egocentric. Urban culture was born as a logical consequence of modernity, which means it is at the third stage, according to Van Peursen's thinking. Urban culture was formed due to urbanization's impact, namely the population's mutation from rural areas and peri-urban areas to the city (Dinas Perumahan Dan Kawasan Pemukiman, 2021).

According to subject 5, urbanization is due to people's desire to get money quickly. Even though it is risky, it makes people make themselves the center of life (follow-up interview, 04-04-2024; S5). Thus, urban culture often reflects life's complexity, diversity, and dynamics. This movement is apparently not only related to the movement of the population but also other dimensions such as worldview, relationship patterns, ways of feeling, consumption patterns, and social interests, thus forming a new lifeworld combination. Regarding this matter, subject 2 commented as follows: "A series of values that characterize habits and principles of life held by urban residents in general, which are formed from a combination of various cultures so that the room for tolerance is higher" (interview, 03-11-2024; S2.2). Here, there seems to be a paradox, where urbanization generally occurs for reasons of accelerating income. Hence, it tends to be individualistic, but the space for tolerance is more significant because of complex diversity. It could be that tolerance is not only a sign of social maturity in a pluralistic context but also a manifestation of society simply seeking security for itself to fulfill its life.

In other words, urban culture is more functionally oriented so that humans fulfill their daily needs. Subject 5 seemed to agree with this view. He feels that urban culture in Surabaya makes people do things quickly and tends to be instant (oriented towards results without paying attention to the process), practical (make it simple and not complicated or not a lot of bureaucracy as much as possible), and has high individualism (interview, 03-25-2024; S5.2). So, subject 5 explains functionality with three terms: instant, practical, and individualist. A researcher concluded that the cultural portrait of urban society is thick with extrinsic values (coming from outside oneself) such as money, fame, appearance, and short-term satisfaction models (Pasaribu, 2018). Pasaribu (2018) further argued:

Commodification conditions the lifespan of satisfaction to be very short and very fast passed. Meanwhile, the psychological tendency of modern humans is increasingly strengthening for more achieve materialistic life goals. The act of pursuing more material and fame becomes a sublimation of a person's sense of well-being. Because, instantly it is able to direct someone to build a more satisfying experience effectively and efficiently. The concept of happiness in modern human life which is moderated through material and higher commodity prices has built urban humans' life goal to become rich.

This is reinforced by the results of scientific research in the psychological field, which reveal that urban humans tend more towards achieving materialistic life goals and highlighting a utilitarian spirit of life (Husna, 2015). Therefore, urban communities are very vulnerable to stress (Basri, 2021). Urban culture is an active process of reciprocal relationality that continues to shape identity, taste, and image (Pasaribu, 2018). These profile points show that urban civilization can slowly eliminate the ontological dimension, giving rise to fatal complications for human life, such as relational crises, spiritual dryness, the emptiness of meaning, split being-personality, and other serious relational problems (Afidah, 2021).

The Surabaya City Official views the slum settlement problem as a serious social-relational problem (Nurwawati, 2017). This observation puts forward the idea that the settlement problem is not just about physical space but also complex biological space, including the problem of relationality. So, it is not surprising that the Surabaya city government is intensifying the slum area social rehabilitation

program (RSDK) as clear evidence of the Surabaya city government's seriousness in implementing an urban healing society (Indahri, 2017). This program is an integrated program carried out by several agencies such as the Social Service, Citizen's Building Capacity, Public Works Service, and the Settlement Division (Dinas Sosial, Bina Marga, Dinas PU dan Divisi Pematusan) (Rozikin et al., 2022). This program provides a strong picture that the Surabaya urban area is experiencing urban sprawl, namely urban development that is so fast that it cannot be controlled entirely (Dardak, 2006). This means there is an imbalance in the lives of the people of Surabaya, where the acceleration of physical growth does not go hand in hand with the existential quality of the population, so complete social prosperity has not been achieved. To overcome this, the RSDK program is implemented by covering three Tribina models, namely human development, economic development, and environmental development (Rozikin et al., 2022).

Subject 1 and subject 2 observed the imbalance of urban life. Subject 2 highlights the need for more awareness among Surabaya residents regarding sanitation issues. Subject 2 stated that household waste and plastic waste were still often found in waterways (rivers) near the shelter location, even though the Surabaya government had made efforts to reduce the use of plastic bags by reducing plastic shopping bags (interview, 03-11-2024; S2.4). Furthermore, Subject 2 expressed his opinion that if this is handled after a period of time, water quality will remain high and impact health (interview, 03-11-2024; S2.5). Meanwhile, subject 1 highlighted current symptoms related to financial resilience, namely suffocating debt related to online loan cases due to the lack of literacy and high consumption inclusion, which has resulted in a decrease in the happiness index and an increase in relationality problems in the family (interview, 03-11-2024; S1.4).

Urban Sprawl has, in turn, resulted in urban decay, namely the decline in the welfare of urban cities due to conflicts from various dimensions, both anthropological, social, economic, environmental, etc. (Dardak, 2006). If urban decay continues, urban conditions will become toxic, resulting in a condition known as urban toxic. As a resident of Surabaya, Subject 4 linked the decline in Surabaya's urban welfare to the possibility of increasing crime (interview, 03-12-2024; S4.4).

Slum settlements, through the lens of relationality, are certainly not just about physical location. This is related to the problems of life as a whole, namely the need for awareness of the cleanliness of the environment and the lack of togetherness in improving health standards. Thames and Hudson stated that almost all urban Asian cities, especially in countries experiencing hyper-growth (Shanghai, Mumbai, Dubai, and Manila), face acute and interrelated issues of social relationality, such as uninhabitable housing, a culture of poverty, crime, and street prostitution (Thames & Hudson, 2010):

In Asia, growth is the shape of our time. Economies may ebb and flow, but the heart, the arc of the world from Shanghai to Mumbai to Dubai and locales in between, is a zone of upward transformation. In recent years and decades, we have seen here population exploding, investments soaring, cities bursting onto the scene, societies progressing, buildings springing up, wealth fomenting and ecosystems failing. It is a familiar story: hypergrowth throws societies, systems and structures into upheaval and existing built, natural and social environments struggle to adjust. Growth goes from good to bad. This is why we must look beyond growth.

For this reason, through their research, Thames and Hudson (2010) encourage the governments of Asian countries, especially local city authorities, to continue to consistently build an urban life structure with the spirit of an urban moment, namely an empathetic enthusiasm for improving the prosperity of the life world. Integrated management, both in regions and urban communities in Asia, is the key to developing countries in Asia (Thames & Hudson, 2010). Healthy communities and a healthy

environment are the pillars of urban life and prosperity. This means that the quality of urban life is one of the main indications of the quality growth of a country.

According to a study by the Regional Infrastructure Assessment Agency of the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing, urbanization and integrated city planning have helped speed up life recovery after the pandemic. Furthermore, Wicaksono Sarosa explained, "The city is indeed the epicenter of the pandemic, with around 90% of cases reported occurring in the city. However, cities also have the potential to be a turning point for post-pandemic revival" (Layanan Informasi BPIW, 2021). Awareness of the rise in the post-pandemic era is also happening in urban cities worldwide. This movement was undoubtedly born out of concern that urban communities are being attacked by what is known as urban toxicity. This type of social poison can damage the relationship with oneself as a being, impacting others, the universe and God. Urban toxicity is related to alienation or existential estrangement, namely the gap between what should be and the reality of life that occurs. This gap happens not only in the inner realm but also in all aspects of life, such as politics, society, culture, and psychology. In the frame of relationality, this social condition arises due to the contribution of all parties and factors in the social space, including communities in the urban habitat (Riyanto, 2018).

The term "urban healing" refers to recovery efforts in urban environments. This is often related to efforts to overcome urban alienation from complex biological gaps. Urban healing is also associated with propaganda programs that aim to improve overall social, psychological, and physical welfare in urban areas. Some data from the following interdisciplinary study shows how urgent urban recovery efforts are in various areas of life in Surabaya. According to a local study, the divorce rate in Surabaya society is increasing due to problems with harmony (Priscilla, 2019). Of course, this increase in numbers is not sudden; there is a change in the lifestyle of the people of Surabaya in the dimension of relationality that is in line with changes in the increasing demands for life's needs.

Anis (2013), through his writing, describes the spiritual condition of urban society amid modernity. He stated that the urban spirituality trend continued from the New Age Movement in the 20th century to urban Sufism in the current century. According to him, urban Sufism is more of a movement outside the standard cultic system to experience healing, purity of soul, and intellectual enlightenment (2013). This means that urban city residents increasingly need healing.

Psychologists from Ciputra University Surabaya, through their research, have tried to examine the need for happiness in an urban context, especially among diasporic students at University X Surabaya (Harijanto & Setiawan, 2017). Based on this quantitative research, they stated that there is a high level of correlation between social support and happiness. This means the need for relationality determines diasporic students' happiness in urban areas. What is worrying is that social support is experiencing a downward trend in line with biological struggles during this endemic period.

The social scientific deepening by Riyadi and Wigati (2020) regarding the Urban City of Semarang concluded that the value of brotherhood that is being developed, namely interpersonal communication, impacts building inter-religions. However, it can be seen that efforts to construct cross-religious bridges are directly proportional to the phenomenon of radicalism. This means that interpersonal communication and brotherhood are still at a formal symbolic level and have not touched all aspects of life. In essence, urban toxicity has existed amid the urban lifeworld and has a latent infectious power. This toxic is identified as alination.

Based on Erich Fromm's definition, alienation is a condition in which a person or community of people (society) feels themselves to be a stranger or separated from others (Sutikna, 1996). It was then explained that there are several forms of alienation: consumption, relationships, and existence.

Consumption alienation occurs if someone is separated from having their needs met. Next, relational alienation is a condition where one person or group is separated from others. Meanwhile, existential alienation is a condition where a person is separated from himself, meaning that he is colonized or enslaved to the point of eliminating his existence. The degree of alienation is, of course, based on the distance of the alienation that occurs. Alienation is also related to feelings of emptiness or loss of meaning in inner life. A person may feel alienated from spiritual values or beliefs that previously provided satisfaction or guidance. In other words, alienation is a condition where a person becomes alien from himself, the gap between essence and existence, separated from the community, far from prosperity, and experiencing a complex biological gap (Schacht, 2005).

Apart from these several forms of alienation, they are exposed to other forms. This can be found with the following question: "How big is the impact of the presence of the church community as disciples of Christ on the welfare of life around the church in central Surabaya?" This question needs to be asked, considering that the church community is an integral part of the social space of the local community. Apart from that, this question shows the degree of alienation between students in their lifeworld. On average, church communities in the Tegalsari sub-district live outside the sub-district. Data from one of the churches in this area could provide a general picture, namely that only around 15 percent of its congregation is recorded as native to the Tegalsari sub-district (Kantor Gereja GKI Pregolan Bunder Surabaya, 2023). However, is this the main factor in the low quality of the impact of the church community on the welfare of the people in the Tegalsari sub-district? Or are there other forms of alienation that spread in the church community? Therefore, a contextual theological breakthrough is needed to build a philosophical (theory) and functional (praxis) bridge so that the impact of the presence of the Disciples of Christ community is beneficial for the welfare of the urban community of Central/Central Surabaya.

Subject 3 felt that the church's role was not optimal in improving the welfare of the residents of central Surabaya. According to him, there are two main reasons: the suspicion non-Christians still have regarding the church's social activities and that most churches in the middle of the city are too busy with themselves (interview, 03-11-2024; S3.7). Subject 1 highlights from another perspective, namely coordination between church communities in joining hands in an integrated manner to work on the city's prosperity mission together (interview, 03-11-2024; S1.7-8). He said thus: "The church has done many things, but in my opinion, it is not optimal because it is still fragmentary. It is still a specific church program without broader coordination. There should be coordination in the form of a city-level forum for church leaders to work directly on urban missions." Subject 2 expands this idea with the idea that the church needs to collaborate with local governments such as RT, RW, Area Head, and Subdistrict Head. He said this urban mission program must embrace many parties and be carried out continuously (interview, 03-12-2024; S2.7-8).

### ***Urban Alienation and Urban Church***

GKI Pregolan Bunder chose Education indicators as part of its urban mission. According to BPS Surabaya data, in 2020, 45.6 percent of the population aged 15 years and over graduated from junior high school or below. This figure shows that the average level of education of the people of Surabaya city is classified as middle to low (Badan Pusat Statistik Surabaya, 2021). This data fact shows a contrast when considering that Surabaya is included as a megapolitan city in Indonesia. Therefore, GKI Pregolan Bunder is involved in improving community welfare in the educational dimension through scholarship programs and shelter programs.

GKI Pregolan Bunder holds a scholarship program in the form of educational assistance funds for underprivileged congregations and non-congregants. Meanwhile, the Rumah Singgah program supports the quality of learning in the community around the church. Between the scholarship program and the Rumah Singgah program, there is a meeting point where scholarship-recipient students are encouraged to study at the Rumah Singgah to improve the quality of their education. In an in-depth conversation with Subject 3, a belief was revealed that education quality significantly impacts overcoming urban toxicity and urban decay. The following is subject 3's comment: "By increasing the quality of education, it is hoped that there will be an increase in skills and skills for urban residents so that it is hoped that it can increase job opportunities and it is even hoped that it can increase income/earnings so that it is hoped that it can improve their welfare. Increasing welfare can reduce the crime rate in urban cities" (in-depth interview, 03-25-2024; S3). This belief was undoubtedly born from his experience as a volunteer teacher at Rumah Singgah for 10 years when he saw the impact of forming the children's character at Rumah Singgah.

GKI Pregolan Bunder uses Rumah Singgah because, physically, this place is a house. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the Rumah Singgah building and the surrounding buildings. However, researchers feel that the term "Rumah Singgah" is applied to this place more precisely because of the meaning of life in it, namely a stopover space where each subject meets to learn about life. So, the equivalent of the term Rumah Singgah is a life-learning place or meeting space because the nuance of relationality is decisive in this place. Subject 3, as a Rumah Singgah's collaborator, believes that the Rumah Singgah program can contribute to improving the welfare of Surabaya residents because this program assumes the quality of children's education and family development work together (interview, 03-11-2024; S3.9).

Rumah Singgah is one manifestation of GKI Pregolan Bunder's urban mission. GKI Pregolan Bunder identifies as a church with a traditional urban center model. This model is formed from several variables (as explained throughout this dissertation), namely history, location, demographic portrait of the congregation, theological heritage, leadership patterns, potential of the congregation, and conditions of the urban environment around the church. This means that GKI Pregolan Bunder, an urban church, is realizing its urban mission in the middle of the typical urban society of central Surabaya. In other words, the urbanity of GKI Pregolan Bunder dramatically influences the quality of its urban mission.

Based on the researcher's observations of this 13-year journey, the Rumah Singgah needs to strengthen its identity with an intersubjective approach, manifested through its three values: authentic, empathetic, and missiologic. Each collaborator builds a commitment to live out authentic, empathetic, and mystic meanings deliberately. Deliberately living and applying this intersubjective approach will raise awareness that a Rumah Singgah is a house where Christ is the host—an authentic, empathetic mission. Christ welcomes and involves every collaborator as His partner so that he continues to move to present the values of the Kingdom of God that support the welfare of society. Subject 1 saw the importance of these authentic values as the basis for the life skills training provided at the halfway house, such as managing money, time, and relationships so that life can be interpreted as a process of becoming (interview, 03-11-2024; S1.9). Subject 2 even connected the authenticity of life with the behavior of saving for the future following life planning (interview, 03-11-2024; S2.9). Subject 5 confirmed this principle based on his experience as a Rumah Singgah's volunteer teacher (interview, 03-12-2024; S5.9). He said:

The contribution of Rumah Singgah to children is improving the quality of education so that children can narrow the gap between children from other schools. A Rumah Singgah can bridge this. They focus on subjects and pay attention to the surrounding environment (humans and the

environment). So, children not only pay attention to themselves but also to their friends. Apart from that, there are also meetings with people with parenting programs so that the student's parents can do what has been given at the Rumah Singgah at home.

Subject 2 witnessed this for himself, especially through an educational project to reduce the use of plastic bottles. The collaborators' discipline inspired the students, and then their parents followed the behavior of the shelter home students (in-depth interview, 03-21-2024; S2). This means that intersubjective missions have inspirational and imperative power through examples starting from simple things in everyday life.

In an in-depth interview with subject 5, he shared his experience: "Knowledge through cognitive lessons conducted at Rumah Singgah Mawari during class and affective through bonding with friends and teachers through WAG and class. "If there is a change in mood or a child is less enthusiastic about studying, usually the teacher asks his students and can discuss things with the teacher about things other than lessons" (in-depth interview, 03-21-2024; S5). In essence, by discussing and dialogue, someone can learn to find the meaning of life together.

### **Conclusion: Intersubjective Approach for Urban Restoration**

The intersubjective concept emphasizes that humans build mutual understanding through social interaction and sharing meaning. Intersubjective is Alfred Schuzt's idea, which was born from repositioning the relationship between subject and object (Supraja & Akbar, 2020). Intersubjective describes how individuals in society participate in the shared construction of meaning. Through social interaction, each person, also called a subject, jointly creates and understands the world around them. Intersubjective emphasizes how the subjects are actively involved with each other to discover while forming meaning together in the Rumah Singgah.

The intersubjective approach propagates three propositions, namely authentic, empathetic, and missiologic, to build the welfare of the church community, and it is the church community's turn to become an agent for creating the welfare of the urban community around their existence. In other words, Intersubjectivity plays a dual role on both social sides, namely improving intersubjective quality on the inside of the congregation community and improving intersubjective quality on the outside of the welfare of the surrounding urban community. This dual role can immediately bridge forms of alienation that are urban toxic.

The intersubjective approach is centered on the Person of Christ, who is present and fully involved in life. Therefore, Intersubjective is not just a formula but a path of spirituality for urban life. The meaning of Christ's redemption becomes more profound and more substantial so that the quality of the new humanity becomes more solid. The solidity of new human qualities is the key to a prosperous life. The intersubjective approach could be a new form of evangelism called missiologicism which emphasizes encounter rather than outreach (Yulius, 2024).

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