

MICRO SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES AND THEIR FUNCTION OF AESTHETICS

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Abstract

Aesthetics is basically part of our daily life. It has a very closet meaning to guide, choose and determine in our behavior and attitudes. In micro sociology, there is also parallel and strong opinions about those, here we know as the phenomenology, ethno methodology, symbolic interaction and hermeneutics. This writing will explore how that micro sociological theories have a strategic interrelationship among them. It can be seen clearly on the work about discourse, philosophical anthropological, and psycho analytic theory of arts.

Keywords : *Micro sociological theories, aesthetics of art.*

A. Introduction

Combining two or more disciplines answering a question about 'something scientifically', is extremely a hard work. It is not because, of course, to make the new discipline becomes more complex but some scholars, contrary, tend to claim that it is more to make it simple. Making it easier, R. Brown, for instance, had worked hard to combine the disciplines of *Linguistics* and *Psychology* and successfully wrote *Psycholinguistics* (1970). Brown quite long time investigated the inter-relationship between 'words' and 'things' and also 'language' and 'the cognition'. And it is sharpened by Albert and Obler (1978) by observing the inter-relationship between 'brain' and 'language' in their masterpiece *The Bilingual Brain*. The second marvelous example is for Arnold Hauser's masterpiece *The Sociology of Art* (1974). This dense book explores the two way sight of social factors and art inter-dependently. Here, Hauser stated the well-known 'The Totality of Life and Art' in which he stressed that human being is totally using art in their life, Art as the weapon in the struggle for life.

Understanding the hard work and in order to make it simple, to encourage and enlarge the Hauser's added by Wolff's phenomena above,

the focus is on sociology's point of view as the study of social in which we have already known that some scholars have divided it into micro and grand theories of sociology. Parallel with the topic, It is wise to first serve the kind of micro sociological theories applied in this paper, phenomenology, ethno methodology, symbolic interaction and hermeneutics-. The second section, there is an overview about the opinions particularly in relation with aesthetics and art. And if there is any ability, at the end of this writing there will be an opinion about the interrelationship between them completing with one or more cases from our social and art daily life.

B. Micro Sociological Theories

This term of micro sociological theories refers to the theory of sociology in which are coming next. If there is a Durkheim's grand theory of sociology, for instance, the functional theory, and a Marx's class conflict grand theory. Here, they are focused on the specific scope in sociological theory. The centre of micro sociological theories are phenomenology, ethno methodology, symbolic interaction and hermeneutics.

B. 1. Phenomenology

The theory of phenomenology is condensed from two important view namely philosophy and phenomenon. Mean while, according to internet the discipline of phenomenology may be defined as the study of structures of experience or consciousness. Literally, it is the study of 'phenomena': appearances of things or the ways we experience the things thus the meanings things in our experiences. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/>. There are three scholars who promote and built it. Phenomenology has meanings of an approach to philosophy that begins with an exploration of the phenomena. It represents itself to us in conscious experience as a means to finally grasp the absolute, logical, ontological and metaphysical spirit that is behind the phenomena. It is commonly said Hegel's dialectical phenomenology.

Another sociologist is Edmund Husserl (1920) that stated phenomenology is an approach to philosophy that take the intuitive experience of phenomena as its starting point. It presents itself to us in

phenomenological reflexion and tries to extract from it the essential features of experiences and the essence of what we experience. It is commonly said Husserl's transcendental phenomenology

The last definition come from Heidegger that states the phenomenological vision of world of beings must be passed toward the understanding of the Being behind all. This is called an existential phenomenology.

According to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/phenomenology>, the important element of phenomenology is intentionality. It means that the main character of consciousness is always intentional. Every phenomenon is directed at an object. Every belief has the believe (an object). Every desire has the desired (an object)

B. 2. Ethnomethodology

This term is literally meant the study of people's methods. Ethnomethodology is sociological discipline in which people make sense of their world. It displays the understanding to others and produce the social order in which they live. The term was coined by Harold Garfinkel around 1960's. Mean while, Ritzer defines that ethnomethodology is the study of "the body of common sense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which the ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves". (2003: 373). Nevertheless, ethnomethodology is distinct from traditional sociology and does not seek to compete with it or provide remedies for anyone of its practices. There are two main differences between ethnomethodology and traditional sociology :

First, traditional sociology usually offers an analysis of society which take the facility of social order while ethnomethodology is concerned with the 'how' or the methods by which that social order is produced and shared. Second, traditional sociology usually provides description of social setting which compete with the actual description offered by the individual who are party to those setting, mean while ethnomethodology seeks to describe the practice (the methods) these individuals are in their actual description of those settings.

According to George Psathas in <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ethnomethodology>, there are five types of ethnomethodology;

- a. The organization of practical action and practical reasoning. Including the earliest studies, such as those in

Garfinkel's studies

- b. The organization of talk in interaction commonly said 'conversation analysis'
- c. Talk in interaction within institutional or organizational setting. This early studies focused on talk abstracted from the context in which it was produced (usually using tape recorder or telephone conversation) . This approach seeks to identify interaction structures that are specific particular setting.
- d. The study of work (refers to any social activity) The analytic interest is in how that work is accomplished within the setting in which it is performed.
- e. The "naeccity " of work. It shows just what makes an activity.

For instance, what makes test – a test.

The approach was developed by Garfingkel based on artful analysis of traditional sociological theory (Durkheim, Weber), traditional sociological concern (Hobbes' problem of order. Ethno methodology has had a significant impact on Social Science : Here in ethno methodology has always focused on the ways in which words are dependent for the meaning on the context in which they are used. It also had an impact on linguistics and particularly pragmatics.

B. 3. Symbolic Interaction

Symbolic interaction is derived from American pragmatism from Herbert Mead who argued that people selves is a social product, but also purposive and creative. His student , Herbert Blummer, sharpened the symbolic interaction as he said that 'people act toward thing based on the meaning those thing have for them'. Human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation the meaning of one another's actions.

The three premises of Blummer are :

- a. Human beings act toward thing on the basis of the meaning that the thing have for them.
- b. The meaning of such thing is derived from the social interaction that one has with fellow.

- c. The meanings are handled and modified through interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the thing.

<http://www.answer.com/topic/symbolic-interactionism>

In addition, Ritzer (2003 : 347-363) states that the basic principles of symbolic interaction consist :

1. Capacity for thought, according to Ritzer each human being has his own capacity to think.
2. Thinking and interaction, the capacity to think is produced by a process of interaction.
3. Learning meanings and symbols, among his social interaction human being learn about the meanings and the symbols, and guiding to optimize the learning.
4. Action and Interaction, by learning the meaning and symbol human being does action and interaction
5. Making choice, human being is a creative therefore he/ she can change, modify and determine what are their choices.
6. The self and the work, human being can develop some self – feeling such as pride as a result of our imagination others judgment. And he/she is allowed to judge the advantage and disadvantage then decide it into the work.
7. Group and society, the action and interaction are interrelated one another which are happened in group and society.

By the definitions above, we can conclude that the symbolic interaction is a branch of sociological theory that try to understand social activity stressing on how and why the reality is constructed by the individual through the action interaction creatively.

B. 4. Hermeneutics

The etymology of hermeneutics is from Greek's God – Hermes whose his role as the interpreter of the messages of Gods.

The term of hermeneutics is commonly described as the study of theories of the interpretation and understanding of text. In contemporary usage, hermeneutics often refers to study of interpretation of biblical text. One of the important scholar is Hans George Gadamer that stated that hermeneutics is defined as a specific system or methods for interpretation of written document (text extended). Another hermeneutics theorist is Friedrich Meier, that is strongly influenced by philosophy view.

He argues that signs do not refer to a specific meaning but gain their meaning through their location within larger , linguistic matter. Thus, what determines the meaning of signs is its relation to another signs. In micro sociological theory, Hermeneutics means the interpretation and understanding of social events by analyzing their meaning to human and their culture. (<http://plato.standford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/>)

Meanwhile , according to Berger, hermeneutics is a part of phenomenology which the focus is on the aspect of cultural collectiveness and its attention toward the language. Text, or even language can be analyzed objectively; to find the communication structures (1987:71).

The important principle of hermeneutics is that it is possible to grasp, hold the meaning of an action or statement by relating it into the whole discourse or world view from which it originates. For instances, the woodblock pictured horn slash in my daughter's bag has really no more interpretation nevertheless it is really more and meaningful when it stands along the streets.

By the conversation below, it is expected to get more understanding about how the analysis of every micro sociological theories has a strategic role in our social life:

At a health and fitness center in New York City.

- Jorge : *Steve seems unusually quiet today. I guess he doesn't like losing at racquetball*
- Mac : *It's more than that. Steve has personal problems.*
- Jorge : *Well. They 're keeping him from concentrating on his game. Today he played worse than last week. This is a new sport for me, but I beat him three games out of five.*
- Mac : *You're right. He usually plays much better. I think he has problems at home ... you know with his wife. I've asked him about his marital difficulties., but he doesn't like to talk about it. I wish he knew that it was okay to talk about his problems.*
(Steve enters the room)
- Mac : *Hi Steve, good game.*
- Steve : *Thanks, Mac.*
- Jorge : *Actually, it wasn't so good. You missed a lot of shoots. What's worrying you , Steve?*
- Steve : *Did you guys see the baseball game on TV last night? What a game! You*

know , Jorge we'll get you hooked on the baseball in no time.

The participants of the dialog are Jorge, Mac, and Steve. They are friends. Mac knows Steve longer than Jorge. From the point of view of phenomenology, as the study of structures of experience or consciousness. it is very important to know that each has his own experience and consciousness. So when Steve does not answer his friends question it is such a sign that Jorge and Mac do are not allowed to enter to Steve's problem. While according to ethno methodology, Jorge, who is new comer and from different ethnic background has his own way to show his expression. He tends to straight to the point. Then it makes a problem whenever Steve regards it is his private business. Next from the interaction symbolic and hermeneutics point of views, each probably has his own interpretation and meaning about Steve marital problem. Nevertheless, it is unwise if every participant declare it openly. Their different background of life and culture, finally make Steve changes the topic of the conversation. What will be happened if every men tend to persists his own meaning and interpretation, it will be climax event and more serious. Mean while, Raymond Gozzi, JR in his book *New Words and A Changing American Culture*, gives the stressing about this condition namely : *'since relationships are becoming so tricky, we find attention directed toward trying to decode the little signs people give off in their body language or their use of eye contact, which might clue us in how they really feel'* (1990: 61).

In my opinion, there is quite permissive in eastern society to say *'what's the matter with you'* or *'can I help you?'* just to show our sympathy to friend's difficulties. Of course, we have to understand that the condition is conducive such as, our friendship is quite long lasting, he has a quite good mood at present and it is important to he himself firstly opens by saying the matter. Anyway, from the text we know that Steve does not answer the question even he changes the topic of the dialog.

C. The Art and The Aesthetics.

By opening this section, I will give an illustration that happened of me several weeks ago. One of my colleagues complained to me whenever my translation results did not give the same degree of aesthetics value. She , then, forced me to find another dictions in order to match the emotional sensibility. In short, I could not find what she really wanted, and finally I quitted from those jobs. Am I wrong ? So what is the

problem? . According to me the main problem is to match the emotional sensibility. And it is closely related with feeling or aesthetics or even art.

Talking about Art and Aesthetics , we really jump into 'ours own daily life'. Whenever, the art and the aesthetics become closer and closer into part of life, so we do not necessary to know, the definition and the performance of what are meant by art and aesthetics. Even everyone have his own taste. If the answer is probably yes, perhaps this paper will be halted and stuck right now. In fact, we can find many examples, that guide to open our mind, knowledge and feeling. There are Islamic aesthetics every time I am in mosque and eastern aesthetics when I become part of eastern community. And also, there are theory of art and the utility of art. Each may be my guide to 'overcome' that problems.

C. 1. Art

So what is art? Let us review many of its definitions. The term of art is most widely used to describe particular type of production generated by human beings. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art>) The art consists some degree of aesthetic value. The impetus or the power for art is called creativity.

Next, Art is the intention of stimulating the human senses as well as the human mind or spirit. So, something is not considered art whenever it stimulates only the senses, or only the mind or when it has a different primary purpose that doing so. Still from the internet, the most common usage of the word 'art' is understood to denote skill used to produced and aesthetic result. Britannica Online defines 'art' as the use of skill and imagination in the creation of object, environments, that can be shared with others.

The meaning of 'art' broads the one that is the Latin which roughly translates to skill and craft And in Indo European , it means 'arrangement' In this sense , art is a deliberate process of arrangement by an agents. A few examples where this meaning proves very broad : *artifact*, *artificial*, *artifice*, medical *art* and so on.

The more recent sense of the word 'art' is for **creative art**. Creative art or called fine art means that a skill is being used to express the artist's creativity or to engage the audience 's aesthetic sensibilities. Art can describe several things : a study of creative skill , a process of using the creative skill, a product of creative skill, or the audience experience with creative skill. The creative art (art as discipline) are collection of

disciplines that produce artwork (art as objects) that are done by personal act (art as activity). And reflect a message, mood, or symbolism for viewer to interpret (art as experience). Meanwhile, artworks can be defined by purposeful, creative interpretations of limitless concepts or ideas in order to communicate something to another person

C. 2. Theories of Art

Few people still questioned to the smile, beauty of the Mona Lisa. These include 'Who gets to say what art is?' and 'What is the artwork that it makes beautiful?'. We do know that while the artist is trying to relate directly to his audience, the process of defining and appreciating art is facilitated by the theoretician and critic. They give us insight into the work, its nature, and its place in this history of culture.

There are many related theories of art. Aesthetics is the philosophy of beauty and aesthetics discussion dispute the best way of defining art. Another states that theory of art is a cluster of related concepts rather than single concept. Another theory is to say that art is socially or culturally rooted, and that art is whatever artists, schools, and museums say it is. This definition of art was championed by George Dickie.

C. 3. The Aesthetics.

The term aesthetics (also pronounced as esthetics) comes from the Greek word 'aisthetike' that refers to the science of how things are known via the senses. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics>). This term was first used by German philosopher Baumgarten introduced its Latin form 'aesthetica', in the beginning of 19th century. Nowadays, the word aesthetics may refer to (1) the study of aesthetic – all phenomena, (2) The study of perception – off such phenomena, (3) the study of art – as a specific expression of what is perceived as aesthetics. Mean while, according to Dictionary of Art and Artist, Herbert Read states that aesthetics is the study of the concept of 'beauty' and 'art'. Aesthetics attempt to give an account of the human reaction to beauty and art, to define words, to explain how men feel the beautiful or the artistic to decide whether the concepts have any other than a subjective meaning and to explain what happens when a man stands before a beautiful sight or a work of art - what kind of experience he has and in what way he is able to experience anything.

In this study, we examine what makes something beautiful, sublime, disgusting, fun, cute, entertaining, harmonious, boring, humorous or even tragic. Kitten is considered cute. Mona Lisa is considered sublime. So that to judge of aesthetics value rely on our ability at a sensory level.

C. 4. Factors in Aesthetics Judgment

It is not easy to give the concrete consideration in 'judging something as aesthetics'. Because of many kinds of issues. Probably a set of factors below can make it into clearer one. According to Wolff, first, aesthetic judgment may be linked to emotion or like emotions, partially embodied in our physical reactions. For instance looking at a beautiful view of landscape of course give us a reaction of awe which might manifest physically as a widened eyes. This reaction may even be partly of what makes our judgment of aesthetics.

Furthermore, second, aesthetics judgments may be culturally conditioned to some extent. Looked at the Papua's sculpture, the present from my father in law, probably there is an opinion of very simple one, many the same thing in Triwindu antique market. But later, in fact the foreigners give high appreciation into the traditional aesthetics of this artwork.

Third, the consideration of the beauty (aesthetics) may be closely related with economic and moral value. As the majority of Indonesian's people is still under the economical difficulties, whenever Valentino Rossi won a newest BMW sport for his fastest time (February 2007). It is meaningless and no signifies to them. Even though less people might manifest as beautiful and of course aesthetics car and it is desirable as a economic status symbol. So that it is what a thing means or symbolizes for us that is often what we are judging.

D. Interrelationship among Sociology, and Aesthetics.

As I stated at the opening of this paper, if any ability of mine to make it interrelated one and another. It is not because impossible for me to do that. But in fact, I have to read more and more concentration with my feeling and my brain in the limitation of my experience of art and social sciences.

Starting the analysis of the aesthetics, sociology and art (here I combine into sociology of art) I will initiate from the Wolff's statements.

She presents the three approaches through the work of proponent (supporting) for the aesthetics theory (1996: 91-104). These are *the discourse theory*, *the philosophical anthropological of art*, and *psycho analytic theory of art*.

For the first approach, it is the discourse theory. What is meant by discourse theory is, according to Wolff, influenced by Foucault's views. The aesthetic discourse approach is to match the analysis of discourse with the issues in aesthetics theory and aesthetic practice. The discourse does not refer to the text narrowly defined, but the all phenomena through social production. This discourse is being co-extensive with the social. An illustration given by Wolff is ; 'in analyzing painting , one can try to reconstitute the discourse of the painter. One can try to recapture the intention which are not transcribed into words, but into lines, surfaces, and colors. One can also try to uncover the implicit philosophy that is supposed to form his view of the world. The painting must be an aesthetic and artwork and understood as a discourse practice. There fore, the discourse theory offers us a notion of the specificity of the aesthetics in terms of particular discursive practice which constitute it.

The second approach is called a philosophical anthropology of art. Here, there is an underlining on the belief that there are certain human universal which find expression or satisfaction in art. In addition Wolff states that to current proposal for an aesthetics based or a philosophical anthropology (or a theory of human universal) . We must resort to a meta physical or pre sociological belief in some fundamental features of human nature.

An illustration to make it clear is the expression of this human universal in literature and poetry. Here these can despite historical variation refer to the same underlying aspects of the human condition.

The third approach is called a psychoanalytical theory of art. Here, she introduces that psychoanalysis into aesthetic in order to identify the specificity of art. The explanation of this approach is merely as an indication of some development s in aesthetic which have some claims to specify the aesthetics and the judgment of their strength and weakness.

Wolff's opinion is particularly influenced by psychologist Klein. The brief discussion of Klein Ian theory emphasizes on particular the importance of the early months of life, the children relationship with their mother realized on phantasm. The appeal of history has always the

same. Thus, we can say that an effective work of art is expressive of human experience which remain relatively constant. The relatively constant features of human experiences are recast in the term of psychological process founded in biological needs and instincts. .

E. Closing

The micro sociology and its function of the aesthetics basically are part of our daily life. They have a very closet meaning to guide, choose and determine in our behavior and attitude. In sociology, there are also parallel and strong opinion about those, here we know as the phenomenology, ethno methodology , symbolic interaction and hermeneutics. The interrelationship among them can be seen clearly in the Wolff's work about discourse, philosophical anthropological, and psycho analytic theory of Arts.

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