

UNDERSTANDING BOURDIEU'S DISTINCTION SOCIAL AND LITERARY CONTESTATION TO GAIN LEGITIMATE POSITION

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UNDERSTANDING BOURDIEU'S DISTINCTION: SOCIAL AND LITERARY CONTESTATION TO GAIN LEGITIMATE POSITION

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Abstract. This writing reveals the subtle domination in the area of literature and social practice which is illustrated through the practice of coffee consumption and also the claims of legitimate authors. Bourdieu examines this sociological space as a field of contestation, so he constructs his sociological project by mapping the type of social power in the arena in which every subject wagers his capital to achieve a legitimate position. In the arena, each subject desires to get power either by way of embracing the rule that applies, doxa, or to fight with the practice of the new, heterodox. Following the existing rules are not able to change anything because it dictates the subject to be a disciplined subject. Bourdieu proposes the emerging heterodox because doing resistance to all forms of domination can give birth to the new alternative social structure and preventing the old one to remain in power. Social change is expected because Bourdieu's symbolic power as in symbolic capital tends to provoke symbolic violence. Having symbolic capital enchanting for its power to subtly dominate people with less capital. Oppression becomes natural due to everyday practice normalizing the oppression. shapes the taste of a certain class as class distinction. Bourdieu's concept of distinction investigates a more sophisticated strategy in the social arena where every agent plays subtle intimidation and indeed domination.

Keywords: *contestation, social arena, taste, distinction, domination*

INTRODUCTION

"The coincidence of the objective structures and the internalized structures which provides the illusion of immediate understanding, characteristic of practical experience of the familiar universe, and which at the same time excludes from that experience any inquiry as to its conditions of possibility."
(Pierre Bourdieu, 1992b)

The quotation above explains the concept of doxa, or doxic experience, which is imagined as an objective structure to be

considered as "normal" which implies such actions to be acceptable or unreasonable. Thus, the objective of this writing is to give a comprehensive understanding on how doxic experiences could play not only in social structure but also reflected in literature arena, news as in discursive practices, and social preferences as in the logic of the taste. The doxic experience is significance to be examined since it is the very locus of domination for every agent to come up with social resistance by accumulating their own particular capitals in relation to the more just society.

Bourdieu even simplifies the doxic experience as an event taken for granted (Pierre Bourdieu, 1992b). This means that someone will not ask why such action is permissible but rather accept it without question, just like why a woman can wear a skirt and cook in the kitchen while a man cannot. This rule has become a popular opinion and it cannot be denied because it becomes a "knowledge system". In Bourdieu's thought, Doxa settles in a field or arena full of dominance where each individual, agent, competes to climb the social hierarchy as a winner, champ, and gain legitimacy based on the logic of the arena as it says "the more it completely fulfills its logic of a field, the more it tends to suspend or reverse the practice of the principle of hierarchization but also whatever degree of independence, it continues to be affected by the laws of the field" (Pierre Bourdieu, 1997) where he often investigates in the practice of literary arena.

Another important concept in the arena is that when the agent successfully adapts to his environment, he will get capital. Bourdieu's term of capital is not always associated with money even though money is the playful capital to be converted in accumulating other capital such as social and cultural capital. The social capital can be in the form of diverse relationships, cultural capital is intellectual legitimacy or other things that are obtained culturally, economic capital is the power of money, and the most prestigious one is symbolic capital because the agent possesses accumulated position to gain honor in the relationship or social arena

(Jenkins, 2015). As an illustration, given on campus, those who have a legitimate position are intellectuals, lecturers, for example, because they have cultural capital, social because they are often connected with other intellectual communities, and institutions arena also support them. Economic capital is not too much of a consideration because the campus is a place to maximize thoughts not to hoard wealth, so what is sought is specific academic legitimacy, but not infrequently economic capital becomes important because it is difficult for intellectuals to do research and write if there are not enough funds so it is not uncommon for someone with stronger economic capital can convert their money to cooperate with other stronger intellectual colleagues to subdue their cultural and social capital. Campus intellectuals will eventually adapt to these conditions to create particular habitus as Bourdieu coined "habitus, as an acquired system of generative schemes is objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted, the habitus engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions, and no others" (Pierre Bourdieu, 2013) Habitus is not a habit but an objective scheme which forms awareness and action in which the agent then acquires certain capital to grapple with the social in the arena.

The whole struggle is indeed for the sake of achieving symbolic capital, which is the most valuable position where a person gets recognition or legitimacy which Bourdieu divides into three, namely

specific, popular and bourgeois (Bourdieu, 1993:51). Legitimacy is important because it determines the extent to which recognition, social honor, can be attached to intellectuals or agents. After all, they are granting legitimacy through degrees, publications and awards though they can only be rewarded with bourgeois legitimacy since it is given by an institution, such as honoris causa. popular legitimacy is where someone in the campus arena has a strong network, from students and the wider community. Specific legitimacy is the most prestigious legitimacy because it is recognized not only by institutions, colleagues, students but also by the wider intellectual community for the contribution to global knowledge. An example is some canon thinkers, namely Ferdinand de Saussure in linguistics, Ranciere in political science, or Gilles Deleuze in revolutionizing the psychology of desire. Furthermore, symbolic capital as the consequences of specific legitimacy is enchanting because it draws subtle domination. However, Bourdieu reminded that symbolic figures can produce violence in the social dimension, and unfortunately, the victim agrees with the action because Doxa dictates to do so. Therefore, this article attempts to reveal the subtle domination practices found in the practice of coffee consumption and the claims of legitimate authors.

Domination, where the victim agrees, is due to the presence of misrecognition, or 'meconnaissance' in French which according to Bourdieu is a process in which power relations are not seen as an objective structure "the process

whereby power relations are perceived not for what they objectively are but in a form which renders them legitimate in the eyes of the beholder" (P Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Bourdieu distinguishes between 'meconnaissance' with misunderstanding because misunderstanding is a language problem while what Bourdieu means is a power related problem. The illustration could be given when a landlady rebuking her boarding girl who comes home late at night, and she fears that something will happen to the girl such as gossip about her boss who has bad intentions and ask the girl to get another job for paying her college fees. Going home at night is not good for women, because it is attached to a negative image, finally, the woman stops working and tells her boss that she wants to find another job even though the salary is not as good as in the shop. There is no problem of misunderstanding here because the message is conveyed, but the problem happens in power relations. The girl accepts her social arena with the consequences of not getting money to support her life though she has the right to oppose the landlady's opinion by arguing that she cannot work during the day because she goes to the campus. The opposing view is needed to perform resistance or often called heterodox, "imposed authoritative view" (Pierre Bourdieu & Coleman, 1991) because this is the only way to restructure the social arena for the woman to gain equality and rights. In contrast, the landlady has a surplus of economic capital, while the woman has no economic capital, the boarding mother has cultural capital because she can adapt to

the right cultural discourse, the woman has a weak cultural capital because she cannot obey and adapt to the cultural discourse.

The concept of heterodox is important because it wants to fight the dominant discourse "heterodox belief implying awareness and recognition of the possibility of different or antagonistic beliefs" (P Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) for the sake of a more just society structure. Heterodox also helps to produce a new social structure because it does not want certain classes to remain in absolute power. In this case, it encourages to fight back, the woman can move to another boarding house for employees, so she can study while working. By delivering contesting discourse, she can keep working because she needs the money to pay for her study. If power relations can be altered, eventually a new regulation will appear in the boarding house that those who work are allowed to come home late. This means that the social structure is emerging, and it is very likely to permeate to the other less just boarding houses. Hence, the social objective structure changes. In the end, agents may both have the same economic capital, but they also have to calculate the extent of their economic capital if they have to deal with other economically powerful agents, how strong is their network or social capital with other agents. The calculation helps to understand the agent's position or Bourdieu posits as the space of social positions where the hierarchy becomes more complex along with the stratification (Jenkins, 2015). The position ultimately affects the calculation of the agents to triumph in the social arena.

METHOD

Bourdieu's method in analyzing social structure employs various forms and struggles against inequality, which can reinforce and challenge each other (Saukko, 2003). Applying this framework to the analysis of social and literary context, one can note that it involves some fields. First, one could argue that there is the field of canon writing or works, where the author is closer to the ideal concept of legitimized one, the higher one's status in that field. However, there is a second field structured around non legitimized yet popular, which may be in an antagonistic relationship with the field. The step of analysis should go along with Bourdieu's investigation of structure and struggle in the various arena, or 'fields', both different and similar (P Bourdieu, 1985).

The first step is to analyze the field and identify the popular opinion or Doxa as the living norm in the arena. Second, the calculation of capital the agent has through habitus. Third, the analysis should focus on the potential of symbolic violence to draw upon the exercised capital which is mostly addressed as domination. The last concept is heterodox. This concept helps a researcher to give alternative and more dynamic discourses in the field in the hope of a more just and equal society.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Taste as Distinction: Innocent or Competent?

Taste in a certain sense is always imagined as something very subjective or even one can very boldly express to be authentic. Like when someone chooses a

cigarette for some reason, he dares to say innocently he chooses what suits them the best freely. In contrast to this general view, for Bourdieu, the taste is not a natural matter, but culturally constructed where it is an attempt to affirm a person's social position in a certain arena to distinguish himself from other classes. "Tastes (i.e., manifested preferences) are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference. It is no accident that, when they have to be justified, they are asserted purely negative, by the refusal of other tastes" (P Bourdieu, 1985). Instead of wanting to show authentic or innocent nature, taste is an effort to distinguish class, he calls as distinction, which can sometimes look very tacky, even vulgar for the 'petite bourgeoisie / upper-middle class to show its position "the entry of the petite bourgeoisie into the game of distinction is marked, inter alia, by the anxiety exposing oneself to classification by offering to the taste of others such infallible indices of personal taste as clothes or furniture, even a simple pair of armchairs" (P Bourdieu, 1985). Distinction states an agent's particular competence to judge and value his taste over another class. This happens in pop culture when two shoes' owners of well-known brands to deem lower another wearer when he finds the shoes are fake. This even makes it funny that someone wants to be considered a different class from other fake shoe wearers even though he also wears fake shoes of better quality. Thus, he acknowledges himself as the upper class.

The practice of differentiation should be noted as a distinction because it

does not only operate on the purchased goods but whatever is attached to the agent as a self-preference for the sake of getting a better position in a certain social arena.

The distinction could go on the choice of language, words, artistic practice, even particular university traditions. Bourdieu shows that in campus intellectuals, as a homo academicus, he can launch cultural distinctions, to produce certain criteria for gaining legitimacy. He says "in proffering these criteria, in trying to have them acknowledged, in staking their claim to constitute them as legitimate properties, as specific capital, they are working to modify the laws of formation of the prices characteristic of the university market, and thereby to increase their potential for profit (Pierre Bourdieu, 1990). In a certain sense, a distinction can modify more rewarding legitimacy in the campus for better or worse. Today's campus seeks for more structural power inside institutions as bourgeois rather than pushing themselves to be more intellectually renowned in terms of more specific legitimacy.

B. Consuming Coffee Versus Religious Authority: Field as Social Contestation

In terms of socio-cultural practices, the arena of social contestation is best displayed on religious communities, when their religious leaders forbid consuming Starbucks because the company supports issues of gender and sexuality, as quoted by BBC Indonesia, "*Macam tak ada kopi yang lain. Kopi Sidikalang berserak-serak, kenapa mesti kopi Starbucks diminum*"

(Ketika "ngopi" Di Starbucks Diancam "Masuk Neraka" Oleh Ustad Somad - BBC News Indonesia, n.d.) translated as "There is no other kind of coffee. Sidikalang coffee is scattered all over the world. hoarse, why should Starbucks coffee be drunk?" which of course this is said in addition to the religious context but also strengthens the social and cultural capital of a cleric to be more legitimate. In other words, the sequence of concepts used in Doha is to impose his extent of power and recontextualizing the discourse being practised in the field.

The field referred to in previous the statement is not aiming at an economic gain, or short-term material benefits, but rather accumulating social and cultural capital, the legitimate status and theological level of the religious leaders are narrowing the only discourse that could be played in the field or as Bourdieu's concept "field of restricted production, in this subfield the stakes of competition between agents are largely symbolic, involving prestige, consecration and artistic celebrity" (Pierre Bourdieu, 1997). In contrast to the large production which is often seen as a mass culture that wants large and abundant direct economic benefits, this sentence is seen as an effort to canonize religion, by hoarding cultural and symbolic capital which could be possibly converted into economic capital in the future. The theological position is very visible because there is a word taken from a private religious dictionary cited as "Karena ada sumbangan". 'Siapa yang menyumbang?'. 'Itu yang di surga' Eh tarik balik. Diobok-obok masuk neraka, gara-

gara menyumbang ke Starbucks" and the translation "Because there is a donation'. 'Who donated?'. 'you in heaven' Uh pull back. You will crush in hell because donating to Starbucks". Thus, the words heaven and hell being remarked are discourses to show a distinction in language to sustain the dominating position.

The distinction is the third concept that can be used as a concept to analyse the preferred position of the contesting agent. Bourdieu sees that class distinctions are also evident from the type of language spoken. When repeated "these conditions, perpetuated in the mode of utilization-ie, in a given relationship to culture or language-function like a sort of 'trademark, and, by linking that competence to a particular market, help to define the value of its products in the various markets" (P Bourdieu, 1985) so that the sentence becomes a differentiating 'trade-mark where in the end the existence of power and the accumulation of capital are getting social acceptance. In other words, this third concept also requires accumulated capital when being practised.

The fourth concept is cultural and social capital accumulation based on the strong religious massive network of followers for a religious leader to fight a large corporation like Starbucks. Thus, it can be seen that the stronger the two capitals, the stronger the possibility that these two capitals can be converted into other capital, namely economic capital, as evidenced by the increasing number of invitations to give overseas sermon such as

Melbourne, Australia which is also mentioned in the news.

The last concept is symbolic violence which is very likely to occur when the agent has gained complete capital. An agent can absent or marginalize others in the majority scheme by prevailing doxa. Symbolic violence works efficiently because it is being veiled through charming relationships, and it also works based on the principle that there is pride that can be inflated. Bourdieu explains it is 'gentle, invisible violence, unrecognized as such, chosen as much as experienced, that of trust, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, debts, fiery, in a word, of all the virtues honoured by the ethic of honour' (Pierre Bourdieu, 1992a) In a certain sense, the sentence is very likely to become symbolic violence because it seeks to legitimize the action that majoritarian moral ethics occupy the field, or in a certain sense, amplify private interests so that they are legally recognized in public practice. Victims somehow agree because it is an honour to be able to carry out these moral practices and in return, they get a sense of pride and verification within social groups. Hence, behind the symbolic violence perpetrated by their superiors, followers also feel elevated, and their obedience is recognized since they are accepted in the community. Even though in the end the majoritarian interest is potentially open for conflict since it blocks the minority position.

C. Authors and Literature: Legitimacy is Never Arbitrary

The literary or artistic field is at all times the site of a struggle between the two principles of hierarchization: the heteronomous principle, favourable to those who dominate the field economically and politically (e.g. 'bourgeois art'), and the autonomous principle (e.g. 'art for art's sake), which those of its advocates who are least endowed with specific capital tend to identify with a degree of independence from the economy, (Pierre Bourdieu, 1997)

Literary works deserve to be studied, but for Bourdieu, literature matters because it involves the author's position in literary struggles, at least for Bourdieu the contestation is divided into two, namely for the sake of economic and political motives which he calls bourgeois art or on artistic motives for more autonomous art which is explained in the quote above. The literary struggle is best displayed in the case of Saut Situmorang who had a dispute with Deny J. A when he launched the book of 33 influential writers to claim the legitimate position of certain authors. This book excludes Saut in the literary arena. Saut's comment "bangsat" or "bastard" in Iwan Soekri's writing on the Facebook group "Anti-Coping Books 33 Most Influential Indonesian Literary Figures", (Cibir Denny JA Masuk 33 Tokoh Sastra Berpengaruh, Saut Dijemput Polisi, n.d.) led to Fatin Hamama reporting on social media accusations. This incident is certainly a bad precedent for certain literary agents, thus providing a strong demarcation that there will be a process of granting legitimacy to exclude "lesser"

literary agents. Someone who is legitimized in the national literary public; novelists who write and publish novels do not automatically become writers, because the status of 'writers' is given by certain parties in the literary arena (Karnanta, 2013)

Bourdieu's concepts to scrutinize this phenomenon can be initiated with doxa of the arena or field, by mapping the literary arena which is often considered as "The constraints inherent in belonging to the field of power also apply to the literary field owed to exchanges that are established between the powerful - for the most part upstarts in search of legitimacy - and the most conformist of the most consecrated of writers, notably through the subtly hierarchized universe of the salons." (Pierre Bourdieu, 1996). From the quote, the important words are consecration, consecrated, and the subtly hierarchized universe of the salons. Consecration demands the extent to which legitimacy can be given to Deny J. A and 33 writers who are also contested by Sastrawan Saut Sitimorang. In addition, it also involves the question of how, where, and by whom the work was acknowledged.

The next concept is capital because this concept can track the capital owned by various agents to calculate the extent to which legitimacy can be given, whether it can be specifically rewarded (accepted by the legitimate literary community) such as Utan Kayu (Salihara and other Jakarta-centered communities), or popular readers (accepted by the legitimate literary community) with a lot of profit. After all, it is widely read by the wider community and to the bourgeoisie (accepted by the

national elite like government or institution). Hence, to measure the position of the author in the arena, the literary work as a product must also be tested to reveal the notion of the social struggles raised by the work implied by the author. The types of conflict abstraction such as actor versus social structures, and also the type of truth that is offered, especially in terms of genetic structuralism (Haryatmoko, 2016). As the result, the author can be proven that his work was born in response to certain sociological conditions.

CONCLUSION

Bourdieu's theoretical power on abstraction needs to be reformulated for his opportunistic scheme when calculating the accepted capital in the social field. This means that Doxa is proposed as a prerequisite factor for victory. The calculation has an epistemic problem because it includes old rules, capital, the legitimacy of actors, and all social structures recorded through habitus. The ethical point of view should appreciate heterodox more because it can challenge dominant social structure through alternative opinions or truth apart from idealized capital. Bordieu's breakthrough was relatively reformative rather than revolutionary in certain frugal terms. Meanwhile, he also warns the dangers of symbolic violence as a leading step to physical violence, and this can be best illustrated on the social conflict that happened at Starbucks mentioned in the discussion. The power of religious leaders is contested by heterodox to offer more

plural space and preventing symbolic violence.

Meanwhile, the problem of literature for Bourdieu taunts the intrinsic and extrinsic dichotomy of literature, because the genesis of the creation of the work needs to be taken into account in addition to the content of the work itself. Therefore, the work must be re-examined, in a homologous way, both in terms of the author's works and his social struggles. In line with the positivistic and determinist nuances in Bourdieu's theoretical framework for social and literary criticism, equality is the locus for a more just society. Hence, by ending the domination of agents with better capital, the future of socio-cultural practices could not only be more non-hierarchical but also ethical.

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