

# CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING COMMUNICATION GRAFFITI ART FOR THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS *ME&ART* IN MEDAN

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## Abstract

Community Graffiti ME &ART is a form of subcultural young people in society city of Medan. Their lifestyle in communicating the existence of himself through the art of graffiti become a phenomenon that is unique and distinctive. This research aims to know the variety of motives, the meaning and experience communication of community members ME&ART in expressing the art of graffiti in Medan. This research used qualitative methode by phenomenology approach and the informant is community members ME&ART who active to expressing graffiti art in Medan. Data collection techniques such as observation, in-depth interview and documentation. The result of research showed that two cetegories motives of the community members ME&ART, past-oriented motives (because motive) such of an existing drawing hobby since childhood and invitation a friend to make graffiti, and oriented to the future (in-order-to-motive) such media to convey the message or social criticism, to earn money and to change negative thinking of society about graffiti. Graffiti art for community members ME&ART interpreted as media of self-expression, as a medium of communication and as an encouragement. The communication experience of community members ME&ART to express graffiti art consists of pleasant experience (positive) and unpleasant experience unpleasant (negative).

**Keywords:** Construction of Meaning, Communication Graffiti Art, Phenomenology

## Introduction

In the era of globalization as it is now this has brought new cultures which flourished in major cities as an expression of young people towards the surrounding environment, and one of them is a Street Art (street art). Street art refers to art created on the public space in the streets. Street art is growing among young people that the Graffiti. Graffiti is one of street art that were made in the walls of the streets the more crowded the urban space. Graffiti is used to establish a communication with the community. Graffiti is a unique phenomenon that his presence

could not be released from the role of the young boy who took it developed in the community up to now. Colorful pylox and paint a shed Wall Street became the medium in the attraction.

Graffiti in Indonesia at the beginning of his appearance as a aims the creativity of young people who have a hobby of drawing, but become different things because the images created on a wall or a wall that result can be enjoyed visually. Graffiti is now growing and favored by young people. The current phenomenon of graffiti become a trend that has continued to evolve and move is marked with the emergence of new artists which of course brought a positive impact for young people. Positive impact, through graffiti can hone the creativity of young children by producing works of graffiti art that is worth.

Medan city as a thriving city, did not escape the touch of graffiti art. Currently, graffiti growing in the city of Medan. Graffiti meets and filling urban spaces with various forms of good writing and images

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that contain a specific message to delivered by the makers of graffiti (*Bomber*) to the public. Bomber is a term in the field of graffiti which was the designation for the perpetrators or the makers of graffiti.

Along with the development of the art of graffiti in the city of Medan, many community groups have sprung up or graffiti. Community graffiti is one of a growing community and become part of the society. The emergence of real graffiti community is one form of subkultural young people in society. Some of the ways that young children do to communicate the existence of himself appears one of them through the art of graffiti. The existence of common interests and hobbies in the art of graffiti makes them interact with one another to form a community.

The purpose of the community of graffiti at a glance with another community that had gathered on the basis of common interests and hobbies. But because of their unusual activities, namely to draw or create a draft using a wall as the media in public spaces. The presence of graffiti community into a unique phenomena in the society. The presence of graffiti community gives its own colour to the city of Medan. Graffiti that made the community revive Wall Street slums and urban spaces with colorful graffiti.

Community ME & ART is one of the graffiti community is still active and exist in a variety of arts activities of graffiti in the city of Medan. The existence of community ME&ART is also quite track on a nationally, this community never took part in the event or activity of graffiti in various cities in Indonesia such as Padang, Bali and Bandung. This community was formed since 6 October 2010 with consists of five members, namely Ilham Wicaksana aka *Lambok*, Muisan Husein aka *Kombet*, Fredy Siswanto aka *Ebe*, Delfi Yonail Fadhsa aka *Padhsa* and Sultan Michael aka *Sultan*.

Members of this community have a unique lifestyle that differentiate it from other people, the members of this community have a unique fashion style. They often wear clothes in which clothes are the image of the writing of graffiti they create and design their own. Their lifestyle in the use of media technology seen in the technology of communication (mobile) they use, the members of this Community average using mobile android inside are some of the widely used social media young people at this moment to communicate like social media BBM

(blackberry messenger), Path, Instagram and so on. Social media are used to inform all community activity ME & ART. Other lifestyle that makes this different is the use of a community name typical calls among members of the community of ME & ART, each Member has a special nickname that they create and invent it yourself.

Community ME&ART in Medan city became a phenomenon unique unto itself, because of the specificity and uniqueness of the activities as well as the lifestyle of this community have made this community exists and is known in the city of Medan. The existence of community ME & ART get different assessment from the community. For some communities, community activity ME & ART is considered only as a sheer wall of write off activities that have no meaning and are just littering as well as make dirty spaces of the city. But for most others, the activities of the community are considered activities that produce works of art that unites elements of line, shape, and color in the medium of Wall Street. In addition, graffiti made by ME Community ART is also considered & can convey a particular message to the community.

Community graffiti ME&ART can be researched as an study of Phenomenology, because this community is part of a phenomenon or, show its existence as a community that is growing among the public and the city of Medan. The direct experience of the researcher with this community is at the core of activities in the field. This community has its own interaction which does not belong to other communities. Members of this community to interact with fellow members or with others outside the community not only through verbal language spoken verbally, but also by the symbols or emblems are made through graffiti to convey a particular message.

Symbols of communication that occurs is very interesting for the researched. It could be said there are interactions that were given the meaning or symbol occurs on this community of graffiti ME&ART. Interactions that occur will certainly make the researcher community members about yourself knowing ME ART that includes & motif, the definition of graffiti and experience of community members ME & ART.

## Literature Review

### The Theory of Phenomenology of Alfred Schutz

Phenomenology comes from the language of



Greece with the origin of the word *phainomenon* meaning "the descry". The term refers to an occurrence of the phainomenon of objects, events, or conditions seen. Phenomenology is the way that humans use to understand the world through direct experience. Phenomenology of making real experience as a principal data a reality, means letting everything become clear as is (Littlejohn, 2011: 57).

The main aim of phenomenology is the study of how the phenomenon is experienced within consciousness, thought and in action, such as how the phenomenon is worth and accepted aesthetic. Phenomenology of trying to find understanding how humans construct meaning and the concepts it is important within the framework of intersubjektivitas. Intersubjektif because our understanding of the world is shaped by our relationships with others. Although the meaning we create can be traced in the actions, works, and the activities we do, there are still other people's role in it (Kuswarno, 2009:2).

The core thought Schutz is how to understand social action through interpretation. Whereas, social action is action oriented behaviors of the person or objects in the past, present and future. The process of interpretation can be used to clarify or check the true meaning, so as to provide the concept of implicit social action. In other words, basing on the experiences of social action, meaning and kesedaran. A human construct of meaning outside the mainstream experience through the process of "tipikasi". The relationship between the meanings of any organized social process, or commonly referred to *stock of knowledge* (Kuswarno, 2009:18).

describe the entirety of one's actions, Schutz breaks it down in two phases that is (Kuswarno, 2009:18).

*In-order-to motive*, the motif refers to actions in the future. Where, the act committed by someone has a predetermined destination.

*Because motive*, the act which refers to the past. Where, the act committed by a person must have had a reason from the past when he did it.

In the context of phenomenological, Community ME & ART is actors who do social action (graffiti) alone or together with other actors so as to have the same meaning in the bonds of community and intersubjektif. The actors also have a historicity and can be seen in a natural form. Follow Schutz thinking, community members ME & ART as

an actor may have one of two motives, namely in-order-to motive, a motive that refer to the future and because-motive, a motive that refer to the past. Of course the motive will determine the assessment of himself in his status as a community member ME & ART.

### Nonverbal Communication

Human in her life is inseparable from communication as a form of interaction with others as well as himself. Communicate can serve as a form of existence of the person. According to Raymond s. Ross, communication is a process of sorting, selecting, and transmit the symbols such that help listeners evokes the meaning or a response from his mind the similar intended communicators (Mulyana, 2005: 69). These symbols can be either image. An image is usually created to deliver a message to those who see it. In this study, the researchers tried to reveal the meaning conveyed by the makers want to graffiti (*Bomber*) from the community of ME & ART. This Graffiti works can be said to be the medium of communication. *Nonverbal communication is all aspects of communication other then words themselves. Nonverbal communication includes how we utter words (inflection, volume), features of environments that affect meaning (temperature, lighting), and objects that affect personal images and interactions patterns (dress, jewelery, furniture)* (Wood, 2004: 159).

### Motive

Motives pointed the systematic relationship between response or a set of specific impulse response with the State (Ahmadi, 2009: 191). Human motives can be worked consciously dann also was not aware of the human self. To be able to understand and comprehend and understand in advance what and how motives contrary to behavior that looks (Ahmadi, 2009: 196-197).

Human motives are impulse, desire, hasra and other propulsion comes from within himself, to do something. All human behaviour in fact have a motive. Motive arises because of the need for or need. Needs can be viewed as lack of something, and this makes it immediately pemenuhannyaagar segera get balance. This shortage situation serves as a force of aau urge reason, which causes a person to act to meet the needs (Ahmadi, 2009: 196). In summary, the motive is something thrust on the individual that moves or raised so that the individual did something (2009,





Ahmad: 197).

## Meaning

Meaning as the concept of communications includes more than just the interpretation or understanding of an individual alone. Meaning always includes a lot of understanding, the understanding of the aspects jointly owned the communicators. Meaning is an attribute that is not only of language but also of the whole system of signs and symbols (Sobir, 2006: 150).

Indeed, the meaning is there because someone gave it to Word. Not the word itself that get them. The meaning given by each person can vary, depending on the context of space and time. R. Brown, defines the meaning as a trend (disposition) total for use or react to a form of language. Meaning itself does exist between humans and the word that is present around him. But the meaning attached to the words, but the words were ones that evoke the meaning in the human mind (Mulyana, 2007: 281). Wendell Johnson describes another view of the concept of meaning in meaning with the process models offer a number of implications for communication between humans (Mulyana, 2007: 282), among other things:

- Meaning there is in man, Everything that is in man is a meaning.
- The meaning has changed, the meaning of words change in accordance with the emotional condition.
- Meaning requires a reference, everything that has meaning certainly has reference why those things have meaning.
- Excessive shortening will uncover meaning.
- Meaning is not limited in number.
- Meaning only communicated partial.

## Communications

Experience is something that is experienced. Through experience, individuals have the knowledge. In accordance with the statement that All knowledge must conform to experience (Joni in Wirman, 2002: 52). Knowledge base the foundation of the membenuk consciousness. This is the foundation of awareness and encourage individuals to take action or a particular behaviours, by referring to the behavior is an experience of consciousness that bestows meaning through spontaneous activity (Schutz in Wirman, 2012: 52). Any event that is going to be an experience for the individual. The experience gained to contain an information or a specific message. This

information will be processed into knowledge. Thus the various events that can add to the knowledge of the individual.

An event which contain elements of communication will become its own communication experience for the individual, and the experience of the communications considered important will be the most memorable experience and have special impact for the individuals (Hafiar in Wirman, 2012: 53). The experience was the Foundation for individuals to take action, is an experience that is inherent in the phenomenon. This is confirmed by the statement mentions, that people is retrieving a memory of a prior experience of phenomena (Radford in Wirman, 2012: 53).

Next experience will be kategory by the individual through the experience based on the definition of the characteristics acquired, this refers to every reference of experiencing has its direction toward what is experienced, every experienced phenomenon refers to or reflects a mode of experiencing the to which it is present (Moustakas in Wirman, 2012: 54). That means experience refers to something that is experienced and the phenomenon being experienced will be classified into a particular experience. The statement gives an overview that each experience has different characteristics, including textures and structures that exist in every experience. The experience of communication community members ME&ART will be kategory certain types of experiences which include communications experience pleasant and unpleasant communication experience.

A description of communication experience pleasant and unpleasant can be preceded by a statement, communication contents and has the dimensions dimension relationships (Mulyana, 2007: 55). This means a pleasant communication experience (positive) can be reviewed, inter alia through a relationship that indicates the presence of warmth, acceptance and caring attitude to each other. Whereas the communication experience unpleasant (negative) means the opposite.

## Community

A community is a group of people get together or live together to achieve a particular goal, and they share the meaning and attitude. Without communication there can be no community. The community relies on the experience and shared



emotions, and communication and explains the role of togetherness it (Mulyana, 2007: 46).

A community is a group that consists of people who have the same characteristics and inhabit a specific location and is usually associated with the same interests. The community usually places emphasis on equality and togetherness. The similarity of vision and mission that is owned by a community fosters a sense of community among the members of the community (Iriantara, 2007: 21).

Usually these groups of people have goals and organizations (not necessarily formal) and involves the interaction between its members. When associated with psychological, then the Group has two marks. First, members of the Group felt bound by the group. They feel there is a sense of belonging among them, certainly not owned by people outside their group. Second, the fate of the members of the group are interdependent so everyone's results are related in a certain way with other results (Rakhmat, 2005: 142)

### Graffiti

Graffiti is one of the posts or markers that are deliberately created by humans on a surface of objects, be it public or private property. A graffiti can be a work of art, pictures or words. When a graffiti is done without the knowledge of the owner of the property, then the graffiti can be categorized as a vandalism. Graffiti has existed at least since ancient civilizations such as the Classical Greece and Imperial Rome (<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graffiti>).

The word "Graffiti" is the plural of "graffito". Sometimes they tend to obscure meaning and on the use of the word art history refers to the creation of works of art produced with put/outlining the design on a surface. Other terms associated with the graffiti is a how to create designs with scratched the surface of one layer of a color/pigment to reveal a layer that is below. All these words originated from Italian, that is the past tense of graffiato graffiare (to scratch or scrape), the makers of graffiti in ancient times worked on the walls before the paint spray, as seen at the murals or frescoes (<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graffiti>).

Graffiti itself refers to the form tag (text) that through the visual aesthetic language. In shape, the graffiti was written with the utilization of logotype or calligraphy is also commonly referred to amongst the street artist as street logos. The use of tags in a photographic symbol often used to denote visually

communicate with the audience. So it will be easily found graffiti that seems meaningless, but when read carefully through the process of reading the graffiti are complicated, then the store a lot of graffiti laden meaning social messages. Of the other forms, graffiti will be found through the use of colors maximum. This use of color support on election forms of graffiti that is created. The colors usually correspond with the existing space, although most color used is the color bright colors (Manco, 2004: 10).

### History Of Graffiti

Custom paint on the wall starting from the primitive humans as a way of communicating the hunt. During this time, graffiti was used as a means of mysticism and spiritual uplifting to hunting. The development of the arts in the age of ancient Egypt also shows the activity of painting on the walls of the pyramid. The painting communicates to other nature found a pharaoh (Pharaoh) after mummified (Bambataa, 2005: 85).

The activities of graffiti as a means of demonstrating the new passion started in Roman times with evidence of innuendo against the Government of painting on the walls of the building. The painting was found in the ruins of Pompeii. While in Rome itself was used as a propaganda tool to discredit Christians who at the time were forbidden to the Emperor (Bambataa, 2005: 85).

### Types Of Graffiti

In its development, graffiti around the 70s in the United and Europe finally venturing into urban areas as identity groups that mushroomed in urban areas. A less flattering image, many graffiti becomes a threat to the security of the city. The reason is because it is considered provoking a war between groups or gangs. In addition to do in empty space, graffiti was often made in the wall of the underground railway. In the United States alone, every State already has laws on its own to curb graffiti. San Diego, California, New York has had a law that stipulates that the graffiti is illegal activity (Manco, 2004: 10). As for the type of graffiti include (Manco, 2004: 12):

- Graffiti Gang
- Graffiti Tagging
- Graffiti Conventional
- Graffiti Expressive
- Graffiti Politics
- Graffiti Piecing/Bombing
- Graffiti Lazer



## Methodology

This research used qualitative method by phenomenology approach and the informant is community members ME&ART who active to expressing graffiti art in Medan. Data collection techniques such as observation, in-depth interview and documentation.

## Research Results

### 1. Motives Members of community ME&ART Expressing Art of Graffiti

In this research about Construction of meaning Communication Art Graffiti community members ME&ART, the members are the actors who perform the art of graffiti that they have in common and togetherness with one another. They have their respective reasons for expressing the art of graffiti.

#### a) Because Motive

The motif of the past refers to what has happened in the past that relate to what a person is doing as his activity in the present. For example, habits or hobbies that are often done before, which brought him to one of his now, that makes the art of Graffiti. Results of informants who had been researchers interviewed in depth, they all have the motif of the past relating to their hobby.

After comparing each other, eventually can be deduced about motives of the past of the informant, the informant felt a connection between the world of Graffiti with a drawing hobby indeed existed since childhood, as it was said that he used to be from childhood, indeed liked to draw. Ebe also said that the first reason this graffiti art expressing himself as he was indeed happy drawing from childhood. So the whole community member ME & ART has an existing drawing hobby since childhood, due to his hobby of drawing that they begin to create and express the art of graffiti.

In addition to the motif of the past relating to a hobby drawing, community member of ME&ART have other reason in expressing the art of graffiti. Past the other motif that is the call from a friend to make as revealed Fadhsa that time Senior High School often invited Kombet to create graffiti, from call it Fadhsa became interested in the art of graffiti. Same is the case with Fadhsa, Sutan also knows the graffiti as a fad in the invite by Lambok make graffiti, since then its own sense of feel is Sutan while making graffiti and he began to love the art of graffiti.

So, the past motif of community members ME&ART in expressing Arts graffiti covering an existing drawing hobby since childhood and the existence of call friends to make graffiti.

#### b) In-Order-To-Motives

Future motif refers to what is wanted for the long term. Based on the results of interviews with the informant, the researcher get some answers from the informant is included into the motives of the future.

Lambok reveal if him expressing graffiti as a communication medium to convey social messages or criticism which represents the aspirations of the community. Unlike Lambok, Kombet said that he continued to express his art graffiti to change thinking about graffiti that are rated as something negative. In addition Fadhsa and Ebe had their own reasons in expressing the art of graffiti, Ebe said that expressing the art of graffiti can be a profession to be able to earn money. Fadhsa also said the same thing if he could express graffiti and also can get money from these activities.

From the informant's statement that there are motives of the future is the reason they are expressing the art of graffiti in the city of Medan, that is because the more people know about the Field of Graffiti, and they continue to express art graffiti to convey messages or social criticism which represents the aspirations of the community. Expressing the art of graffiti is also a container of the bomber to get money from the work of graffiti they create. Further expresses the art of graffiti to change the thinking of society that considers that it is the Act of graffiti vandalism or destruction.

### 2. The Meaning of Graffiti for The Community Members ME&ART

Researchers will explore the meaning of graffiti for the members of community ME&ART consists of five informants. This informant is the fifth member of the ART already & ME quite a long time dabbling in the world of graffiti. A lot of the experience they have gained since joining the community of ME&ART. Of course they have their own view of their get into fields, This is the art of graffiti.

So according to the informant, who in fact are members of community ME& ART and long involved with the world, the meaning of graffiti Art graffiti is divided into three parts, that is :

#### a) Graffiti As A Medium Of Self-expression





Graffiti became the medium of self-expression for members of community ME&ART, to pour his heart and imagination in the form of pictures. As did Lambok, he made graffiti "Save Peace Palestine" as a form of expression or feeling concerned about the events that are being experienced by the Palestinian people. Expressing feelings in Lambok graffiti containing the element volume or the contents of the forms of expression of someone who likened the Palestinian people with sad face expressions.

Lambok has strong emotional feelings towards what happens around him so he decided to create a masterpiece that contains symbols that illustrate what the Palestinian people. He was motivated to create the work as an expression of taste are concerned over what is going on and felt by the Palestinian people, there is an interaction through symbols in his work that he would like to share to others.

Ebe also interpret graffiti as a medium of self-expression as in graffiti "hijab woman" he had made. Graffiti is a form of self expression and expression of Ebe to the graffiti in hijab women. Kombet have similar opinions about graffiti as a medium of self-expression that graffiti is a visual arts and art drawing to express themselves. The informant made the graffiti to express what he feels and what he wanted to be revealed. Through the graffiti they can express themselves positively and make something positive anyway.

#### b) Graffiti As A Communication Medium

community ME&ART graffiti is a communication medium that is unique, different from other media. In interviews with Sutan, he revealed that when he want deliver message and the message is different from the rest of the message in the form of pictures or writing graffiti. As a media message that quite an assembly unique, graffiti can indeed made as one of the alternatives in delivering the message. Symbols that are in the works or message can be delivered.

Graffiti works out to be an effective communication media such as graffiti "Dare to be honest very good". In the graffiti community members to write the word "Dare to be honest" with the colour symbolises courage to deliver the message to the public that dared to be honest it is a behavior that is great. In addition members of ME&ART using graffiti as a medium to convey a message to a community that experienced unrest in Medan city in graffiti "City Of Darkness". Graffiti was

made in the form of images of batman with a sullen face conveyed the message that batman feel pout if frequent power outages.

Each graffiti made by community ME & ART has meaning by itself that would like conveyed to the public, community members, therefore ME&ART interpret that graffiti is a communication medium for conveying messages.

#### c) Graffiti As Encouragement

Some informants consider graffiti as encouragement because graffiti is closely associated with his life. For the same graffiti Sutan such as life, even the life of glitter-colored bias remains more like graffiti. It pointed out that the meaning of graffiti as an encouragement at a time are experiencing distress. Perhaps sutan never experienced when he felt hard, he gets spirit back after doing or create works of graffiti. Him emotions that he money into a work that is more beneficial for others. Kombet also interpret graffiti as an animator in his life. Kombet feel more energized live out his days because his days are always filled with graffiti-related activities.

### 3. The Communication Experience of Community Members ME&ART to Express Art Graffiti

The experience of communication referred to in this research is something that is experienced by a community member ME&ART. The experience of communication experienced by members of the community ME&ART form communication experience positive and communication experience negative. The experience of communication resulting from community members called ME & ART with family, friends, and the environment.

Pleasant experience (*positive*) experienced community members ME&ART in the interaction with the family that family acceptance of community members ME&ART to action expressing artistic graffiti. Results of interviews with Lambok suggests that families consider making graffiti is a positive thing. Experience fun Kombet family-related family support activities, namely creating graffiti. Experience fun experienced Ebe, with dabbling in the world of graffiti adds landscaper Ebe. Fadhsa has experiences in the form of such a relationship adds a lot of owners of cafe, owner of Internet cafe owners to outfit the convection. The positive experience of mobilising Sutan i.e. He gained popularity because it is known among young children.



In addition to positive experience, community member ME&ART also had an unpleasant experience (negative). Unpleasant experiences shaped scolded and expelled by the surrounding communities while making graffiti as experienced Lambok. The negative experience in the get Fadhsa which is considered strange by mothers who are looking at he made graffiti. Kombet and Sutan has unpleasant experience that deals with the police and Satpol PP, they rebuked the police and Satpol PP while making graffiti. Another case with Ebe, Ebe experienced negative experience that asked for money by the local youth in which Ebe making graffiti.

## Conclusion

Motive of Community members ME&ART expressing the art of graffiti is divided into two, the first motive of the past (because motives) that includes an existing drawing hobby since childhood and the call friends to make graffiti. Second, the motive of the future (in order to motives) community members ME&ART in the form of graffiti as a medium to convey a message or social criticism, graffiti as a container to get money and to change the stigma about the graffiti.

The meaning of graffiti art for community members ME&ART include graffiti as a medium of self-expression to pour his imagination and as a form of communication medium to convey certain messages to the public through images or text in graffiti with a fusion of elements of the form, colour and content of the graffiti, and graffiti is meant as an engagement in daily life and at a time when members of community ME&ART is undergoing distress expression.

The experience of communication and by members of the community ME&ART to express their art in graffiti, that is positive communications experience form of acceptance and support from the family, increase friendship, adding new friends, and get popularity. Secondly, the negative communication experience community members perceived ME & ART include scolded and expelled by the local community, it was considered odd by the police rebuked the police and Satpol PP and asked for money by the local youth.

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