

Tye Hooker

Prof. Hart

SOCI 140

5/4/2022

## Discussing the Elements of Sociology Found Within Alphonse Mucha's Iconic Posters

During his time, Alphonse Mucha created some of the most recognizable and beautiful works of art for royalty across the globe, stretching his influence well beyond his humble beginnings in the formally known Czech Republic. Many of his most famous works feature beautiful women with long, flowing hair and light, loose garments surrounded by immaculate summer colors. The artist first caught his big break when presenting one of his cutting-edge posters for actress Sarah Bernhardt, which sparked much hype for his upcoming work. An article titled “How Alphonse Mucha’s Iconic Posters Came to Define Art Nouveau” provides an excellent breakdown concerning the life and times of the famous artist and how his style of work went on to foster an entire genre of art in the future. In this summary of his life and works, we can find many instances of sociological thinking, which solidify its place as a sociological article. So, without further ado, let’s look at what makes this paper a shining star in the world of research articles, and where its authors could’ve added some spice.

One instance we see that helps us identify the article as being sociological is that it contains what is commonly deemed as a necessity within research articles: biography and history regarding the subject, as well as a focus on the artist’s influence and personal experiences. (A)

Throughout the beginning of the article, the author recounts Mucha's life from the start and his wild ride into a successful career, checking off one of the boxes necessary to consider the paper a sociological work. Another sociological element found within the article is how the author de-familiarizes art some would simply skim through and explains the painstaking process and story behind each piece. (B) In the article, aside from the fact that much of the paper discusses his upbringing and the work that made him famous, many examples explaining the processes developed and made popular by Mucha, help solidify this paper as a sociological work. To me, this acute attention to detail to look beyond the art really helps readers grasp just how impressive this style is and was at the time, an impressive aspect of the work.

Throughout the article, the author discusses how Mucha's art had a major impact on the way others created pieces in the future, showing a strong ability to realize interconnections and relay them to their audience. By explaining the link found between Mucha's most popular style and Art Nouveau, the writer helps readers to understand the influence Mucha's art had on the world. Describing this in detail in the article is one of the best examples of sociological thinking found within the essay and did a lot to help solidify this piece as a serious composition. (C )

Perhaps the most notable example of sociological elements found within the article comes early on when the author describes the women commonly featured in the works of the Czech artist. In a brief description, as mentioned before, the author notes how Mucha mainly featured small, petite women wearing light, silky fabrics in his works, signifying beauty and wealth. This touch by the author to include how the beauty standards of the time affected which

characters the artist featured in his works is a glaring example of sociological thinking found within this article. (D)

On the flip side, there are a few notable things the writer could have added to make the article appear more sociological. On one hand, if the author wanted the paper to appear more sociological, they could've gone into more detail surrounding the artist's processes and patterns found throughout his works, seeing as how a majority of the text details the life and times of Mucha. While the article does go into some detail about his methods and ideals surrounding his art, a larger focus on the matter is crucial for this paper to be called a sociological work. (E)

Another major improvement that the author could make to have the paper appear more sociological could be so minuscule, yet so important. In many of the most popular sociological articles, clear examples of the subject's point of view and that of the public and historical records are separated and easy to find. However, within this work, the author chose to take a more broad look at the artist and his life through the accounts of various historians and long-held beliefs. This means that within the article, we never get to hear the situations and personal experiences told from Mucha's point of view, which can leave some parts up to speculation. In all, while it's a small and seemingly worthless point to note, adding some accounts or quotes directly from the artist may have helped the argument to call this piece a sociological article. (F)

In conclusion, "How Alphonse Mucha's Iconic Posters Came to Define Art Nouveau" by author Cath Pound is an extraordinary summary of the life and times of the artist, which contained many examples of sociological thinking within the article. From connecting important

biographical and historical information to focusing on interconnections and interdependencies, this article has many of the characteristics you'd expect to find within a sociological paper.

While it could be improved and considered "more sociological" by adding some elements of integrating inside views and focusing more on the legendary painter's processes, it still can be considered an excellent biographical work with clear and expertly placed information throughout.

### Works Cited

- A. “1 Introduction to Sociology – Hart SP22” – Slide #15
- B. “1 Introduction to Sociology – Hart SP22” – Slide #15
- C. “1 Introduction to Sociology – Hart SP22” – Slide #15
- D. “4 Introduction to Sociology – Hart SP22” – Slide #10
- E. “1 Introduction to Sociology – Hart SP22” – Slide #15
- F. “1 Introduction to Sociology – Hart SP22” – Slide #15