REFERENCE CASE IN CONTEMPORARY ART

Abstract

In today’s world which is called as the cybernetic age, virtual images such as TV, video interface, internet inevitably take the place of dark cave. Images that have been blessed by modernism have lost its sanctity with the end of modernism. Correspondingly, art which is abstracted from its object turns into a world of imagination which is the indicator of its own. This rapid transformation of the images within the cybernetic age allowed art to be separated from its history and integrate it with the dominant visual culture. As Hal Foster points out, cybernetic age art produces consecutive images based on images of monitors such as TVs or computers.

Keywords: Contemporary Art, Reference Image, Cybernetics

ÇAĞDAŞ SANATTA REFERANŞ OLGUSU

Özet

Sibernetik çağ olarak adlandırılan günümüzde karanlık mağaranın yerini kaçınılmaz olarak tv, video arayüz, internet gibi sanal görüntüler oluşturmaktadır. Modernizmin kutsadığı imge, modernizmin son bulmasıyla birlikte kutsallığını yitirir. Nesnesinden soyutlanan sanat da kendi kendinin göstergesi olan bir imagelem dünyasına dönüşür. İmgenin sibernetik çağındaki bu hızlı dönüsmü, sanatın tarihinden sökülmesine ve egemen görsel kültürel bütünleşmesine olanak sağlamıştır. Hal
Foster’ın da dediği gibi sibernetik çağ sanatı, TV veya bilgisayar gibi montitör görünümlere dayalı peş peşe imgeler üretir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çağdaş Sanat, Referans İmge, Sibernetik

Art which has left its place to philosophy after modernism has become a demonstration in the name of the blessing of the image as in the cave paintings. Within this context, Duchamp's ready-made objects are demonstrations rather than being work of art. The sources depending on which art progresses after getting rid of the artistic images within the postmodern period include everything in visual culture that is produced or revealed to be perceived visually. Elements which reveal visual culture can be called media elements briefly. The capability of the media to reach the society quickly and equally pioneers the development of art and media relations. Baudrillard's determination regarding this issue is as follows: ‘... the greatest work must be the aestheticisation of the world, staging it in a cosmopolitan way, turning it into an image and arranging it as semiological. What we have witnessed is that everything has turned into an sign industry through advertisements, media and images beyond material rules of trade. (Baudrillard, 2005: 20-22)

Media images which have taken the place of traditional forms of art have led the beginning of the cultural production process of art since they are quickly accessible. ‘The television screen is not a stage, it is a reproduction tool. It does not look like a stage both in the technological sense and contextually. It tries to show everything as a stage but in reality, it is nothing but a tool which shows nothing is a stage. The screen is nothing more than a transparent surface over which the images flow.’ According to Baudrillard, these images are usually recorded on a tape and they appear on the screen through this tape. (Adanır: 2008: 16-17) According to Baudrillard who thinks that mass media cannot go beyond creating a simulation, these tools are useless and do nothing but neutralize all meanings and contents.

Undoubtedly, Andy Warhol comes to surface for explaining and exemplifying the reference images that Baudrillard mentions. The reference images that Warhol created got out of the gallery space which served the function of the art positioning and succeeded to spread to every area of the visual culture that dominates everyday life. Warhol who extolled consumption objects by iconizing them managed to present simulation as a drama. The reference images that Warhol created are the ordinary images of the current life imposed by America to the West. Warhol who managed to create an up-to-date iconographic language using popular figures such as John Lennon and Marlylin left the aesthetics and excluded handicraft and ability. Warhol who uses the advertising strategies greatly allows circulation of reference images.

Baudrillard is the greatest supporter of the predictions that Warhol has related to the fact that art should be free from the creative action. ‘Warhol has gone to an extreme point by withdrawing himself from the creative acts for annihilating the artist which is the subject of art. The reason behind his mechanical disdainfulness lies the fact that the power of object, sign, image, simulacrum and value has increased and the art market is the best representation of this situation today.’ (Baudrillard 2010: 58-59)
Effective area of American Pop Art has a larger structure compared to the whole world. Andy Warhol is the person who used closeness of contemporary media images to the society greatly. Warhol has integrated advertising in its own repeating logic which can be encountered every day, at any time, with a constant and repeatable feature.

At this point, a danger of criticism such as "not going beyond the imitation" arose for Pop Artists, especially before Andy Warhol. Warhol has repeated the same image related to certain topics on canvas several times and added techniques which are specific to photographs.

It can be said that in addition to the popular images and idols he chose, creeping and shocking criminals, accidents, animals and nature which are positive signs have made his art sophisticated. With the quotation of Norbert Lynton, Warhol always rejects the idea that his works have a meaning and he says in a speech which was published in 1968: "I am painting in this way because I want to be a machine. The reason why I make everything like a machine is simply because that's all I want to do. There becomes a terrible result when everybody is similar to each other ... In the future, everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes in the world ... If you want to learn something about Andy Warhol, look at the surface of my pictures, my films and me. It is me. There is nothing beyond." (Norbert, Lynton 1991: 302-303)

Picture-1 Andy Warhol, John Lennon Series

Things which are consumed in everyday life are art materials for Warhol. These are the objects which make unreachable, sacred art ordinary. These objects are: Coco Cola cans, boxes used for detergent, money, etc... He is an artist who attacks idols and makes them ordinary commodities. Is Marilyn Monroe an idol? He says ‘’here is a lot of Marilyn!’’ by multiplying Monroe's photo...
with serigraphy. It is important that a work in art should be unique, that is, original. That’s why; some artworks are sold for millions of dollars. For this reason, Warhol multiplies photographs of the idols and reduce their value as idols in a sense. (http://t24.com.tr/yazarlar/erol-anar/mona-lisanin-bivigi.4894)

When we consider within the context of reference, Mona Lisa is undoubtedly at the forefront of the most replicated painting in the world. One of the most important works of Dadaists is "L.H.O.O.Q" which was painted by Marcel Duchamp where he portrayed Mona Lisa with a moustache and beard. L.H.O.O.Q means "she has got hot pants/she has a hot arse. Dadaism was a constant rebellion against art, life and society. This work of art has turned into an international icon of Dadaism. "The creation of L.H.O.O.Q deeply transformed the perception of La Joconde (the French called this work of art like that, but Americans and Germans, by contrast, call it Mona Lisa). In 1919, the Jocondisme cult became a secular religion of the French bourgeoisie and self-image of the art masters. Duchamp's obscene interpretation was a serious attack to the bourgeoisie. "(L.H.O.O.Q.-Internet-Related Derivative Works.) His idea is based on a "ready-made" idea which is an object which is not made by the artist but selected (and sometimes changed). Ready-made is an object which is selected and evaluated as a work of art among its counterparts, used without making any change on it or the changes on it stemmed from the accidentalness that arouse during the production process.

![Picture-2 Marcel Duchamp 1919, LHOOQ](image)

Images which are rebuilt by taking references provide the intersection of different disciplines. It is possible to see the functionality of reference images in areas such as fashion, advertising sector, decoration, etc. In this sense, Mondrian's works can be shown as examples in par-
allel with the idea which praises simplicity and functionality of Bauhaus logic. Piet Mondrian was among the leading artists of the early 20th century and De Stijl movement which he founded with Teo Van Doesburg in 1917. Originating from Holland, De Stijl is a movement in which order and harmony, artistic intuition, universalism and simplicity are given importance. De Stijl seeks to isolate nature from its external appearance with ideal geometrical forms and main colours. In Neoplastism which was developed by Mondrian, contrasts are visualized with verticals which symbolize objectivity, intellectuality and males and with horizontals which symbolize subjectivity, materials and females. Defending pure truth and expression, Mondrian aims to reach the universal essence by combining the physical and spiritual worlds with colours such as black, white, gray, yellow, blue and red which stand between vertical and horizontal lines intersecting at right angles. According to Mondrian, the elements of painting art such as colour, asymmetric balance and proportion are also valid for architecture, furniture and decoration. (http://lebriz.com/pages/lsd.aspx?lang=tr&sectionid=1&articleid=1233&bhcp=1)
Another artist who uses referential usages of images in art is Cindy Sherman. Cindy Sherman caused a crisis among feminist art critics with her photograph exhibition named Untitled Film Stills, which she exhibited at New York Artists Space in the late 1970s. These photographs are made up of film frames which have never been shoted, in which Sherman used herself as the model, which make references to America of 1950s and imitate Hollywood B-class films, the New Wave, and New Realism.

An American art critic named Arthur C. Danto stating "Life really begins when the story comes to an end" says for Cindy Sherman: "She is both a director and a cameraman of herself ... I do not know what a good girl is but she is a good girl ... When we met I asked her why you are not continuing the Untitled Film Stills and she told me ‘‘Because all the clichés are over.’’" (http://www.sanatblog.com/isimsiz-film-kareleri-cindy-sherman/)

As we have seen in the artists we exemplified, reference images can interfere in the field of many art disciplines. Iconic images of the past arts are always in the circulation by finding themselves an exhibition area on the TV screen, on the podium, in the advertising industry and in many other areas.

**RESULT**

The nonstop innovations of the technology and the spreading images in today's cybernetic era have been rebuilt and made usable again. In the simulation world which is the argument of Baudrillard as an inevitable phenomenon, rebuilding the images based on the past images has become a shelter for the contemporary artists. Rebuilding of the existing ready-made images instead of the handcraft and creativity that Warhol left in the 60's has led artworks which have been made without the sense of aesthetics. As Arthur Danto points out, the fact that he claims that the element of artwork is not aesthetics but the theory shows it clearly. The increase in the media of art has promoted to the development of language limits of art.
REFERENCES


L.H.O.O.Q.-Internet-Related Derivative Works


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