## KİTAP İNCELEMESİ – 2

Hazırlayan: Gözde AYKUT\*

## FALSE CHINESE DECONSTRUCTION

Author: Byung-Chul HAN Shanzhai: Deconstruction in Chinese (Çakma: Çince Yapıbozum) Sibel ATAM (translated by) Istanbul: Telemak Kitap, 2021, 86 p. ISBN: 978605745269

Han, the South Korean cultural theorist, and philosopher discussed Chinese deconstruction with the Chinese words he used in his work called Çakma. For this reason, the first concept he discussed is Quan, the maxim. This concept is essential because it contains different reflections of pragmatic Chinese thought. Han cares about the concept for several reasons. First of all, the Chinese system of thought, unlike the Western system of view, is a process without a starting point and an end, to be more precise, a straight path. In this way, Chinese thought embraces Tao, that is, change, This idea also manifests itself in China's consciousness of time and history. It rejects the idea of being original or original since there is no absolute and unique creation. Therefore, Adyton does not exist in Chinese thought. The concept is Greek and is used to describe a place. It is not transparent and contains roughness and negativity, which makes it more valuable, according to Han, which everyone cannot enter. Therefore, since there is no adyton in Chinese thought, there is no contribution to originality and uniqueness. The concept of Ouan means weighing and being adjustable as an essential part of all these evaluations. He constantly changes his position to stay in balance. Therefore, the concept has a tactical meaning in terms of adapting quickly to changing conditions, that nothing is final and that it is independent of rules and requirements. The spread of the concept in the Chinese thought system also manifests itself in understanding intellectual property and copyright. The character used in the idea of intellectual property has been deconstructed in the Chinese thought system with the concept of Quan. Therefore, the interpretation of phenomena such as wisdom and truth differs from each other in the Chinese and Western thought systems.

Another concept that Han discusses is the original, Zhen Ji. It means one. The trace does not approve of a finished, centralized work of art. To explain through a work of art, what makes a work of art different from itself is that it does not reach the final point. In



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this respect, the trace allows the work of art to differ from itself. Thus, the Chinese idea of originality constantly identifies itself with new creation and change. As can be understood from here, the trace destroys the subjective. This process of destruction initiates the process in which subjectivity cannot be replaced again. In Chinese thought, accordingly, a multi-form and multi-layered approach dominate in Chinese art. But at the core of Western thought, being is unique. Chinese artifacts are so appreciated if their masterpieces and appearance change. Change and appearances continue to exist in the form of increasing layers on the work. Han identified this change with Freud's concept of memory in his book. Because Freud claimed that memory manifests itself many times in various types. He gives the continuous re-creation of a work of art in Chinese thought through the example of the Ming and Song dynasties. Dong Yuan's corpus has taken on different appearances from the time of the Ming dynasty to the Song dynasty. Not only has one artist's work changed but sometimes all of his works have also changed. Chinese artwork is flat and empty. However, it has moved into the future. Han attributes this to the extroversion, not the introversion, of change. It is not only the work of art that changes; If the subject he is working on is not suitable for the fashion of that period, it can be easily forgotten. However, copying a work of art is perceived as a tribute and respect to that artist. Even copying an old master's work by a painter and succeeding in putting it into the collection of a specialist is a serious achievement. According to experts, there is no difference between counterfeiters and experts. This rivalry between the two sides is about who has the more profound knowledge about the existing artwork. If a forger has done the work as well as a master, he is already a master. Han makes comparisons of some famous paintings that accompany all the reviews. These include the copy of Edouard Manet's Olympia made by Paul Gauguin and Kameido's The Plum Garden by Van Gogh.

Han continues his discourses on the understanding of Çakma in the Chinese thought system through Xian Zhan, the Seals of Entertainment. The signatures of ancient Chinese painters on their works are different from the signatures of Western painters on their careers. The signature is essential to prove the originality of a painting and that the work belongs to the author. However, this is not the case with Chinese painters. In such images, not a signature but a seal stands out. The seal has two meanings. First, the seal describes a changing and ongoing communication. Secondly, the seal is both a part of the painting, and these seals can allow future changes such as the continuous reinterpretation of the image. Therefore, the seal is not a subtext but a part of the text. More importantly, the seal does not represent an innovative feature. Han states that the seal is important because it has something open to interpretation and can be added to it, just like pictures.

In some Old Chinese paintings, a poem is added to the picture beside the seal. Painting and poetry in Far Eastern thought is a communicative and communal action. Han included some of these poems in his book. Like paintings and seals, these ancient Chinese poems are suitable for interpretation and to add something to them. At the same time, it is possible to see the influence of the authors on each other in these poems. Therefore, contrary to what is known, poetry in Far Eastern thought is a painful and lonely act. Of course, the fact that these paintings are open to interpretation also shows that the image is not the product of strict action. It also shows that there is no authoritarian action on the work with the signature of the paintings in Europe. With signature, the work comes to an end, and interference is prohibited. Han interpreted the fact that the work is so subjectless and perspectiveless as without a glance. In some paintings, the painter has created images. It does this by placing a mirror image in the picture. Thus, the notion that exists in the painting itself is also in the mirror with the same shape. This is the fact that the painter is both in the picture with the seal and is present again in the mirror in the view. There is no picture image here that begins with the subject. There is an emptying of the subject here.

After all these evaluations, Han discusses the concept of Fuzhi. As can be understood from the assessments so far, all the works, including the seals of the painters, have meanings beyond being original in the Chinese thought system. It has continued its existence by putting something on each work. It is possible to talk about two types of copying here. The first is Fangzhipin, which is known to be fake by everyone. It is considered to be affected by the Chinese themselves. The other is Fuzhipin. These are exact imitations of the original, just like the terracotta soldiers, whose copies continue to be produced rapidly while the excavations continue. To the Chinese, these replicated soldiers are identical to the original ones. There is no difference between them. This sense of identity in the Far Eastern understanding looks pretty distant and incomprehensible to the Western system of thought. The most prominent example of this is the terracotta soldiers exhibited in the Hamburg Museum für Völkerkunde. Like the return of soldiers sent here by museum administrators because they are not historical artifacts. Another example is the 1300-year-old Ise Temple in Japan. The temple has been removed from UNESCO world heritage because it is constantly being built from scratch. These terracotta soldiers were reproduced from modules and standard molds.

Modules represent reproduction, not originality, in production. The aim here is not to produce original objects or to protect the original. It is mass production that allows change. In this sense, it is not accidental that the Chinese first found the printing press. In the past, when the new one was produced, the old one was destroyed or burned. When the exhibition value of such works emerged, the treasures began to be exhibited instead of destroyed. If a work is to be restored in the West, the old one is emphasized. But in the Far East, this situation continues by being copied continuously. In a culture where there is constant copying, nothing remains but the copy itself. This copying has spread to the foundations of the Far Eastern thought system so much that Hwang Woo-suk, a Korean Buddhist, attempted cloning. In this regard, the Far Eastern thought system has less conscientious hesitation than the Western thought system, as used by Han. Although Christians call for a ban on human cloning, the basic idea of Buddhism is reincarnation. In other words, it is the recovery of life.

The last concept Han discussed is Shanzhai, that is, Çakma, which is essential both for the previous point of the Chinese thought system and for explaining the historical dimension of the process. The concept is new in Chinese. Although the idea coincides with meanings such as "imitation, fake", it is an expression of the Chinese thought system and history. "Shanzai is the destruction of creation. Identity with a transformational difference, functioning, functional differentiation; It opposes existence with process and essence with path. Thus the shanzai expresses the true Chinese spirit" (p.82). The concept from culture to Nobel Prize; has spread everywhere from movies to politicians. The idea, which first emerged as a counterfeit of branded products like Nokia and Samsung, appeared in mobile phones. Shanzhai products are multifunctional and capable of responding to needs. Shanzhai mobile phones can distinguish counterfeit money, for example. These products are separated from their originals until they become authentic day by day: Adidas, Adidos, Adados, etc. The concept also has an aspect meaning "mountain castle", which describes the castle where the fugitives are hiding in the famous novel called Water Shore. What makes the book close to the concept is the way the story is produced and unfolded. It is a book with multiple editions ranging from seventy to one hundred and twenty novels. Just like paintings, other cultural products are not owned by a person in China. It often emerges as a collective product and is not considered a product of individual intelligence. Similarly, it has been rewritten in classic works such as Dream of the Red Chamber and Tale of the Three Kingdoms. These cultural works can be separated from the previous ones so much that the endings of these novels are sometimes happy and sometimes sad. This is not only the transformation of Chinese literature or cultural values within itself. One of the sufficient reasons for a work to be imitated is that it is successful and admired. Therefore, it does not necessarily have to be within the Chinese thought system and cultural boundaries. The reinterpretation of Harry Potter is an example of this. "Shanzhai products do not deliberately attempt to deceive. Their appeal lies in the fact that they draw particular attention to the fact that they are not original and play with the original work" (p.81). Of course, this situation is not limited to the Chinese cultural world. Han showed an example of this in his ideological attitudes. For him, Maoism in China is itself Shanzhai Marxism. Maoism interpreted Marx's original teaching in its way. In this case, it shows that China does not tend to be on one side at all. There are alternatives in every sense. These alternatives are also not binding on a strict speed. Because in every sense, shanzhai and hybrid situations show themselves. China is adapting to capitalism with this hybridization method it has come up with as its last point.

As a result, Han evaluated both the historical process of the Chinese thought system and philosophy through concepts such as Quan (Düstur), Zhen Ji (Original), Xian Zhan (Entertainment Seals), Fuzhi (Copy), Shanzhai (Fake), and also the capitalist system of China. It showed how he found himself in the system. At the same time, Han discussed how the pre-acceptances of the Western thought system were rejected by the Chinese thought system with these concepts. It is essential where and with what intellectual motivation China takes its place in the capitalist system. This work written by Han is crucial at a point where the position of China in both the neoliberal economic system and the capitalist system is frequently discussed. Because the work has revealed the philosophical basis of every product that is faked and put on the market. It is essential where and with what intellectual motivation China takes its place in the capitalist system. The violence of positivity, which Han discusses in his other books, is a text far beyond the concepts of performance subject and psychopolitics. Another point that makes the book significant is the distinction between Chinese and Western philosophy, despite the concept of "fake it". Considering the historical process, it isn't easy to find an almost original historical artifact in China. As Han stated until the exhibition value of the products is revealed. The understanding of the rapid reproduction and reproduction of everything is far outside the world of Western thought. Therefore, it is not surprising that today, China has a shanzhai, or fake, side in every product it produces. Considering all these evaluations, it is essential that the concept describes the historical process with its chosen ideas. However, the detailing of the work called Cakma, which is the central theme of the work, is partially missing. In this sense, it is a work that can contribute to the literature.