

IDEOHUMANARTOLOGY

ИДЕОГУМАНАРТОЛОГИЯ

İDEOİNSANATOLOJİ

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ABSTRACT

Throughout history, art has been a means of various motives and aims. These differ from magic, religion, understanding nature and imprinting new ideas into the minds of humans to aesthetic worries. However, no matter what art has as an aim, it has always managed to be the leading power of social and cultural changes in terms of its transformative quality over the society, the human and his mental perception of social and natural phenomena. Art, merely for this reason, has always had a political / ideological identity. That identity is sometimes the leading power in social and cultural transformation, and sometimes a tool for the acceptance and maintenance of values of a newly established political revolution and its order. Art, which is an inseparable part of human society, can never be free of an ideology as an ideology can never exist without art. In human history, just as every society has its own art conception, so every kind of art possesses, whether directly or indirectly, an ideology or ideological function.

Key Words: Art, Artist, Ideology, Society

АННОТАЦИЯ

Искусство, на протяжении истории всего человечества реализовывало различные социо-культурные функции, трансформируясь от волшебства, религиозный мистерий до современных эстетических норм. Однако, несмотря на весь свой широчайший спектр, искусство стало авангардом в создании общества и его гуманистических идей. Из-за этого, искусство приобрело политический и идеологический характер, которое иногда является как авангардная сила изменений, или же после этого служит формированию облика данного общества. Искусство не бывает без идеологии и наоборот. В истории общества искусство прямо или косвенно играет идеологическую функцию.

Ключевые слова: Искусство, искусствовед, идеология, общество

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ÖZET

Sanat, insanlık tarihi boyunca pek çok farklı işlevler için bir araç olagelmiştir. Bunlar, büyüden, dinden, doğayı anlamaktan, belirli bir düşünceyi aşılaktan estetik kaygılara kadar değişiklik göstermiştir. Ancak, sanatın işlevi ne olursa olsun, insanı, düşüncesini ve toplumu şekillendirmesi açısından her zaman toplumsal değişimlerin bir öncül gücü olmayı başarmıştır. Sanat, sırf bu yüzden, her zaman için politik ve ideolojik bir kimlik taşımıştır. Bu kimlik bazen değişimin öncü gücü, bazen de değişimden sonra toplumun kültürel kimliğinin kurulması ve yerleşmesi açısından yapılan devrimlerin sürdürücüsü konumundadır. Toplumun ve insanın ayrılmaz bir parçası olan sanat ideolojisiz ya da ideoloji sanatsız olamaz. Toplum tarihinde, her toplumun bir sanat algısı olduğu gibi her sanatın, dolaylı ya da doğrudan, bir ideolojisi ya da ideolojik işlevi bulunur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sanat, Sanatçı, İdeoloji, Toplum

Ideohumanartology

Nobody has yet constructed or grown up anything with materials brought from another world. So "ultimate reality" can only be found on this earth with the materials from this world.

People communicate with others for many reasons, among which are the need to be understood, an attempt to create a common world of experience by sharing one's worries, the wish to console oneself in the face of the tragedies experienced by others, the creation of a common memory and transmit it to future generations or just educating other people around. Humans are different from other animals, for, as Gasset says, they "have far too many things to express" (1998:144). Some reasons why humans have a deep urge to express themselves can be the obligation in survival to break up one's loneliness and feel secure, to form a society or community, to maintain the existence and well-being of this society, to make sure that the people in this society become subject to the intended conduct, ideas and way of life as they are shaped by the ruling ones. In other words, humans are in pursuit of creating a type of existence for a community that serves their interests and so ensures their comfort in life. Accordingly, art in general, with its literary texts, poems, plays, stories and novels might turn into tools in the hands of artists directing their gazes onto the formation of such a society.

Throughout the history of civilization, man has struggled to change the world around him and interfered with nature and his own environment. These interferences have been conducted with the aim of constructing a more hospitable world. Among the means man has used in his struggles perhaps art is of unique importance. To change the world, according to Hauser, has always been the main direction followed. As van Gogh states, if the world weren't "an incomplete sketch", nothing would be left of art. Art is never a sign of an invert approach to life with passive acceptance of the conditions, or fate, or a disinterested look at whatever happens to the person or communities (Hauser; 1984). In contrast, art, with all its branches, has the vital function of reconstructing the world, changing and transforming it. Art may intentionally direct its tools at this transformation, though change may occur in its natural course.

In the development process of civilisation, man's attempt to change the world has manifested itself in two creative ways. The first is science, by which man has interacted with the world of objects, and the other is art, which is an outcome of his intimate relationship with the environment he inhabits. Thanks to art and science, man has managed to establish a space where he can live in peace and harmony. According to Thompson, "the scientist reinforces our power on nature by enriching our knowledge, whereas the artist increases our consciousness to a higher level" (1979:129). While art and science serve these functions, they can be influenced by both the environment in which they are performed and the cultural structure they are produced in. In this case, art has a two-dimensional characteristic: it can affect as well as be affected by the community. It may form people or be formed by their expectations, hopes, sorrows or interests in general. Art transforms individuals and so determines culture; yet likewise, the artist is a work of the environment and culture he grows in, and as a product, he can be regarded as the object of his environment and culture as he has been formed in and by them.

The social, emotional and intellectual environment and culture to which art belongs are the main constituents of art. Although art, which is a social and psychological phenomena reflected through various means, has undergone great changes in history and appeared in different modes, styles and forms, it has always had a communal, social role whether directly or not. It is so because it develops depending on the cultural structure and nature of societies while simultaneously it contributes to the change of the culture in which it comes into being.

As an individual, the artist is surrounded by a torrent of social phenomena called social environment. Whether he feels a part of it or not, he is obliged to live in a group with distinctive beliefs, norms and conduct. Therefore, as a social subject with his creative power, he is inescapably a part of the community he lives in and so carries and inherits some of the values that society possesses. In a way, hence, any work of art the artist produces, carries the tunes of that society's discourse, for the cultural environment and traces of social phenomena are in the form of freely wandering atoms in the artist's mental and emotional domain. These atoms may take the form of values submitted on the level consciousness as directed by a knowing mind, and sometimes they can be a reflection of a secret phenomenon screamed out by an identity hidden beneath artistic creativity, making itself known through words, signs, symbols or figures.

Not all people are artists. Just a few have managed to take their parts on the stage of history as artists, very few of whom have produced works of art fine enough to surmount their own ages and maintain their value and existence up to the present. So the qualities that make an artist really successful need to be defined. For Sontag, as the artist has ascended to the deepest point of suffering and found a Professional method to express that suffering in a virtuous way, he should be accepted as an exemplary sufferer of mankind (Sontag; 1991). Kafka defines the artist in a similar way: "In reality, the artist is smaller and weaker than the ordinary human being in a society. Thus, he feels the burden of gravity and pressure of life more severely than the others. The song of the poet is a scream arising from the depth of his heart. Art is just suffering for the artist and it relieves and prepares him for new suffering. The artist is not a giant, but a colorful bird in the cage of existence" (Janouch; 1966:14). That colorful bird creates a space of existence that contradicts itself. On the one hand, the artist is a weak being crushed under the burden of emotional and intellectual depth resulting from the tragic events of the community, on the other hand, he is so powerful as a magician

who is not swayed off by the destructive force of ordinariness with a spelling touch to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary with his creative ability. Through his works, although he reflects his own ideas and emotions, he, at the same time, speaks for his society with a new discourse, and so determines the fate of that society in the course of history by extending the borders of people's emotional-intellectual worlds.

Throughout history, works of art have been produced for various reasons, one of which is the use of art as a propaganda means for political / ideological aims to support those in power. In this sense, Antal says that art is the source of political discourse, beliefs and the behaviors resulting from them, and works of art themselves are parts of the social atmosphere which the political movements stem from (Antal; 1966).

Art was used for religious and magical purposes in primitive societies. In parallel with development of civilization, after the changeover to settled life from hunter tribes, the function of art began to evolve. Art was used as a means for expression of power in Egypt, Rome, and medieval realms, Renaissance Italian city-states, and the early monarchies of Western Europe. Beginning with Renaissance and reaching up to Baroque, Classicism, and Romanticism; art, as the re-interpretation of Antiquity, was in search of a human-centered ideal world. Before Renaissance, mission of medieval art was to express the greatness of religion, put into practice in accordance with the interests of the church and clergymen. This world order which is dedicated to human knowledge is a symbolic order in which God calls out to humans. 'World Book' was given to humans for reading the world. Here, the artist did not have a mission such as pursuing or expressing the reality of the world; instead, they were supposed to disseminate a religious message appropriate to the creed, and to tell humanity about the world which is perfectly designed by God. As a consequence, during the middle age, because the religious and earthly powers were inseparable, just like humans, art was also under the constraints of religion and shaped accordingly. In the middle age, the artist, who did not have any certain identity, was obliged to portray the creeds of Christian religion, and so, in a way, he was some sort of craftsman. They were expected to tell about the ideological discipline of the church in a schematic and simple way so that the public could understand God's / the Church's / the King's messages clearly, which would but serve to the maintenance of a feudal / religious order.

Symbolical understanding of the literary works had a versatile function due to their easy allegorical presentation: (1) easy understanding of religious teachings by the public; (2) settlement and consolidation of religion based regime; (3) emergence and enhancement of the dominant power of the clergy upon the public for their own profit; (4) thanks to the plain language used, increase of literacy among public; (5) prevention of the emergence of a superior language distant from public, like the language of royalty; (6) improvement of abstract thinking faculty among the public depending on literacy, and construction of an intellectual base for the other posterior fields such as philosophy, history, of science. Artists did not only mediate for reinforcement of the political structure via the language, but they also created a base for later conversion of this structure. In short, artists both constituted an ideological function in the short run, and built the future of the society they lived in.

With the beginning of Renaissance, emergence of newer protectors of art, brought up newer missions for the artists, and the artist assumed a new role of serving the interests of prosperous aristocrats. Although the artists satisfied their individual taste, they started to respond to the expectations of the groups they were protected by. Artists who chose to pave the way for the liberation of the public and played a leading role in illuminating them,

thereafter became defenders of the community's political discourse. This situation, on the one hand, provided disengagement from public, and emergence of a discourse and language special to the royalty, and on the other hand, it constructed a base for processing artistic, aesthetic paths for national and universal values and rights. By this means, even if it could not address to all parts of the society, literature took on one more significant task as a right move towards processing and development of philosophical creativeness, intelligence, and humanism. Because art did not join religious rituals of the Middle Ages, feudal or court community's public festivals anymore, it lost its halo and it both accumulated an aesthetic discourse and started to gain an institutional status. Courtly-aristocratic art not only witnessed the shift in the aesthetic function, but also the occurrence of a distinct social site. Its primary function was a political one: 'legalization of autocracy'.

In parallel with the increase in individual liberties in social life, and after art's getting farther from the divine one, and becoming earthly, art, which previously praised and cherished gods or god-kings, assumed the service of a certain social class, a political party or a prosperous family. Although art seemed as if it had the function of protecting benefits of the groups, it also led to an understanding of the concept of "individual" with a different perception. Thereafter, the human being was no longer regarded as an inborn sinner creature packed off to earth. Inner world of humans, who started to be perceived as a social entity with the help of literary works, especially poetry and novels, came to the fore as an area of exercise so as to better understand the motives, senses, feelings, thoughts and actions of an individual. Writers and poets worked on human nature and psychology and helped the individual to be perceived as a subject that has got emotions and intelligence, and that can re-shape the environment.

"Due to its shift to life, art turned its gaze from the divine to the humanistic. Since then, creativity has been in the hands of the individual subject. So, art should be the representation of the independent individual's vision, nature, and emotions. The 'old one' should be ruled out and the 'new one' should dominate. The classical aesthetic which was under the dominance of the church and court, and authority of the academy which imposed that aesthetics should be terminated, and the canons and norms these institutions founded in the minds of the public should be collapsed"(Artun; 2003:21).

After French Revolution in 1789, during Napoleon period, formal art understanding of the academy which was opened by the government, was determined as Neo-classicism. This point of view had been based on re-interpretation of philosophical and literary works produced in ancient Rome and Greek civilizations, aiming at a newer positioning of humans in the world. With literature and philosophy, concepts of agnosticism, skepticism, and empiricism were brought to the fore as an emphasis to thinking and interpreting phenomena and superiority of intelligence. Via the art works which provided a shift in perception about humans, nature, society, the divine, and life in general; artists came into prominence as modifiers in the societal roles and thinking in the political arena again. According to Creft, "French Fine Arts Academy was the first modern institution which represented the authority of nation-state in art. The academy aimed at building up a universal, elite, civilized taste and knowledge; and for all, it was based upon the newly emerging ideology of the period: the government must be the representative of civilization opposing the untutored and ordinary masses via its institutions"(Kreft; 2008:24).

In Europe, the effects of Neo-classicism in art led to both re-exploration, evaluation of works from ancient Greek and Rome, and production of similar ones. This opened a path to

the old philosophic, social, and ideal movements to be evaluated and produced in line with the ideas, philosophies and ideology of the time and new social and political circumstances. The civilization level, which the antiquities had, influenced the Europeans deeply, and away from the influence of scholastic thought and religion, new artistic works were produced, and as a result, a completely new and more modern world perception developed.

Those who carried out the French Revolution adopted Classicism as an art conception proper to their political thought, and a consequence of Classicism adopted the concept which could serve for the revolution spirit. Revolution adopted Classicism as the most appropriate movement for its own views and ideology. According to Hauser, the factors which played important roles in this choice were “not the taste and style matters, or the principles of sincerity and creativity but those inspired from the art philosophy of bourgeois of Middle age and early Renaissance. Classicism seemed the best tendency to represent the patriotism and bravery ideals of the Revolution and its republican liberalist ideology,”(Hauser; 1984:133). There had to be a demure and modest art conception which would represent the ideology of the newly established republic, and make it settle in society. We find the examples of art used for political purposes mostly in this period. In this century, the relationship between art and politics was based on nation-state building model. Creation of national ideal was aimed at the education of the masses via art, and construction of national awareness. Poems were written for this purpose with a newer form, style and content; novels and dramas created characters and plots directed to this purpose; and via the new themes, values of nation-state concept were imprinted in the minds of the people of that period.

Together with Romanticism, deep changes were witnessed in the history of art. Individualism, which started with the Renaissance, could only show up in the 19th century, and artists took the possession of dominance of art. Artists were the poets who have freely been singing their songs since then. According to Baudelaire, “Romanticism is not about the theme choice or copying the reality identically. Romanticism is about the artist’s way of feeling. They looked for Romanticism outside, but it could have been found only inside” (Baudelaire, 2003, s. 150). Art got beyond being an illusion of the outer world. Basically, “Romanticism can be thought as a reflection of the artist’s imagination or the reality in his dreams in a metaphor of mirror,”(Şaylan; 2009:86). At the same time, besides being the first example of freedom of art, Romanticism also influenced the art understandings in the following periods. As Kreft puts it “the idea that art should be independent from the other fields of human life meant that the service of art would be rejected. This was not an apolitical move which was an appearance of the well-known approach that locked art into an eburnean dungeon, or which made it give up the public matters. It was an anti-political approach about art, and a radical criticism of the post-revolution, new capitalism and the world of constitutional republic”,(Kreft; 2008:36).

Modern art was established upon the denial and rejection of the aesthetic understanding of the classical art. Since then, art has been beyond an identical copy of the absolute reality, and a historical document. Artwork is the concretization of the artist’s emotions and his political posture stemmed from his perception of reality. The artist who took the mission of reflecting reality as in the classical art, reflects this reality in a subjective way based on his own experience of that perception. The elements determining the way of artist’s reflection of reality are partial reality emerging from the artist’s political view. As Kreft says, “Aesthetic utopia is a direct consequence of art’s autonomy. In one hand, autonomy of art

establishes a special art-politics relation which prohibits evaluation and reformation of art with ordinary political principles; so that politics, economy, morality and other regularities cannot be applied to art. On the other hand, autonomy of art is a policy of aesthetics in art: a policy which provides everything life is in need of, but cannot find without art”,(Kreft; 2008:36).

After Modernism, the changes in the language of the art which reflects the reality, has been through breaking the object into pieces. Corruption of the realist image of the object can be perceived as a rebellion against a world which cannot be lived in. As in the existentialist philosophy, some Surrealist artists saw the disruption of the object as a reaction against reality, and an offence against civilization. This attack on the real form of the object is a response to life, and revenge taken from life.

Beginning from the second half of the 19th century, art has assumed its most political state ever. It gained currency as the century of revolutions and conflicts in which new ideologies sprung up. After the beginning of the 20th century, wars and ideological conflicts have also influenced art. However, art have not lost its establisher role in the political climate.

Revolutions, wars, social order offers alternative to capitalism, ideologies, partisan artists, or their emergence with a mission which aims at playing an active role in speeding up the historical process have all brought up newer discussions in modern art. These debates point at a newer paradox emerging in the modern art conception. “The artist will imply his own subjective interpretation, freely; but this does not mean that he will politically be objective. Just like the rest of the public, he is supposed to be a supporter of a political ideology, and will not be neutral across the social debates and problems”, (Şaylan; 1999:99).

After the Industrial Revolution, losing the subject, human’s becoming a subject of industry, becoming an unimportant tool in the relationship between human and machinery, and as a consequence of this, the negative influence of psychological accumulations occurred in the individual have brought up the problem of alienation of the individual to himself or the society. The individual who was previously determined how to live, how to behave, is a simple piece of the mass society. His independence is limited and he is turned to a mechanical being. After this, beyond being individual, art started to deal with public matters. Art took the side of humans, and became caring for their problems more than ever before. In this context, artists are included in politics more, and their works started to contain so much political issues.

As seen, art’s and the artist’s functions in the social process have shown variability according to the dominant tendencies in their historical period, the relationship between nature, other people, and their world perception; and increasingly had more political properties. What is more is that, in the historical period, liberation of humans and becoming an individual have brought about artist’s autonomy, and pulling out them from being a political object, converted them into a subject; and have started to function as a determiner of human’s political views, tastes, tendencies, choices, and life perspectives.

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