

**International Congress of Aesthetics 2007
“Aesthetics Bridging Cultures”**

**Intercultural-Transcultural, Works of Art
Creating a Common Aesthetic Language**

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There are many definitions for culture. According to Güvenç:

Culture in the sense of science is a complex field that includes religion, art and everything we do.” As abstract “culture is the total of materiality and spirituality created by human beings as members of a society who have learned by living, doing and who have transferred and taught all this. Its origin is without any doubt in society. Culture includes the persons who have created society. These people are joined and held together by language and communication processes, their art, beliefs, ethical principles, law and administrative institutions, their production and consumption in the system.”¹

In my opinion, culture is the identity formed by science, technology, industry, art, philosophy, language and religion of a community in the long run and the element that defines that society. Culture holds people together and is an adherent factor helping people to become a society. In the past, communities were brought about migrate to other countries by climatic changes, the fact that nature could not meet the needs of that society, or the will of rulers to expand the borders of the country and create an empire. If the migrating communities were strong they were able to dominate the pre-existing community or they exchanged their cultures in a way that a new culture of synthesis occurred. War can also be a cause of migration; during World War II major and valuable artists like Alexander Calder, Jackson Pollock, Joan Miro, Max Ernst, Vieira da Silva and Alberto Giacometti immigrated to the United States when the Nazis ruled in Europe. For this reason, New York became a center of art.

The formation or transformation of culture in the aftermath of the industrial revolution and capitalism was different. In one respect, whereas industrial culture makes life easier and faster, it also creates a routine and uniform way of life despite the fact that the countries themselves are different. Rapid developments in science, technology and industry make it difficult to protect national identities. Certain nations not aware of their national characteristics have

disappeared under the identity of developed countries and have lost their national identities. Finklestein's opinion in this respect is:

National cultures were created by their development in the era of capitalism. On the other hand, when a nation had established its own economy, politics and culture, it could also be overruled by another country in such a way that its values were suppressed by the other nation.ⁱⁱ

It is known world over that the Japanese have maintained their culture by preserving their industrial culture, together with their traditional handicraft and folk arts. After having a short look at culture, let us also examine the influence of industry on art and especially on globalization. Man's interest in nature leads him to discover its secrets through scientific, philosophic, cultural and religious research. Parallel to his own development, man's objectives have also changed during the historical process through the creation of architectural projects, paintings, ceramics and sculptures. As the societies divided into classes, their folk arts, church and palace arts also varied according to these classes. Culture depended on the reason and the person for whom the art was created. According to Fischer:

Folklore, folk arts and romanticism were not only concepts related to German Romanticism, they constituted concepts developed by the romantic movement as a whole and also were some of the most important elements of this movement...Folk art was also called so because the name of the artist remained unknown.ⁱⁱⁱ

When an artist is artistically blocked or is trapped he researches the values, the past of the folk arts or traditional handicrafts of his own country and finding a new way out he transforms these into a national art form. For example, traditional Turkish handicrafts are miniature, marbling, calligraphy, wooden and mother of pearl objects, carpet-kilim, gilded, hand painted fabric, embroidery, knitting, cloths, leather-cover (bindings), metal, stone-plater, tile and ceramic. At the time of the Ottoman Empire these were made in the workshops of the palace. Craftmen and artists worked in places called "ehl hiref."

Turkish folk arts developed within the context of traditional rural life. Objects like hand painted fabric, embroider, kerchief, kilim, trunks, saddlebag, painted carriage are some of these objects. This folk art has been maintained by strict observations to the rules of knowledge and experience acquired from the beginning of childhood or from the father or master without making any modifications.

In the 15. century in Europe, before earning the ability of making paintings or sculptures, most of artists, like Brunelleschi, Donatello, Ghiberti, Uccello, Antonio Pallajuolo, Verrocchio, Ghirlandajo, Botticelli worked eight or ten years in jewelry workshops, beginning as an apprentice. Until the famous Donatello was admitted in the "Luke" guild, he was known as a jeweler and stone master.^{iv}

The industrial revolution began in a new system, a new life style, depended upon developing technology and rapid production. Nature began to lose its mystic and man followed to concrete his own dreams. Art, with the developing technology and science, changed its direction and expressed itself with a different understanding. While up until the industrial revolution, nature was exalted, after the industrial revolution, it was technology and mechanization that were exalted. The development of knowledge and technique directly reflected onto art and philosophy expressing art. It was thus that art movements like impressionism, futurism and constructivism came out. Isaac Newton had sent light through a prism and he got colors Impressionist painters like Claude Monet, Edouard Manet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Alfred Sisley and Edgar Degas used their own works with light and the changes of colors due to light. The influence of industrialization on the Italians was expressed in the art movement called Futurism. Up to 1930, this movement, with its expression of speed, became dominant on literature, architecture, painting and sculpture. Painters and sculptors like Umberto Boccioni, Gino, Severini, Carlo D. Carra and Fillippo Tommaso Marinetti all used the concept of speed and movement in their works. The constructivists Antoino Pevsner, Naum Gabo, Kazimir Maleviç and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy reflect in their paintings the technique of industry and structuring. While industry was developing the Bauhaus was established by Walter Gropius in the city of Weimar in Germany in 1919. Aim of Bauhaus was to create a new art school with an innovation conception in the fields of painting, architecture and in the applied arts of ceramics, graphics and textiles. Besides the functionality of industry and mastery of technique, purpose of this school was also to emphasize aesthetics. In a sense, the factors of functionality, aesthetics and art were created in this way. Functionality and aesthetics became important in industry, which was again dominant in society. Teaching at the Bauhaus were such names as Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Lyonel Feininger, Oskar Schlemmer, Marcel Breuer, Herbert Bayer and Gerhard Marcks which the skills of craftsmanship and aesthetics played fundamental role.^v

With the invention of the photograph camera, the art of photograph was created. After the invention of cinematograph, cinema also became a branch of art. Now the latest technologic development is the computer. Visual representations are created on the computer are now getting more and more acceptance.

CONCLUSION

When the products manufactured by mankind for its vital needs exceed necessity, aesthetical values are created. Factors like science, technology, industry, art, religion and philosophy play vital roles indefining societies. New states investigate their cultural sources in order to their define and document them. For example, after the proclamation of the Turkish Republic, there was both a turning towards the western world in order for Turkey to keep pace with the contemporary era, at the same time, cultural centers called “halk evleri” (people’s house) were created to revitalize and preserve traditional handicrafts and folk art. Having study in western countries painters traveled throughout the country to search for the cultural characteristics of the different areas so that they could use them as foundations for their own art. Rapid

developments in sciences and technology have a direct effect on art. The fact that swift development and mass communication media have removed the frontiers between countries and have caused globalization in art. Globalization has made it easier for different societies to become acquaints with each others characteristics. The greatest danger inherent in globalization, if they are not fully knowledgeable of their cultur values, the easy life the industrial culture has become very attractive and societies may lose their own national identities. The high speed in communications and transportation has not only made international activities like art biennales and triennals easier, but also has allowed them to be held more frequently. These exhibitions bring nations together and like harmonizing voices of a chorus, a common denominator in visual arts are created. Such exhibitions are also an inspiration for future ones. Another fact is that these kinds of art events support the establishment of new art museums so that art continues and is permanent. We know that, in historic processes, art tends to develop according to the possibilities created by science and technology. It can be said that according to the changing circumstances, in the future art itself will be subjected to new definitions. Even if a new art understanding is created to conform to future innovations in science and technology, fundamental terms like color, form, structure, rhythm, light and shade, lines, forms, scarcity-abundance, big-small, spare-full will continue to create a common language of art with an aesthetic understanding.

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ⁱⁱ Finklestein Sidney. What Tells Music, IST:Source Publication, 1986,115.

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^v Tunalı İsmail, Enter to İmagination Philosophy Building Industry Center, IST:Building Publication, 81,2004,29.