

# Final Exam- Second Part

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Electronic Arts Theory

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Art is a specific set of practices within a culture, with an equally specific set of histories. Before understand modern art, we should recognize and understand our own history. In the end of 18 century, artists changed their art because world changed and people began to think who they are. After the American Revolution of 1776 and the French Revolution of 1789, people supposed to have "Free Will". Especially, artists began to have their own language on canvas. Modern artists who would represent modernity in all its complexity, recognized self-consciousness, namely consciousness of the practice of representation itself.

We are beginning to be in a position to see that the key development in the nineteenth-century attempt to paint the truth of modernity involved a paradox. Representing modernity was not quite the same as picturing modern subjects. Consider for a moment one of the first implications of the desire to tell the truth about modernity: that when a person looks at your painting one of the points they have to be made aware of - as part of the requirement of self-consciousness - is that that is just what they are looking at: namely a painting, and not a railway station. For they will have to be made aware of this by the painting itself. It must, so to speak, recount its own truth. It must both give a plausible representation the condition of modernity, and give it as a painting.<sup>1</sup>

The main stream of Modernist art was led by the idea of an independent, aesthetic art. Dada, Surrealism, and Constructivism were parts of the main stream of Modernism. Constructivist machine-sculpture, for example Model for the Monument to the Third International, by Vladimir

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<sup>1</sup> Pam Meecham and Paul Wood, *Investigating Modern Art*, Yale University Press 1996, P.13

Tatlin, and Dada nonsense collage shows the experimentation of new idea for good art compared to traditional ideas of what made for good art.

Clement Greenberg used this term in his book, " Art and Culture" in 1939. He explained the meaning and function of avant-garde. "It is among the hopeful signs in the midst of the decay of our present society that we - some of us - have been unwilling to accept this last phase for our own culture.....avant-garde culture. A superior consciousness of history - more precisely, the appearance of a new kind of criticism of society, an historical criticism-made this possible.....the true and most important function of the avant-garde was not to "experiment," but to find a path along which it would be possible to keep culture moving in the midst of ideological confusion and violence."<sup>2</sup> Avant-Garde showed breakboundary of life. And it moved art into our life. Dadaist and the students and instructor of Bauhaus was significant groups moving art into our life.

Art is one of the mythology in modernity. It is the power to achieve and the right to create. The Mythology of modernism took art as a self-expressed media. The Family of Man, a big exhibition of photographs in Paris, showed the universality of human actions in the daily life of all the countries of the world. In the show we see birth, death, work, knowledge, sorrow, terror and so one. The myth of The Great Family of Man functions in two stages : first the difference between human morphologies is asserted, exoticism is nsistently stressed, the infinite variations of the species, the diversity in skins, skulls and customs are made manifest, the image of Babel is complacently projected over that of the world. Then, from this pluralism, a type of unity is

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<sup>2</sup> Clement Greenberg, Art and Culture, 1939, P.4-5

magically produced: man is born, works, laughs and dies everywhere in the same way; and if there still remains in these actions some ethnic peculiarity, at least one hints that there is underlying each one an identical 'nature', that their diversity is only formal and does not belie the existence of a common mould.<sup>3</sup>

Jacques Lacan introduced the conception of the mirror stage in childhood. That is the recognition of his own image in a mirror and this is an essential stage of the act of intelligence and identity. Jacques Lacan explained the image in a mirror stage, "Once the image has been mastered and found empty, immediately rebounds in the case of the child in a series of gestures in which he experiences in play the relation between the movements assumed in the image and the reflected environment, and between this virtual complex and the reality it reduplicates - the child's own body, and the persons and things, around him."<sup>4</sup> Our sense and identity is shaped our culture and environment. The mirror stage is the first moment of identifying social I.

We can thus understand the inertia characteristic of the formations of the I, and find there the most extensive definition of neurosis - just as the captation of the subject by the situation gives us the most general formula for madness, not only the madness that lies behind the walls of asylums, but also the madness that deafens the world with its sound and fury. The sufferings of neurosis and psychosis are for us a schooling in the passions of the soul, just as the beam of the psychoanalytic scales, when we calculate the tilt of its threat to entire communities, provides us with an indication of the deadening of the passions in society. At this junction of nature and culture,

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<sup>3</sup> Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture*, 1939, P.100

so persistently examined by modern anthropology, psychoanalysis alone recognizes this knot of imaginary servitude that love must always undo again, or sever.<sup>5</sup>

Issues of the body and feminist aesthetic and theoretical practice of the Feminist social and political organizations had emerged in the late 1960s in the United States and Europe. Campaigns for equal rights and pay for women compared with men's, became linked to gay and lesbian political struggles. Mainly, feminist artists involved with art and popular culture. Even though most feminists continued to use traditional media such as sculpture and painting in the early 1970's, some feminists began to use photography and graphic design to represent women's sexual difference and the theme of vaginal iconology. Feminist artists described that both women's art and women's experience are essentially different to that of men because women are biologically different and they believed that feminist art should reveal something of this biological difference through its imagery and formal characteristics.

Judy Chicago is a representative who showed women's sexual difference from men and vaginal iconology. In her work, *The Dinner Party*, 1979, represented the images which are linked women's sexual identity to woman cultural producers' achievements such as artists', writers' and philosophers'. Cindy Sherman is a representative who mainly used photography to feature a female figure and female identity. Her work "Untitled Film Still No.21", is part of an extensive series of photographs, which tend to feature a female figure in a range of scenarios and which, like

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<sup>4</sup> Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits*, W.W.Norton & Company 1949, P.7

<sup>5</sup> Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits*, W.W.Norton & Company 1949, P.7

this image, evoke speculations not only about the drama of the situation, but about the identity of the woman involved.<sup>6</sup>

Womanhouse is another example of woman's struggle to show woman's identity. This installation and performance was performed and created by California art institute women students in 1972 under the direction of artists Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro. The Womanhouse represented the everyday life of an ordinary housewife and addressed to female imagery and vaginal iconology.

As there was a phenomenon which has no name to women, there was invisible people in American culture. The black and colored people are invisible in American art and mass media. Graffiti in the street is a way to represent their right and voice. Several black artists and popular muddier artists tried to find their identities. Public Enemy's rap music is among the most eloquent and powerful creations dealing with the issues of race in America. Their music video shows fast-paced graphics reminiscent of those of the Situationist International feature images of great African-American leaders, film footage of blacks being beaten in race riots, racist cartoons, and tabloid news clippings which are interspersed with the lyrics of "Shut'em Down,"<sup>7</sup>

Adrian Piper's installation "Cornered" represented the race issues and the isolation of black society in America and she created the installation to show a racially divided society.

In 1967 Rauschenberg stated provocatively, when Henry Liebermann of the New York Times asked him the reason for his commitment to the Art and Technology movement: "If you

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<sup>6</sup> Fiona Barber, *Investigating Modern Art*, Yale University Press 1996, P.156

don't accept technology, you better go to another place because no place here is safe.... Nobody wants to paint rotten oranges anymore." Most important is the notion that an art that excludes modern technologies will lose its social relevance.<sup>8</sup> Technologies challenge artist's identities. They are strong and be changed very fast than we expected. Now, artists has a dilemma where they should accept technologies or not. The changed society provided new role models for artists, but the new technologies is dangerous to be controlled by artists, due to the fact that the new technologies attacking artist's identity and creativity. We can not escape from the attack of new technologies. This is avoidable. So, Artists definitely control technologies and use it as the inspiration for art.

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<sup>7</sup> Mary Anne Staniszewski, *Believing Is Seeing*, Penguin Books, Ltd, 1995, P.286

<sup>8</sup> Soke Dinkla, *Clicking In*, Bay Press, 1994, P.284