

Instrumentation of Freud's Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Semiotic, Iconic & Realism in context of Politics & Class Struggle in Modern Day Arts & Motion Pictures

The communication, correlation and impact from Psychoanalytic, semiotic, iconic, realism and Marxist viewpoint

Abstract

This project-based research in the form of a visual essay along with reflective summary will gaze into the political aesthetics of art and history collaborated with its communicative approach and correlation in the global appearance. The motto of this essay is the representation of political aesthetics and class struggle through modern day arts, images and graphic from Psychoanalytic, semiotic, iconic, realism and Marxist viewpoint and their impacts on the communication and correlation. As images could be read from various perspectives, how the formalism and visual form of art alongside psychoanalytic and connoisseurship point of view could encounter the reflection as a limitation, would also be elaborated. In order to perform that and to achieve a concrete establishment according to the finding, thirteen images will be evaluated in relation to their political aesthetic to find out their influences, political aesthetics and class-struggle perspectives on global-scale appearances from Psychoanalytic, semiotic, iconic, symbolic, realism and Marxist viewpoint. Apart from the accomplishment of the evaluation of their nature of communication, this essay would also enlighten the theoretical dimension of arts and images in contrast to the point of interests.

Illustrations

Bibliography of images

Figure 1 - Courbet, G., The Stone Breakers

Figure 2 - Salgado, S., Serra Pelada, State of Pará, Brazil, 1986, 'Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age' Phaidon Press, London 1997 p. 339

Figure 3 - Salgado, S., Serra Pelada, State of Pará, Brazil, 1986, 'Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age' Phaidon Press, London, 1997, p. 301

Figure 4 - Salgado, S., Serra Pelada, State of Pará, Brazil, 1986, 'Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age' Phaidon Press, London, 1997, p. 309

Figure 5 - McQueen, S., 'Carib's Leap / Western Deep', Artangel, London, 2002, p. 62

Figure 6 - McQueen, S., 'Carib's Leap / Western Deep', Artangel, London, 2002, p. 79

Figure 7 - McQueen, S., 'Carib's Leap / Western Deep', Artangel, London, 2002, p. 83

Figure 8 - Sekula, A., Title Unknown, 'Fish Story', ca. 1989-95,

Figure 9- Mad Max- Fury Road, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d605rM0U3x0>

Figure 10- Turntino Q., Django Unchained, [https://m.media
amazon.com/images/M/MV5BOTA2NjY5NzY3NV5BMl5BanBnXkFtZTcwNzcyNjY4Nw@@.
V1.jpg](https://m.media.amazon.com/images/M/MV5BOTA2NjY5NzY3NV5BMl5BanBnXkFtZTcwNzcyNjY4Nw@@._V1_.jpg)

Figure 11- Hooper T., Les Miserable, [https://m.media
amazon.com/images/M/MV5BNzY4NDcwMjUyNl5BMl5BanBnXkFtZTcwMjQ3NTA4OA@
@._V1_SX1777_CR0,0,1777,954_AL_.jpg](https://m.media.amazon.com/images/M/MV5BNzY4NDcwMjUyNl5BMl5BanBnXkFtZTcwMjQ3NTA4OA@@._V1_SX1777_CR0,0,1777,954_AL_.jpg)

Figure 12- Ross G., Hunger Games <https://m.media>

amazon.com/images/M/MV5BMTcwOTU1NDk3NV5BMTl5BanBnXkFtZTcwNTkxMjE1Nw@@._V1_SX1500_CR0,0,1500,999_AL_.jpg

Figure 13- Ross G., Hunger Games <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTyyKROkC3E>

Figure 14- WWII Recruitment poster, 1940 | NZ History, New Zealand history online,
<https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQCl1EJTjV8sem0Dy7QqIZpGjtr-SWpRc82kVeCa-4squqOcdKX>

Figure 15- Flying rainbow flag at Taiwan Pride, (2004)

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/87/Flying_rainbow_flag_at_Taiwan_Pride_20041106.jpg/800px-Flying_rainbow_flag_at_Taiwan_Pride_20041106.jpg

Figure 16- The former SS Generals' Hall (German: "Obergruppenführersaal"),

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/08/Schwarze_Sonne_Obergruppenf%C3%BChrersaal_%28SS_Generals%27_Hall%29.jpg/800px-Schwarze_Sonne_Obergruppenf%C3%BChrersaal_%28SS_Generals%27_Hall%29.jpg

1. Introduction

Whether it is Marxist theory or psychoanalysis, communication through image is not only considered to be an autonomous field of society, but also a fundamental part of the social structure. During the early 19th century, the world observed an intense interconnection between symbols, semiotics and iconology with the social stresses and struggles in the form of a stimulus for intensive production [Pleios, (2012)]. Although, the Marxist ideology analyzed the exploitations of works leading to the class struggles could be illustrated yielding immense social changes, this particular matter of fact had been the part of society for thousands of years and arts and images were being applied for bringing forth social changes in the form of iconology, semiotics, psychoanalytic and obviously from Marxist point of view [D'Alleva, (2005)]. Referring to the various theories of arts and images, this visual essay will review previous relevant artworks and their influences in the literature review segment. This particular literature review based visual essay would explore how did they successfully communicate with mass people to bring forth changes in the society irrespective of the nature of change and how the modern-day images, arts and graphics had been utilized for critical representation of the political aesthetics from time to time.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theoretical dimension

From the historical point of view, art, image and society were always related and irrespective of the ideology of the artists, it is believed that art has the power to change the world. In contrast to that fact, this literature review will carefully consider thirteen images representing the working class in form of graphics, images or moving images.

While considering the theoretical dimension, it ought to be considered who could be called as a working class. According to Thompson, the class is a fluid historical phenomenon that perpetually occurs between relationship [Thompson, E.P., (2013)]. In accordance with the Marxist theory of class struggle, it was mentioned that the underlying tension between social and economic classes give rise to the concept of class struggle and working class. In simple term, working class could be defined as the population group who sell their labor, yet do not own the production. The change of styles in images and art are large as a response to economic, social and political development and this could define the correlation and communication. However,

according to theoretical point of view, diegesis is the art-work in which the artist ignores his or her presence, while disclosure is quite the opposite. As this visual essay is going to review the representation of working class in contrast to political aesthetics, objectivity and realism and positivism should be considered as highly significant, as objectivity stands for representation of object from absolute truth and positivism actually considers every form of suspicion as well as interpretation. While representation means showing something to someone an individual way, the subjectivity could often correlate with the term positivity. Icon, logo, recognition and pictogram should be regarded important as the visual motion images are also going to be reviewed and while icon is a representational symbol, logo is a graphic mark utilized for promoting publicity. Where logos and recognitions are worked together hand in hand, pictogram is a graphic sign that conveys meaning. As there would be considerable amount of discussion about communication and message through the images, the communication refers to social interaction through message and the message might have been of several nature including still image and motion pictures. Message could have been perceived by semiotic perspective or as a processed notation [D'Alleva, (2005)].

2.2. Images and realism

Accurate as well as accurate representation of the world has clearly been associated with still photography and moving images. In this essay, the chosen photographs of Allan Sekula, Sebastiao Salgado and Steve McQueen along with the motion pictures of Tom Hooper, Gary Ross and Quentin Tarantino would be reviewed. According to Susan Sontag (1979), a photograph irrespective of its nature could never be able to scratch inside without proper context of altitude as well as feelings, which in turn signified the importance of motion pictures (Sontag S., 1979: 17). Actually, during the industrial revolution around 1850, the realism as a form of art movement started to emerge [The Communist Manifesto (1848)].

2.3. Visual Reflection and representation of political aesthetics and class struggle in form of image, graphic, still photography and motion pictures

As images are getting stronger voice as a mean of representation of political aesthetics and class struggles, the flowchart would have been year-wise showing the improvement of technology, basically did not overrule the amplification of public sentimentality, instead actually enhanced it. The first image of the series would be “The Stone Breakers” and that image significantly disturbed the French bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the artist, Courbet was accused of corrupting the beauty of art The Stone Breakers by Gustave Courbet (1849). Aimed to depict the true nature of working class, two anonymous workers were depicted, one was older and another was slightly young. The communicative message of the image could have been the working class would always remain working class unless the hammer could have been of better use for something else and this image played its part significantly during French revolution. The second image brought forth horrors of industrialized warfare (WW1), as it depicted a lone firefighter became unconscious by the explosion of a wellhead and the lone firefighter was lying among a post-war landscape. This image reminded us how the hard labors of millions of working classes were exploited for the colonial expansion and most of them were destined to be gone in vain by the colonialism [Sebastião Salgado, 1997: 339]. Figure three depicted the collectivity of machinery of mankind that we still observe in these days, as the intellect of mankind are being misused in several form and this working-class people depicted in the image used to work with their bare hands instead using any machinery in rock fields of Brazil. It also revealed the dissociation from natural harmony that industrialization and capitalism in combination could cause. In Image four, there was a confrontation between an armed member of Brazilian state guard and a mine worker revealing the true nature of relationship between men and their political as well as economic masters. However, according to Marxist theory, the masses of laborer are actually organized like soldiers and the depictions often did not truly define the true nature [(Marx, 2008: 10)], thereby it could have been told that image actually revealed two prisoners of same system. Figure five depicted the black miners being trapped economically and abstractly within brutal subterranean working condition. However, it was from “*Documenta 11, Western Deep*”, a documentary that was narrative free and image six from same documentary showed a bizarre sequence of walks up and down between two rows in the mines, representing men were being used as machines brutally completely overlooking their nature of intellect. The image seven of same documentary depicted a man standing behind metal grid representing that there was no escaping from this system. Image eight was from Sekula and it was titled as *shipwreck* from the project *shipwreck*

and workers. It depicted a pessimistic image and a sense of lost hope, the exploitation of human in the worst way followed by irresponsible degradation as a result of capitalist industrialization. Image nine was from the motion picture “Mad Max: Fury road”, written and directed by George Miller. It depicted an image how controlling the mainstream of demand (in this instance, melodramatically the resource was depicted as water) could control a whole civilization and give rise the sense of mastership over free nature of humankind. The image ten was from the motion picture “Django Unchained” and it showed two bounty hunters moving for their next target and living in isolation, as Django the black character in left could not be accepted in the society, although he was a free man. This image depicted how human could become enslaved and blind by the system, as they react ruthlessly to anything that is unusual to the system and it could have been termed as an enslavement by the system. The eleventh image was from motion work “Les Miserable” based on the novel of Victor Hugo and it depicted a woman was forced to work in a brothel after being sacked from her previous job to feed her child who was being fostered away. This image including the motion picture Les Miserable was depicting the disappointing truth that every human chained in the system could be subjected to the prostitution. The twelve image is from the motion picture “Hunger games” which was already considered to be a new symbolism of Marxist approach in the 21st century. However, the image showed the rudimentary form of a ruler making a speech in his tower hundreds of miles away from the districts where people are suffering from hunger, yet they have to pay human tribute each year that could be resembled as a power show-off that major developed countries used to do to remind me of what they were made of and the thirteenth image was depicting the tradition of human tribute as part of power show off. While looking towards the political aspect of iconology or symbolism, the image 14 would illustrate a graphical representation of WWII recruitment, where art-works are used, it would be a matter of dispute whether it was exploitation or utilization. Image 15 illustrate a symbol of LGBT pride irrespective of the nature of our belief and value. This graphical representation was a rainbow flag demonstrating the freedom through equal implementation of all colors. It also has significant meaning from religious point of view, equality and social freedom [*“The Rainbow, Symbol of God's Everlasting Covenant with Mankind”*, 2011]. While looking forward to the Nazi symbolism, graphical representation of the black sun or sun wheel was used by several Neo-Nazi and pre-WWII political parties and it was depicted in image 16. As it holds immense significance

in German neo-paganism, a correlation between political aesthetics and rituals could also be sensed.

3. Methodology:

This Literature review based visual essay demonstrated the images, which represented working class in form of political aesthetics through modern day arts, images and graphic. According to the images, the communicative messages, correlations and impacts from Psychoanalytic, semiotic, feminist and Marxist viewpoint would be analyzed.

4. Analysis

While analyzing the images in contrast to the point of interest, the representation of political aesthetics and working class in the form of art, image, motion pictures and graphics, it could have been mentioned that the art, image and motion pictures had always played their roles in representing the true nature of society being subtly objective from theoretical point of view, though a few of them had to be described in an iconological and symbolic sense. Whether it is French revolution or present day social exploitation, art, image and motion pictures kept nourishing the objectivity and the essence of truth to limit social struggles in terms of class and political aesthetics. According to the image flow chart, “The Stone Breakers” significantly disturbed the French bourgeoisie. The second image brought forth the horrors of industrialized warfare (WWI). Then, there was a depiction of the collectivity of machinery of mankind. The next image unveiled the true nature of the relationship between men and their political as well as economic masters. The next picture depicted the black miners being trapped economically, as an abstract manner of speaking, within brutal subterranean working condition. Next image depicted that the men were being used as machines brutally, masters completely overlooking their nature of intellect. Irresponsible degradation as a result of capitalist industrialization was shown in the next picture. Next two images were representing that there was no escaping from this system and the irresponsible exploitation of human resource and natural resource by capitalist industrialization. Next images show how controlling the mainstream of demand could control a whole civilization and give rise the sense of mastership over the free will of humankind, how human could become enslaved and blinded by the system and the disappointing truth that every

human chained on the system could be subjected to the prostitution. The 14th image depicted a WWII graphical representation where volunteers were being asked to join in the war. The 15th illustration showed a rainbow flag or logo as a means of LGBT freedom, as there was equal distribution of all the colors in the logo. From religious point of view, a rainbow flag stands for hope and change. Therefore, rainbow flags could not only be seen as a manner of independence, but also it had been acting as an ignition towards hope and social change. The 16th image showed an intense relationship between religious rituals and political beliefs, as it is the black sun, which was used in several Nazi pre and post-World War movements [*“Christian symbols Glossary”*]. The thirteenth image depicted a power show-off that major developed countries used to do to remind us of what they were made of. However, from political aesthetics, it could have been told that men being enslaved by the system, perpetual class struggles and continuous human exploitation, all might have been explained better from Marxist arts. The psychoanalytic perspective was the only limitation, as art could have been seen as a manner of compensating personal grief and could solely contribute to the self-interest. Yet, while looking at a broader picture, the collection of self-interests always contributes to overall social struggles, aren't they?

5. Conclusion

While concluding, it ought to be admitted that the representation of the working class in the form of political aesthetics through modern day arts, images and graphic could not only be supported from the Marxist viewpoint, but also it could be supported from a psychoanalytical perspective as well. However, the artistic representation could limit the extent of personal and social grief and that might have been the psychoanalytical aspect, yet the broader picture overruled that fact. Additionally, an intense relationship was found between the German Neopaganism and its impact on the political movement, as the black sun, that was an integral part of German Paganism, were used elaborately in different Nazi political movements. Additionally, a form of semiotic, symbolic and iconological activities along with Marxist arts also played pivotal role and it has been represented as well. As, the concept of neoliberalism as form of logo or graphical form could be best analyzed by the phenomena of social and economic utilization or exploitation, class and commodification of human, any artistic movement along with image, logos or motion picture as well as graphics linked with social movements ought to have an interest in the question of class, class struggle and their political aesthetics.

Illustrations

1.



Gustave Courbet, *"The Stone Breakers"*, 1849

2.



Sebastiao Salgado, (*"Brazilian gold mine"*) (1986)

3.



Sebastiao Salgado ("*Brazilian gold mine*") (1986)



Sebastiao Salgado, ("*Brazilian gold mine*") (1986)

5.



Sekula ("*Documenta 11, Western Deep*") (2002)

6.



Sekula, (*“Documenta 11, Western Deep”*) (2002)

8.



Sekula, (*"Documenta 11, Western Deep"*)(2002)

9.



Miller G., “Mad Max: Fury Road” – (“*Let There Be Water*”), the ruler controlling the water as a manner of controlling the whole kind

10.



Turntino Q., "Django unchained", (2012): Django (in the left) acting as a bounty hunter being deserted by his own kind as he was free from slavery even after being a black in the late 18th century

11.



Hooper T., "Les Miserable", (2012), Anne Hathaway in Les Miserable after being forced to prostitution

12.



Ross G., The Hunger games (2012), Donald Sutherland in the Hunger Games

13.



Ross G., The Hunger games (2012): after making the first human tribute from a district resembling a colony or an unprivileged nation

14.



WWII Recruitment poster, 1940 | NZ History, New Zealand history online



A six-band rainbow flag reflecting Taiwan freedom (2004)

16.



The former SS Generals' Hall: the marble inlay is called as the "Black Sun" and the Neo-Nazis during WWII were highly motivated by the depiction of this graphical art in the party logos or posters.

References

1. D'Alleva, (2005), Methods and Theories of Arts and history, Available in Online, Hyperlink: http://www.khist.uzh.ch/chairs/bildende/lehre/DAlleva_Theory.pdf, Last accessed, June 30th, 2018, Published in 2005 by Laurence King Publishing Ltd 361-373 City Road, London EC1 v 1 LR, United Kingdom

2. Manifesto of the Communist Party by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (February, 1848), Marx/Engels Selected Works, Vol. One, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, pp. 98-137; Translated: Samuel Moore in cooperation with Frederick Engels, 1888; Transcribed: by Zodiac and Brian Bagging; Marxists Internet Archive (marxists.org) 1987, 2000, 2010
3. Marx, K. et al, 2008, The Communist Manifesto, Oxford: Oxford University Press
4. Pleios, (2012), Communication and Symbolic Capitalism. Rethinking Marxist Communication Theory in the Light of the Information Society, tripleC 10(2): 230-252, 2012, ISSN 1726-670X
5. Thompson, E.P., (2013), The Making of the English Working Class, London: Penguin Books
6. 5. Sontag, S., 1979, On Photography, London: Penguin Books
7. *Christian symbols Glossary*, Available in Hyperlink: <https://www.thoughtco.com/christianity-symbols-illustrated-glossary-4051292>, last accessed July 2nd, 2018
8. “*The Rainbow, Symbol of God's Everlasting Covenant with Mankind*”, 2003 Available in Hyperlink: <http://goodnewspirit.com/rainbow.htm>, Last accessed, July 2nd, 2018