



## Art for Meta-Art Paradigm (Artworks in Three Distinct Periods of Reproduction)

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**Abstract:** *In the course of history, audience has been the essential factor in the formation of the schools and the subsequent production of the various works of art. Although the term has not been specifically considered by the philosophers and artists, the artwork theory of Benjamin's era of mechanical reproduction provides a ground for scrutinizing the subject according to the art functions and it can be considered as the turning and focal point in contrast to the periods before and after it. It is through transversal analysis of the original and copied artworks during the three traditional, mechanical and virtual eras that we can find new accomplishments of meta-art concepts in the third millennium. Considering the fact that the social and political functions of art has come about by the means of modern technologies and innovations, the question has been raised as to how does technology create novel relations between art, artist, artwork and audience based on such a mechanism as the social relations in every period thereby to form the art for meta-art paradigm? Reproduction, technology, economy and politics, media and, finally, addressing special groups of audience are amongst the keys for entering this discussion and correct exploring and analysis thereof. The audience is the last target of the art subject introduced in each theory like "art as ...".*

**Keywords:** *Walter Benjamin, Reproduction, Publication, Sharing, Audience.*

### INTRODUCTION

Since the art values have been crystalized in the course of history from the type of their functions, which have been directly accompanied by scientific and technical progresses, the investigation of art values during the three premodern, modern and postmodern eras as well as the similarities and differences of the art during the historical changes and evolutions has been considered very important. Technology trends caused maximal enhancement in the speed of access to and attainment of the information. One such information is art subjects that are made available to their audiences assisted by methods of such technology. Publicizing of the art brings about daily increasing attention to the art value in the society to the extent that minimum effects of art can be witnessed by turning our heads to every spot in our periphery.

The present research aimed at elevating the art for publicizing art experience and comparison of the three substantial periods for reaching the audience attraction in the contemporary era. The study has dealt with

the reproduction of visual artworks and virtual media sharing of them in the contemporary era through adopting a new approach but, of course, based on Benjamin's line of thought.

### **Statement of the Problem:**

It is due to the expiration of "death of art" and "art for art" that finding meta-art and its application becomes a very important subject. The main question is that what role does technology play in the determination of the relations between art, artist, artwork and audience? And, how is the paradigm of art formed for meta-art?

### **Study Method:**

The present study has been conducted based on content analysis and information gathering through library research. In this method, the artwork was judged during three periods of manual reproduction, mechanical reproduction and digital reproduction.

### **Background of the study:**

According to the prior research on the notions by Frankfurt School and the similarities and dissimilarities between art theories to and from Benjamin's artwork article as well as the ideas by McLuhan about media, the transformation of artwork from a specific subject to a process at the service of the general public masses can be figured out and the bezel of these intellectual chains from the primitive periods till now that can be termed as the theories' war era is nothing other than the audience.

#### **1. Artwork during the Manual Reproduction Era:**

Walter Benjamin<sup>1</sup> is a cultural critic, a literature scientists and a social journalist who lived during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Germany. He was an imperialism critic in the west and fought capitalism. The most important work by Benjamin is about the relation between text and background. It is called "artwork during its mechanical reproduction"<sup>2</sup> wherein the reproducibility has been introduced as the most important feature distinguishing the premodern from modern eras (Ahmadi, 2014: 237). In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Benjamin was a Marxist thinker and an independent critic who was invited by Adorno<sup>3</sup> and Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) in cooperation with "social research institution"<sup>4</sup>, the primary goal of which was bridging the gap between the two theoretical and applied aspects of Marxism (Jay, 1993: 6). The intellectual and theoretical heritage of this institution became later known as "Frankfurt School"<sup>5</sup> or "critical theory" (Salehi Amiri, 2008: 120).

From historical perspectives, Benjamin enumerated three simultaneously different properties that formed the essence of each artwork before the era of industrialization and mechanization: 1) now and here<sup>6</sup> (with the unique presence of artwork in its right place; 2) originality or authenticity<sup>7</sup> (with an extract of the entire properties of a work from material continuation to its historical testimony); 3) aura<sup>8</sup> (with its unique phenomenon). Benjamin also considered three domains for the aura of an artwork: 1) uniqueness of the work (oneness); 2) distance from us (the unit spatial dimension for a work); 3) eternity (perpetuity of an original

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Bendix Schönflies Benjamin (1892-1940)

<sup>2</sup> Das Kunstwerk im zeitalter sener technischen reproduzierbarkeit (the work of art in the epoch of its technical reproducibility); it is available in three versions that are different from one another in certain significant respects. The first version was written during late fall and early winter, 1935. The second version or the French translation was completed during spring 1936 and Benjamin, following the recommendations by Horkheimer and the social studies institution, made the sharp political edges of it blunt. In the final version that was completed between spring 1936 and spring 1939, he omitted parts of the first version. Since the differences between the versions are often elucidative of the important aspects, the present study refers to the other versions in some cases with an emphasis on the final version.

<sup>3</sup> Theodor Ludwig Wiesengrund Adorno (1903-1969), a German Neo-Marxist sociologist, philosopher, musician and composer who headed the Frankfurt School along with Horkheimer, Benjamin and Marcuse.

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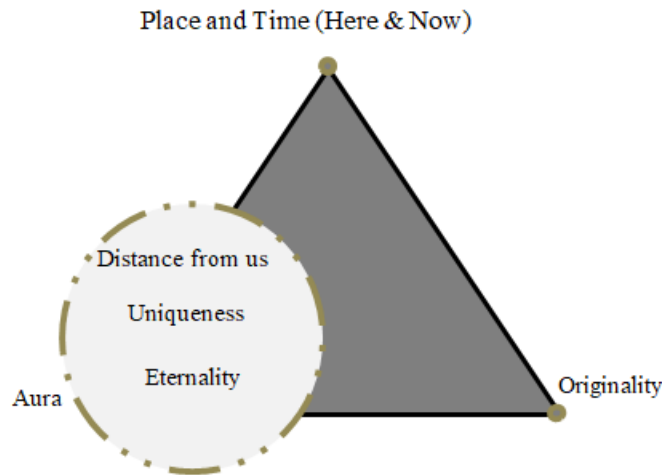
<sup>5</sup> Frankfurt School refers to the intellectual and theoretical heritage of a group of outstanding German enlightened minds that were trying to create and expand a revolutionary philosophical type of western Marxism that was recognized under the title of critical theory (at first, Horkheimer posited the general outlines of the theory in his traditional and critical theory. The critical theory, as viewed by Horkheimer, can be defined as "conscious social criticism in line with social change and deliverance via enlightenment" but it does not preserve its principles and does not remain loyal to them in a decisive manner).

<sup>6</sup> Hier-jetzt

<sup>7</sup> Echtheit

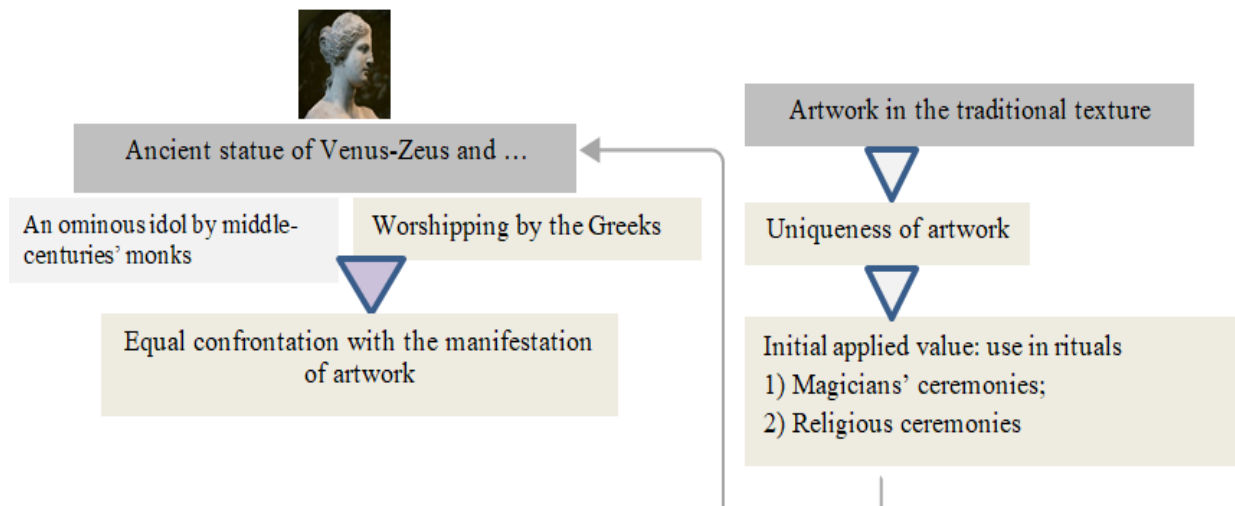
<sup>8</sup> Erfahrung

artwork during the traditional era). Benjamin’s intellectual triangle can be shown in the following form (image 1).



**Figure 1:** Benjamin’s triangle of intellect

The thing that Benjamin called aura or halo is an adjective for an object that goes beyond the apparent shape and gets deeper than the actuality and reality. It is a manifestation of a force for exhibiting the distance and uniqueness (Ahmadi, 2014: 238). Presently, reproduction of the artworks has become an ordinary issue with the existence of technological growth very much like the reproduction of Mona Lisa wall-painting that is a sign of uniqueness (existence of wallpapers) in its replicated versions, distance from us (we can buy it from any place) and eternity (we can replace it by the reproduced version of another artwork when we get tired thereof) (Ahmadi, 1987: 20). An artwork is unique due to its being interlaced within the weft and warps of the tradition. Venus statue was within a traditional texture for the Greeks and it was different from the tradition of the middle centuries’ monks that realized it as an ominous idol. Blending and combination of art in tradition began with the praising of the gods. The first artworks were made for use in rituals that were seminally held by magicians and became religious subsequently (Benjamin, 1998, 214) (image 2).



**Figure 2:** artwork in traditional texture

In the beginning, art was based on a mysterious subject, something ominous and hidden; an endless caprice. But, when the lean content of an artwork is completely dissolved within the art format, its unattainable spirit loses its objective embodiment and returns to its internal self. This is exactly the thing that has happened in our time (Ahmadi, 2017: 64).

In the final version of his research article on artwork, Benjamin pointed only in two sentences to the ancient Greece's reproduction techniques in such specific terms as casting and molding. But, these two sentences are excerpts of more detailed discussions in part eight of the first version under the title of "eternal value" that explicates and expands a relationship between the title of technique and spatial-temporal experiencing of uniqueness. At first, he continued as follows: "all of the artworks had become unique and technically non-reproducible. Therefore, they had to have been constructed for an eternity. Greeks were guided by their technological status towards the production of eternal values in their artworks (Ramezani, 2012: 28).

In a part of his article, Benjamin has dealt with the comparison of the original and copied versions and has divided the latter into two sets of manually and technically reproduced. He knew manual copy as a forged version against which the original copy's originality is preserved. But, on the contrary, the technical copy, as he puts it, does not follow this rule for two reasons:

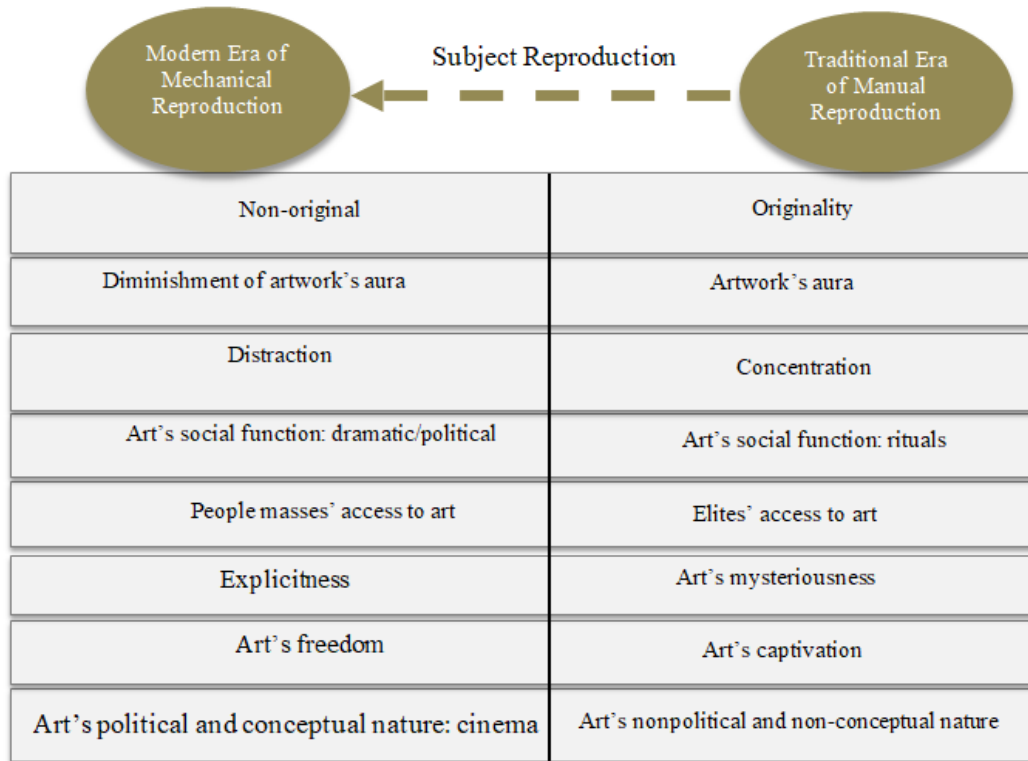
- 1) Technical reproduction is independent from the work more than the manual reproduction. For example, technical reproduction in photography reveals those aspects of the work that cannot be seen by unarmored eyes, but are catchable by the lens which can be adjusted and its angle can be changed arbitrarily.
- 2) Technical reproduction of the copied version of an artwork opens the door to situations well beyond the access of the artwork itself. More importantly, technical reproduction causes the artwork to become closely approached either as an image or as a musical plate by the spectators or audience. This way, the cathedral is transformed into its original function to a studio for the individuals interested in art and the song by the choir performing in the hall or in an open space resonating the sitting rooms of the houses (Benjamin, 1998: 212).

The reproduced artwork was as important as the original one to the premodern communities' audience who had limitations in reproduction techniques. The audience has been identical and fixed in mythological, metaphysical and theological periods. The social base of the art has been fixed and temple has been a sign of this base. In a book named art sociology, Aryanpour points to the investigation of the function of magic for the primitive human beings (their domination via accessing their wraiths) thereby has stated that their domination over reality by images and statues and by the match between the arts of every period and the expediencies of the practical life is a result of the magical continuity of imagination and reality with art and that art still had its magical color and was not separate from real objects and was enumerated amongst the important factors of their practical life (Aryanpour, 2014: 36-44). In a comprehensive investigation, he stated that "there has been no conflict between individuals and groups in the primitive communities and the evolution of these communities has been accompanied by incongruence. During early urbanization, the unity of the primitive life is diminished and majority and minority are formed based on two practical and theoretical dimensions and it is by the destruction of the unity in its whole that every individual finds oneself belonging to either of these two poles (Ibid: 66-68).

## **2. Artwork in Mechanical Reproduction Era:**

Comparing the visual arts with one another and creating a proper position for production and reproduction of art, Benjamin has pointed to the distance between artist and artwork from the audience. He realized aesthetical death instead of Hegel's "art death" amongst the accomplishments that happen with the presence of technology in the modern era.

Separation of art from its traditional and ritual authority based on reproduction methods is viewed by Benjamin as the replacement of multiplicity for unity and determination of the method of artwork perception by the addressees themselves. The following figure explores some of the changes resulting from artwork replication due to the contrasts between Benjamin's traditional and modern periods (figure 3).

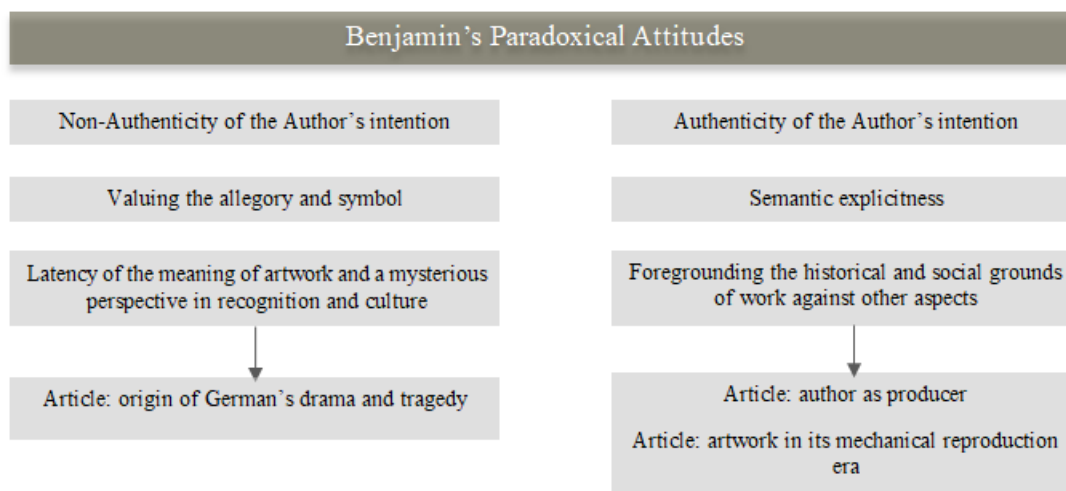


**Figure 3:** Comparison of the art's topical reproduction during the traditional and modern eras

In all of the arts, there is a material and objective part that cannot stay away from the effect of the power and modern knowledge. In the contemporary era, neither matter nor place and not even time have been things imagined of the very ancient periods. Now, huge innovations are expected to change all the art techniques thereby have created wonderful evolution not only in artistic inventions but also in the art concept itself (Benjamin, 1998: 210).

In Benjamin's idea, the end of the ritual value in art and its transformation to a dramatic value has been directly associated with the art's reproduction and function. Benjamin believed that the artwork has lost its aesthetical values by mass reproduction in the modern society and it has been converted into a commodity. The reproduced artwork leads to the generation of an artwork designed for multiplication (Ramezani, 2013: 25). The advent of photography as a revolutionary instrument of reproduction in the mind of Benjamin and the emergence of socialism as a political, economic and social movement and belief in public coherence and equal shares in public interests caused a crisis that resulted in reactions by the theory of "art for art" to the reproduction instrument. Benjamin knew the entanglement of art in the theology's spell as a latent deprivation of "art for art" that means stripping of it from "its close relationship with its teaching, informing and political elements" (Dashtara, 2013: 28).

Meanwhile pointing to the similarity of the fascism's ritual exploitation of that time's newly emerging proletarian masses to the exploitation of the art's ritual value in the ancient era, Benjamin has dealt with the revolutionary and political aspects of visual arts that presented art with technology. Benjamin was also always wandering between two conflicting attitudes. On the one hand, he was inclined towards a mysterious perspective to the recognition and culture and non-authenticity of the author's intention and valuableness of the exemplification and symbolism. On the other hand, he was eagerly zealous of foregrounding the historical and social backgrounds of an artwork and defending the biasedness of the text and importance of author's intention, purpose and semantic explicitness (Ahmadi, 2014: 242) (image 4).



**Figure 4:** Benjamin's paradoxical attitudes

In the book “enlightenment’s dialectics”<sup>9</sup>, Adorno and Max Horkheimer reacted by elaborating the term “culture industry”<sup>10</sup> through Benjamin’s perspective that realized mechanical reproduction of an artwork as a part of the culture’s democratization process (Bashiriyeh, 2000: 28). Adorno and Horkheimer placed mass art inside this industry and deployed it against modern art. Later on, it was revealed that they have chosen this term for its anti-populistic implications<sup>11</sup> so as to exhibit the nonspontaneous and objectified situation, to wit stylized barbarity<sup>12</sup>. Adorno has written that the concept “purposeless teleology”<sup>13</sup> by Kant has been converted herein to “the purposelessness of all the teleological goals” and every goal has become a “target determined by the market”.

From the perspective of Adorno and Horkheimer, the intellectual project of enlightenment has led to the technology’s domination of the world and individuals’ captivation and slavery in totalitarian systems (Jahanbaglou, 2005: 75). Adorno did not disagree with creating interest in the masses in sublime art and modern art. His problem was the capitalistic form that introduced an art that did not deserve the masses’ prestige. He was unhappy with the participation of the masses in the trading of art and demanded the search for another way (Rahimiyan, 2000: 77).

The social function of art begins with the creation of all the artworks for an audience of a type. In this relation, three function types can be taken into account (Rahimiyan, 2000: 79). Artist’s effort for creating a work features various aspects: s/he may try to make us happy or impress us by offering a phenomenon; or, s/he may intend to stimulate us to exhibit a sort of political or social reaction. And, finally, we may find ourselves in a situation of which we were not aware before (Ibid: 80) (image 5).

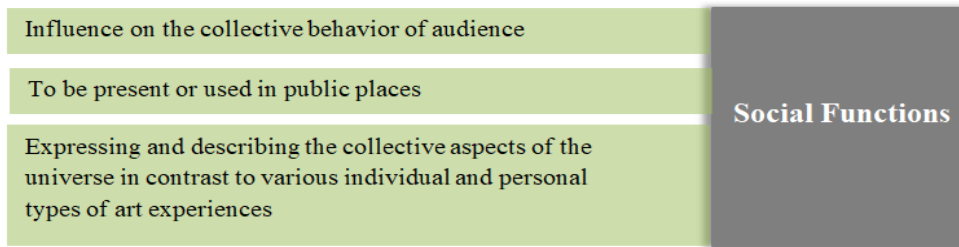
<sup>9</sup> Dialektik der Aufklärung is the name of a book written by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno that was published in 1947. It is the most important work on critical theory that deals with the status of a social mentality realized by Frankfurt School as the defector of the enlightenment.

<sup>10</sup> Cultural industry or culture industry was created during WWII in Frankfurt School for describing the powerful American film-making industry. Based on a common definition, cultural industries are consisted of entities that design, prepare and reproduce information and educational, scientific and cultural amusements for the general masses of the people in various forms. The goal of these industries is conceptualization, coordination, reproduction and enhancement and trading of the cultural goods within various formats, including books, journals, newspapers, film, audio-visual products, videocassettes, software and CD.

<sup>11</sup> Populism is a political method and teaching in supporting the general public’s rights and interests against the elites.

<sup>12</sup> “Stylized” is derived from the term “style” meaning an adopted style and method. This way its past participle would also be stylized “casted within the format of a method”. But, due to the lexical deficiencies, the same word is also used in Persian hence “stylized barbarity” means standardized uncouthness.

<sup>13</sup> It points to Kant’s definition of beauty: “the beauty is that that creates pleasure free of interest and profit, with no concept and in a public manner for it is a teleological goal.



**Figure 5:** summary of three types of social functions of art

One sign of crisis in painting was the simultaneous contemplation and consideration of the painting tableaux in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Such a crisis was exclusively not related to photography. However, it was pertinent to a situation. Such a situation as “simultaneity in collective experience” was in the form missing from architecture from its beginning till now, from epical poetry in the past and from cinema at present (Benjamin, 1998: 220). Benjamin introduced the works by Atget<sup>14</sup> as the manifestations of the replacement of art’s social function and the empty spaces in his photos display the fascist government and the dreadful revealing thereof hence considered as a dramatic art from Benjamin’s viewpoint (Benjamin, 1987: 238&250). Atget’s photos are distinguished by a sort of technical depth and perfection enhancing the reality level. Thus, the simplest subjects are even of great importance in his work (Jensen, 2015: 1050) (Image 6).



Source: <https://www.metmuseum.org>; 1924–25

**Figure 6:** street café by Atget



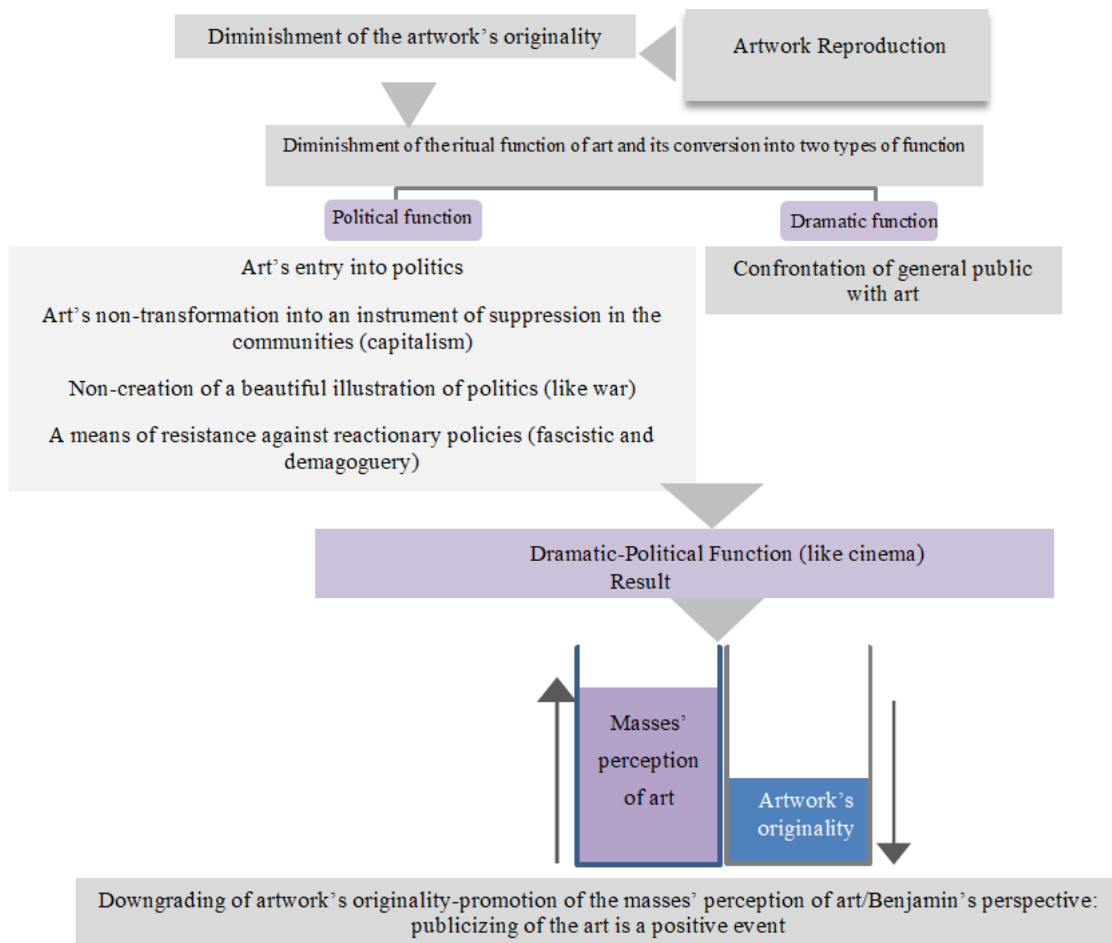
Source: <https://www.thinglink.com/scene>; (1937)

**Figure 7:** echo of a scream by Siqueiros

<sup>14</sup> Eugène Atget (1857-1927) was a French photographer. The photos of Saint Cloe gardens are amongst the most famous works by him. His works inspired surrealists. His photos of the abandoned streets in Paris and the vitrine of the shops dominated by the beautiful mannequins caused the surrealists call it the dream capital city. Alfred Stiglitz and Eugène Atget are often called fathers of documented photography.

Depicting the repetition of a child’s image at the side of an industrial dustbin, the “echo of a scream” by Siqueiros<sup>15</sup>, the prominent Mexican painter, is an example of revolution-orientation and modern art containing political and ideological perspectives to human motivations. Action for alleviating the children’s pain and suffering through instigating the imagination and feelings of the audience is the main goal of this painting (Ahmadi, 2014: 81) (Image 7).

The art’s political and dramatic function with the overthrow of the art’s ritual function can be witnessed in the area of photography and film in the gradual promotion of the masses’ perceptions of art , which is considered as a positive event from the perspective of Benjamin. In other words, a sort of dramatic-political function happens that causes the prevention of an aesthetical drama from displaying the phenomena stemming from reactionary policies. This approach barred fascist that resorted to the industrialization of art for taking advantage of Marx-criticized enlargement of the gap between proletarian and bourgeois communities from achieving its final goal. Benjamin admires film as a mechanical process uniting itself with Marxist ideals. Generally, pointing to the political factor and revolutionary character of such media as cinema and photography, Benjamin has adopted a relatively optimistic approach towards the media technologies (Image 8).



**Figure 8:** Reproduction and dramatic-political function

“Mechanical reproduction of art caused changes in the masses’ reaction to art. Reactionary look or consideration of Picasso’s painting is changed to promotive reaction towards Charlie Chaplin’s films. The

<sup>15</sup> David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896-1974)



feature of the civilized reaction includes direct and interlaced combination and interference of the visual and affective pleasure with a specialized orientation and tendency. The critical perspectives of the public area are matched with passive looks at it following the emergence of the cinema (Nowzari, 2005: 305). Getting released of the chain of the rituals provides art with a possibility to enter the area of politics. Moreover, the grounds are set for the critical perception of tradition. Such a perception contributes to political awakening in its positive aspect that would otherwise lead to a crisis in tradition in a negative form (Stein, 2004: 92). This is why Benjamin finds “publicizing of art as a positive incident” and it is by the diminishment of the ritual value that “elitism” disappears from art (Madadpour, 2011, v.5, p.515).

From Benjamin’s perspective, two factors, i.e. mass and cheap reproduction of artwork and the emergence of new art forms including cinema and, then, radio and television, caused art to generally take revolutionary nature and origin. But, unlike Benjamin, Adorno underlined in a letter that “the participation of masses in art production does not mean art sublimation at all, rather it downgrades art to the level of the masses’ routine awareness (Ahmadi, 1987: 70).

The economic function of art can be witnessed since the onset of reproduction and the emergence of art’s dramatic nature. The other face of the coin of the art’s publication by reproduction is art economy. Benjamin has written the following statements in a research named “the image of Proust” that is based on Marcel Proust’s novel, “searching for the lost time<sup>16</sup>”: Proust’s analysis of snobbism that is a lot more important than his effort for thinking of art as a god reflects the peak point of his criticism of the society because snob is per se nothing more than perseverant, organized and stubborn attitudes towards life from consumerism perspective (Benjamin, 2003: 116-117).

Apart from its dramatic value, the most accentuated aspect of artwork in the contemporary era is its economic value. The important happening in the reproduction of artwork is scaling and marketability. In fact, a work is bought or sold as a commodity. One of the important motivations in mass reproduction of artworks from their original versions is the art business and culture transfer and, eventually, politicization of the art (image 9).

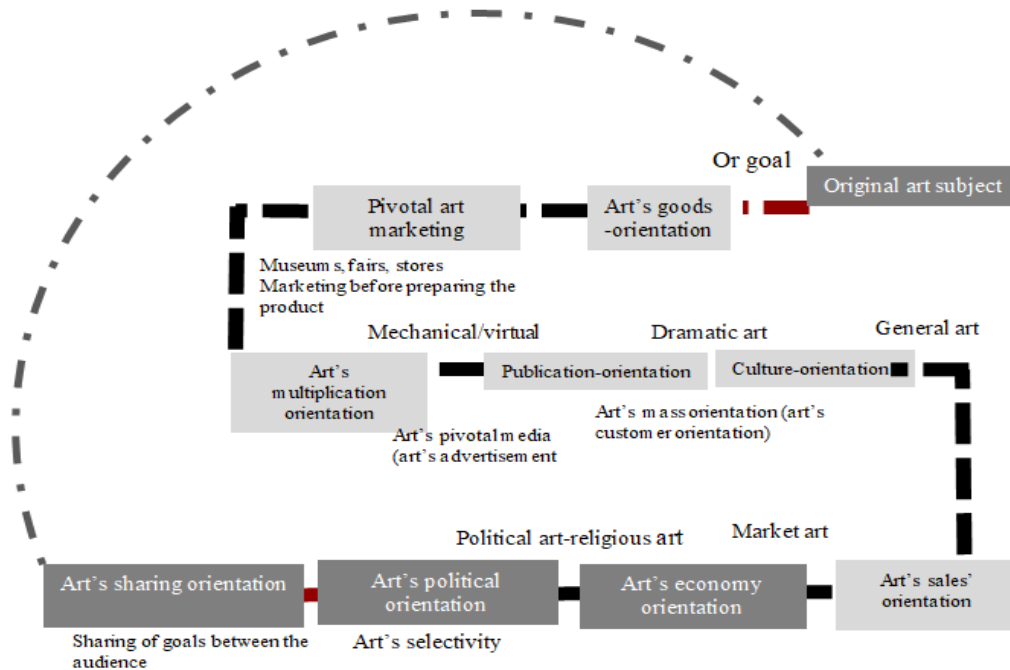


Figure 9: art's reproduction and cycle

<sup>16</sup> À la recherche du temps perdu

Benjamin believed that artwork has lost its aesthetical values in the modern society by the means of mass production and it has become a sort of goods. Artwork reproduction leads to the production of artwork designed for reproducibility. Photography is the first art driving the ritual values away from its full-scale and film is considered as the most distinct manifestation of art's reproducibility. Instead of voting for the death of art as Hegel did or in lieu of giving up to the passive concept of art for art, Benjamin has posited the political, instructional and people masses' psyche-purging function of art against its fascistic applications (Ramezani, 2013: 25).

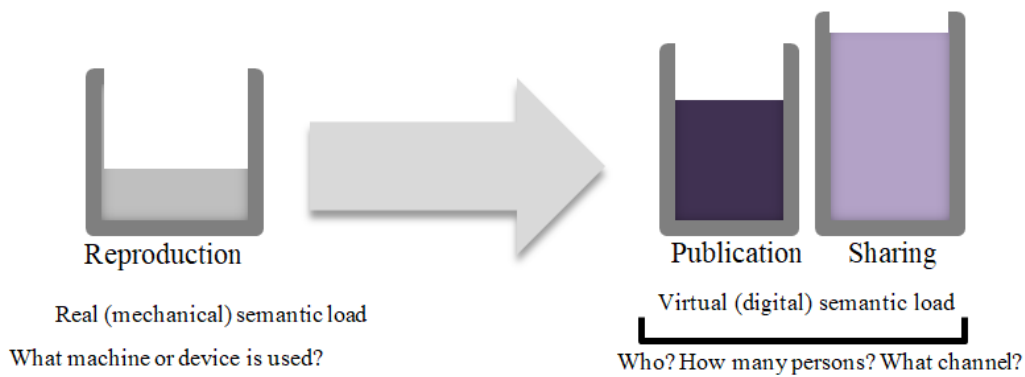
The modernism is characterized, as Benjamin puts it, by the disappearance of the sacred aura meaning that it takes the exchange value as well as the allegorical and ritual integrity of an object. The object loses its ritual value to be converted to an exchangeable and showable commodity. The creative task of an artist who is especially seeking for humanizing the goods begins from here. The fundamental transformation in concerting an artwork from an idol-like (manmade) thing to a process at the service of the mankind is a sort of radical politicization that is accompanied by the complete destruction of the artwork's specialty and path change of the alienated object for the sake of subject. In the meanwhile, the best example of this transformation is the overthrow of these visual arts and their conversion to a form of information (Prikles, 2005: 79). From Benjamin's viewpoint, the distinction between modern and premodern art does not mean the death of Hegel's art. He believed that art is alive and dynamic as a human action but it is essentially different from the past art (Sheikh Mahdi, 1998: 99).

"Art for meta-art" paradigm begins where art subject is envisioned as an ideological commodity serving social, political and other functions. The audience in this period is comprised of incongruent consumer masses and efforts are made through creating a common collective experience for guiding them towards a unity that is at the verge of destruction.

### **3. Artwork during Digital Reproduction Era:**

In continuation of some aspects of modernism and in the postmodern era, as well, movements came about like arrangement, conceptual and multimedia and video art. The traditional styles of painting and sculpturing played a secondary role. These two are closely interrelated with modernistic tradition and, for the same reason, they are denied for the accusation of their being instruments in the hands of the ruling class. In the meantime, the nontraditional forms like environmental and photographic constructs have reached the forefronts and have become extraordinarily politicized. The primary manifestation of modernism is the recruitment of artworks consciously approaching the prior art. They do this by imitating the prior styles and being appended with special thematic roles or even complete artistic images thereby to bring about essential changes in them through placing them in a novel background. Postmodernism is surely an interesting phenomenon. However, it has a catastrophic defection; it has produced an art that is more showcasing our time and not something memorable and unforgettable, but it deserves attention exactly for the same reason (Jensen, 2015: 1068).

Combined and multidimensional functions of pictorial arts in photography and cinema and novel arts create combined values. The reproduction grounds of artworks have undergone metamorphosis and evolution since 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as well as for the time being. It was with the entry of new technologies that the modern phenomena of publication and sharing came about. The importance of reproduction takes a lower rank and in undulation in respect to publication and sharing. Definitely, the increase and reduction in publication and sharing of the artworks are effective in their reproduction. Besides the increase in the club of the addressees of the artistic messages, the presence and introducing of the modern art species have been actualized by the same effect. The newly emerging media are enumerated amongst the most important tools and ground for this activity. In sharing a work, every person becomes a medium for oneself, but there is a small group of human beings in publication; this is the productions in large number are reproduced without the interference of the human element (image 10).



**Figure 10:** modern reproduction media

Benjamin’s non-instrumental approach to technology that is a sort of subjective configuration in “Artwork” article is of a great importance in the contemporary era. Benjamin’s combative criticism about cultural and aesthetical concepts tears down the “great wall” between aesthetics and technology and makes a passageway that is similar, for example, to the explanations by McLuhan<sup>17</sup> about the idea that how our engagement in the perception of television images elevates our tangible abilities. Gutenberg’s galaxy and media have taught us a way to see the similarities between the first role in printing industry in shaping the human beings’ thoughts and life and change of the perception styles influenced by living in the era of electricity (Heints Bark, 2004: 3). It can be stated with interference and transformation in Benjamin’s emphasis that the era of communication’s burst with digital art during the 21<sup>st</sup> century has caused rapid real and virtual publications and sharing in such a way that, as put by McLuhan in the global village, the artworks are being published and shared in an incredible speed. McLuhan believed that although technology is born of the human’s theory and practice, the human beings from every era and epoch are per se born of the technology of their time. In other words, every technology gradually places mankind in a fresh space which would become a determinant in the mankind’s destiny and life. He has called technology as the divine comedy. In his opinion, the mankind has been guided to a corporeal paradise wherein he frees himself from the physical pain by the use of tools made by his own self. McLuhan has divided the mankind’s civilization, as introduced in Gutenberg’s galaxy, into three periods with the ability of making prospective predictions and we have presently entered a fourth period that is the very digital space, which is indeed the virtual global village.

Nowadays, public media has applied novel technology with the intention of pervasive publication of dominant ideology thereby to expose the audience and users to the artistic and pseudo-artistic innovations in a vast level. It is by the domination over the masses’ minds that they have taken control of the human beings’ tastes and interests, feelings and aesthetical senses and somehow unified the society by publishing special messages and signs of subjectivity. One of the essential duties of these media is socially organizing and coordinating and uniting the people (Madadpour, 2011, v.5, [517]).

Considering the fact that the media are changing and evolving in terms of their forms, the addressees’ types also undergo changes, hence the art content is also transformed according to their functions. Denis McQuail realized communication media as an organizational form or tool created for facilitating the giving, sharing, exchanging or storing meaning (McQuail, 2003: 216). “In the today’s time, the preliminary source of the media audience is latent in the public theatrical and musical performances as well as in the ancient era’s contests and dramas. Our first perceptions of audience refer to the people’s gathering in a special place. All of the cities in Greece and Rome were a theater or an arena and, undoubtedly, informal gatherings have been common for similar goals or for holding religious or governmental ceremonies” (Ibid: 5). “The audience’s shapes have been always diversified and the media technologies’ inventions have offered a new form of a social technology. The modern forms of the audience, though characterized by some concepts of the preliminary audience, are no

<sup>17</sup> Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980)

more representing its old example. This particular form differs from the concept of the preliminary audience in that it is a lot larger, more scattered, more individualized and more specialized” (Ibid: 6).

Mircha Eliyade believed that, in postmodern era, the idol-like nature of the luxurious objects, including automobile and the emotional outburst that can be called the worshipping of the holy automobile and the Hollywood faces’ turn into myths and the consecration and admiration of them by thousands of the fans and performing of certain rites for praising them, are rooted in the characters’ becoming legends by the means of public signs and their transformation into exemplary forms signifying the people’s mythical tendencies (Farhangiyan, 2008: 56). The possibility of access to the information has come about in a virtual-real form indicating Benjamin and McLuhan and others’ far-sightedness. Fundamental transformation in the conversion of an artwork from an idol-like (manmade) thing to a process at the service of the mankind is a sort of radical politicization that includes the perfect destruction of an artwork’s specialty and change in the path of alienated objects for the sake of subject. In the meantime, this transformation can be best exemplified in the overthrow of the visual arts and their transformation into a form of information (Perikles, 2005: 79).

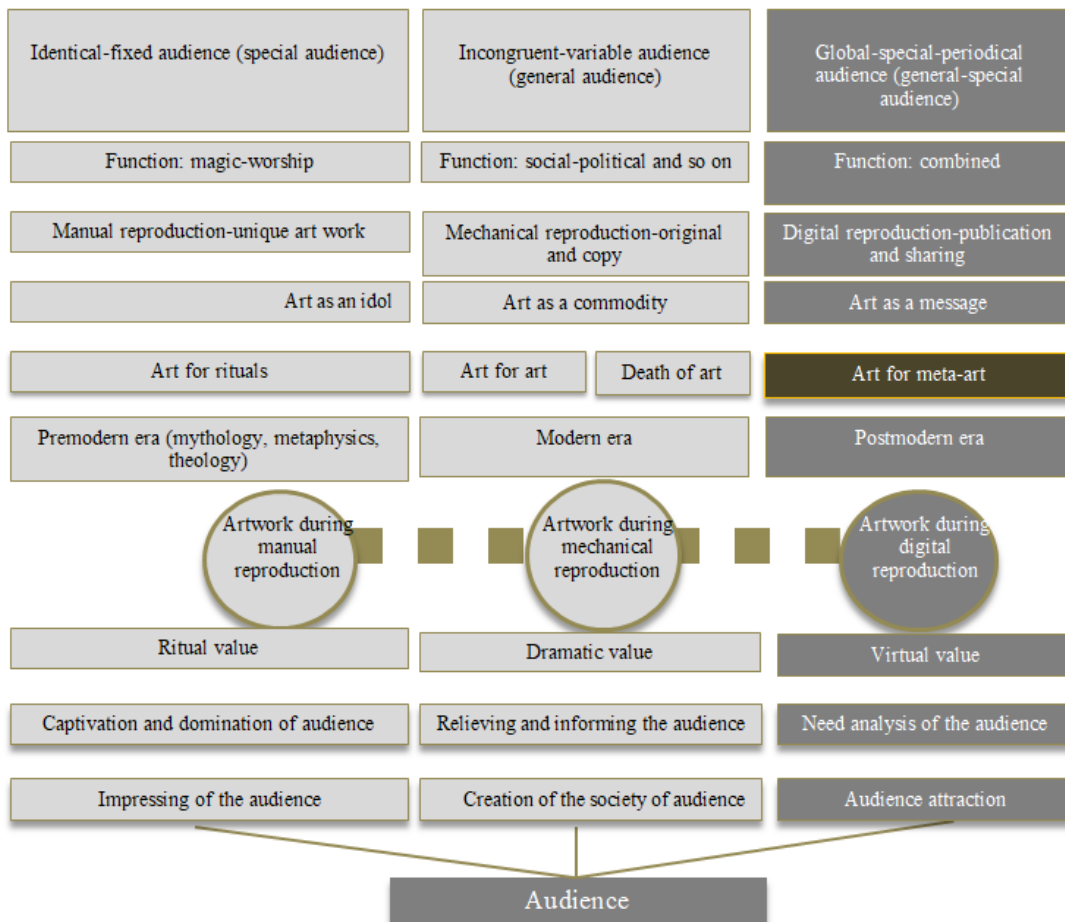
The change of every virtual space user into a producer is a path towards need analysis and audience attraction depending on the analyses of the audience and their interests in terms of their types and the way they react. Being not limited to the native audience and the non-fixed effect of artworks on everyone turns to the offering of modern kinds (even of a fixed subject). The following part points to a summary of the results of artwork reproduction based on publication and sharing (image 11).

- Directing the masses towards use of art in their life baskets
- Destruction of the gap between the society members for buying original artworks
- Metamorphosis and transformation of the artworks’ historical experience
- The right to select and choose
- Easy access to artworks
- Covering the taste-based diversity in the general public
- Reproduction of arts with certain subjects
- Increasing functionalism in art
- Audience attraction instead of elitism
- Delivery of the maximum concepts in the shortest time
- Ease of transferring with the least cost
- Social organization and coordination and unification
- Offering a new form of a dominant social innovation
- Pervasive dominant ideology
- Publishing of the special messages and signs of subjectivity
- The instrument for delineating the national culture
- Processing the modern form of audience (larger, more scattered, more individualized and more specialized)
- Removing of the borders between the author and audience
- Transformation of audience to author (changing the relations between the artist and the audience)
- Transformation of the artwork to a message (information)

### **Conclusion:**

Audience has been the final and common goal in the original and copied artworks in the course of art’s history disregarding any special artwork and artist. Digital media of publication and sharing have gradually taken the place of mechanical reproduction in the various audiences’ general perceptions. The economic, social and political effect on art through auctions and fairs, civil activities, advertisements and so on along with the

expansion, progress and accompaniment of art are amongst the results thereof. According to the vastness of the art subject, the digital world has come to assist the newly emerging arts for introducing artworks and combined styles. The virtual publication and sharing of the artwork amongst the general public, analysis of the individual and collective taste and extensive advertisement cause the directing of audience towards the use of art in the life basket. Invitation of the art activist, collectors and gallery owners in virtual space for attending the auctions for buying original works creates a gap amongst the society members that is very much similar to the story of the artwork aura; this has happened more frequently in the area of painting tableaus. The gap created between the various human groups can be bridged via publishing and sharing artworks (even in case of the painting tableaus). On the other hand, the internet and the virtual canals and the applications deal with the metamorphosis and transformation of the artworks' historical experience and, on the other hand, the global markets of artworks are considered as capital intake centers corroborated by the appearance of the virtual space. Therefore, the alignment of the auctions and virtual spaces on the same line and along with a single stretch is envisioned as a positive point. Publication and sharing enables easy access to the artworks and covering of the diversity of the general public's tastes, selection right and choice. Owners of artwork attempt to create newer methods of attracting the audience by resorting to political and religious expressions, which shapes audience that may not be necessarily committed to a certain type or kind. Art sponsors' ordering of certain arts to the artists causes the reproduction of arts bearing special subjects and functionalism in art, moves towards usefulness earned from more production. Resultantly, "death of art for art" or, in other words, birth of art for meta-art" comes about and it can be per se envisioned as a sort of art. Hence, audience attraction and audience-fostering preempts elitism. The following figure illustrates the general schematic view of the reproduction in three periods based on the above-presented materials (image 12).



It is with the emergence of diverse virtual media for reproduction in the form of publication and sharing that the art functions have taken an active and influential form and the sending of maximum number of concepts within the shortest time has become possible. Modern and mixed functions, satisfying the diverse tastes of the audience, ease of transferring information with the lowest possible cost and others provide the media owners with an important opportunity. Even art has proved an active presence in the designing of interactive media. "Art for meta-art" offers a modern definition of art that, considering the art's higher level functions, plays an active role in the artistic experience and perceptions of the today's audience and makes art's value assessed by the number of the society of the audience.

Artwork reproduction with the objective of elevating the individuals and society's general perception is per se followed by positive effects and causes the balancing of the social relations, mixing of art with daily life, creation of artistic approaches to the resolving of the problems, mobilizing of the masses, delineation of the national culture and acquisition of a favorable rank in the global economy and so forth. It is true that the art has become a commodity and this has metamorphosed the ritual self of the art; but, it has per se become another ritual self.

Using modern methods in publishing and sharing information with certain, credible and verifiable links is a strategy for attracting even transnational audience exposed to wrong messages. Yin and Yangi's thoughts regarding the artwork reproduction might be even better capable of meeting the expectations and capricious wants of the today's audience than its coverage of a single domain like a show (visual arts) that contain rituals or vice versa (a combination of the technology and rituals).

Cultural and political and other functions of art assisted by the technology's capacities can be viewed as an important step for enhancing a country's gross product and elevation of the international communications in terms of audience; very much like tourism industry that is an important example thereof. Digital reproduction, in adherence to proprietorship rights, can be envisioned as a positive phenomenon, as far as ethics are concerned.

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