

The Struggle of the Global Centers of Art to Manipulate Minds: A Study in the Changes of Dominance

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Summary:

The historical column of the art of painting, as the most prominent aesthetic human activity with a clear impact on individuals and groups, presented a series of stylistic, spatial and temporal shifts in terms of shifts of control, transmission and positioning at the top of the aesthetic pyramid. According to the difference between one centre and another, and as for the measurement of the depth of influence, its temporal duration and its continuity after the decline of that centre. The contemporary has become a cumulative and expanded stock, preserved by the memory of history. From this, it is clear that contemporaneity also lives under attraction, dialogue and acculturation, some of which are obvious and declared, while others are hidden and arise. This leads to intellectual manipulation arises according to the perceptions presented by the artwork in secret. It is established by a group of geographical locations around the world, which have circulation as global artistic centres where artists from around the world come to spread or learn. This increases the phenomenon of global aesthetic mobility. This study is an attempt by the researcher to reveal the image of aesthetic leadership and the global endeavour towards the forefront of artistic transmission and influence in the other. The subject is revealed in its declared details according to the definition of global hegemony since a long time ago and the path of transformations that accompanied the art between the rise of one centre and the decline of another until the contemporary. The researcher analysed four paintings from four global locations currently in aesthetic circulation. Her findings are as follows:

1. Artists addressed local styles in varying proportions despite the prevalence of globally agreed stylistic models in contemporary art. However, the degree of reliance on local style varied across art export centres.
2. National ideologies and affiliations influenced some art export centres by choosing vocabulary and employing international styles to present their ideas and reach the recipients' highest acceptance and understanding.
3. Whenever the artist wants to use the artistic medium to communicate his direct and hidden message, he adopts the simplified and easy method and avoids the coded method, so he turns to the most understandable and readable methods by the recipients in general.

Keywords: Conflict, manipulation, minds, domination.

Introduction:

Throughout history, there have been global broadcasting centres for the export of art, and each of them has become producing art within a certain geographical area, and often their specifications and features meet the culture of their peoples, or even direct them towards previously drawn directions, to achieve self-serving goals to fill the quest for artistic hegemony through the production and export of artistic styles or ideological ideas that may be implicit in artistic formats, and these centres did not appear in a vacuum, but used a mixture of arts that preceded them, and added their own styles, to reach a point where they became influential art centres, showing their authority over the rest of the centres, within a different spatial and temporal reality, armed with an individual identity and an artistic system that is referred to as a signifier. These centres did not emerge in a vacuum, but used a mixture of arts that preceded them and added their own methods to reach a point where they became influential artistic centres, showing their authority over the rest of the centres, within a different spatial and temporal reality, armed with an individual identity and an artistic system that is referred to as its signifier and highlights its personality and distinction, and each artistic centre has sought to compete to be the leader of artistic leadership in its favour, relying on what it has, with the help of the surrounding circumstances, and this is what caused the multiplicity of centres and their instability on a specific side.

Several studies have addressed the issue of the exchange of global art centres, including (Joyeux Prunel, B, 2015), as this study discusses the concept of centre and periphery, in light of what is known as the first globalisation of the modern art market, and shows that there is a hierarchy due to geopolitical factors, referring to both Paris and New York as the capitals of artistic modernity in succession, although there are criticisms of this traditional theory, according to this study, which was built on different foundations, as it is a quantitative study based on data, data and statistics of art exhibitions and works that contributed to the transformation of their artists. It is a quantitative study based on a database, data and statistics of art exhibitions and works that contributed to the transformation of its artists from local to international, and its results showed that Paris was

not alone as an artistic centre, but that there are other centres that are no less important, but have not been highlighted as much as its predecessor Paris. However, this did not change the idea that Paris and New York are sources of innovation and artistic influence.

The study (David W. Galenson, 2002) examined the changes in the art world after World War II. Many historians in the United States believe that New York has become the centre of modern art, replacing Paris. However, French experts have a different view, as they believe that New York is not the capital of new art and that the contributions and experiences of French artists, such as Jean Dubuffet or Yves Klein in the field of art, have surpassed in importance the experiences of Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol and other contemporary American artists. In contrast, American historians do not disagree on the relative importance of their country's artists. However, they acknowledge disagreement over the most important art produced by the experimentalists in the 1950s or the conceptualists in the 1960s.

The current study differed from the two studies, as it defined the concept of an art centre and how it is formed, and addressed the most important art centres throughout history and their influences on each other, why centres seek to maintain artistic leadership, and how these centres used their artistic position to promote their ideas hidden behind their artistic products through the analysis of (4) paintings that were purposely selected from the research community.

Research on this topic is important to uncover potential aesthetic conflict and reveal what art export centres worldwide are emphasising by seeking to export artistic styles.

The concept of technical centres:

In order to identify the concept of an artistic centre, it is necessary to refer to the concept of hegemony, which refers to the methods used by the individual to control the fate of others (Wadah Zeitoun, 2014), which means here control, sovereignty and artistic control that must be achieved, to turn into an artistic centre that exports to others, and forms a source of inspiration for them, and its effects appear on their arts, but the artistic centre's achievement of the source stage did not come suddenly, but passes through the stages of formation of the centre, and most likely the artistic centre appears on the accumulations of the art that preceded it, such as the experience of the Islamic centre (Demand, 1982) So it was a mixture of other arts, and was based on several styles, including Christian arts, Iranian and Hellenic arts, as well as Turkish and Central Asian styles, and came to be called Islamic arts; because Islam was the link between these styles despite their different roots, and because these arts appeared under the patronage of Muslim countries. Although the Islamic centre is one of the most widespread and long-lasting arts, it was weakened after the Muslim artist was influenced by Western arts and the decline of the special identity in the face of global openness and the quest for integration (Zaki Mohammed, 1945). Political, social, cultural and economic conditions have influenced the decline of centres and the emergence of other centres, as happened with the experience of the Italian centre and the transfer of artistic sovereignty to the French centre and then to New York.

Transformations of control and artistic export:

Art has the property of developing relatively more quickly once the appropriate climate is available, and this is what happened in the Renaissance, where the progress of the economy in Italy had a role in the prosperity of life and the direction of the founders and rulers towards beautifying life, which revitalised the status of the creators of beauty, which are artists, so the artistic Renaissance appeared in multiple places in Italy. Italian kings and princes had a role in the establishment of art schools in Italy; each school had its specifications and methods, including Florence, Venice, and Umbria; all these schools and their artists had their additions that contributed to enriching the artistic field technically and formally, such as perspective, interest in anatomical proportions, light, the third dimension and matching nature, which caused an unprecedented revolution in the art of painting and sculpture whose effects still exist to this day (Mohiuddin Talo, 2010). After the themes of the Middle Ages were characterised by limitation and rigidity, it became necessary for Renaissance artists to transform the human being into an important element without losing its roots, which opened the way for the rich to tend to the new values to immortalise themselves through art, so they brought artists closer to them and portraits of people appeared alongside religious themes (Kamal Mazhar, 1979), which took a large part of the Renaissance themes to the point of placing the possibility that the implicit hidden objective of her art is the glorification of the Christian religion (Mazhar, 1979).

The Renaissance continued to flourish, reaching an era called the Golden Age. However, it soon came to an end after the sack of Rome and the death of its great artists (Emory Petrolinda, 2003), marking the end of this era and the birth of new derivative artistic styles such as Baroque and Rococo, which can be considered a form of Renaissance that remained dominant until the mid-18th century (Carl, Klaus H. & Victoria, 2009).

After the decline of Italy as a centre and exporter of art, it was likely that other centres would rise to dominate the art scene as a broadcasting centre for new ideas. France was the closest in this regard, as decades ago, the French court tradition was for kings and princes to take an interest in art and promote it, and before the French Revolution, art was imported under the knowledge of other centres. But after the French Revolution, the French Institute was established, which extended its influence over the life of French art, constrained by the

ideas of the past (Neumayer Sara, 1960), until (Romanticism) came and gave art a new meaning, which opened the way for artists to open new horizons for artistic expression, as the French Romantics at the end of the nineteenth century were credited with paving the way for giving the artist freedom in choosing subjects and style and breaking with tradition (Al Attar Mokhtar, 2000).

Most artists sought renewal, and Paris became the centre of attention for those seeking a new beginning. Impressionism, as the beginning of a new era, is not only a revolution in the academic system, but also has deeper goals that may be a means of propaganda for France itself. After its artistic consolidation and through several arms, each spatial center exports what it wants to others through several tools, including art, which has become a propaganda tool for it. So, it presented itself to the world and through its artistic currents such as Impressionism with its dazzling appearance and exported itself as the capital of beauty, freedom and extravagance. The topics of the paintings represented the luxurious French life, the manifestations of the dancing celebrations and the landmarks of Paris, excluding the inappropriate manifestations that do not represent the modern life that the French live. Impressionism became a starting point for art schools from within France and other European countries, and the development of the plastic arts was still linked in one way or another to the start that began with Impressionism (Mahmoud Amhaz, 1995).

Hence, France succeeded in achieving its desired goal of being the capital of art and the centre of artistic leadership, and it maintained this leadership for quite some time because those who hold initiative and dominance will not simply give it up. Because the process of displacing centres was not easy, this hegemony continued until the economic crisis was at its height and the efforts of merchants combined to move the art scene from Paris to New York (Zainab Abdel Aziz, 2000).

As soon as factors leading to the weakness of the centre appear, such as wars and crises at the same time foreshadow the emergence of the power of a centre elsewhere, as in the case of America after the Second World War, the United States sought to strengthen its position as an artistic centre with its assets at all levels, even though the Paris school was dispersed after the defeat of France, the United States sought to strengthen its position as an artistic centre with its elements on all levels. (Muller JA and Frank Elger, 1988) After these events, European artists travelled to the United States. It greatly influenced the art scene in America during this period, and most surrealist artists returned to Europe. As a result, emerging American artists with European connections adopted European trends and were responsible for establishing the modernist principles that underpin contemporary art (Smith Edward, 1995).

Herbert Read says that there are no sudden discoveries that come to us from the unknown but that every phenomenon, according to the law of dialectics, is the product of a complex, complex process in which factors and elements interact and are determined by the appropriate conditions for the development and growth of that phenomenon (Al-Mubarak Adnan, 1973).

The United States took several measures, including the establishment of special exhibitions and museums for abstract and contemporary art and the establishment of associations for artists who practise this type of contemporary art called the Society of Abstract Artists, and also took it upon themselves to introduce the public to abstract art by publishing books that review the experiences of its early artists (Mueller, 1988), which led to the emergence of abstraction in this form. The promotion of this artistic path was to achieve artistic sovereignty in New York, which led the United States to become the largest market for Western art, especially in the 1950s. The events after World War II and the emergence of capitalism played a role in transferring artistic sovereignty from France to New York and transforming the course of art (Stalabras Julian, 2014).

For American art to keep pace with globalisation and the consumer culture that swept the world, where the American capitalist system took another direction by giving the artist absolute freedom and an open field and allowing the use of everything that can be used to promote the ideologies of capitalism and American globalisation, including the culture of consumption, so it was necessary to abandon the local in exchange for diversity, difference and hybridity and this led to the emergence of new artistic movements facing abstraction such as Pop Art, Surrealism and others (Muller, 1988), after the American destination turned into an artistic arena in which European artists found fertile ground for their ideas and the freedom of their aspirations, so the artistic trends achieved success in America and abroad by European artists. After the American destination turned into an artistic arena in which European artists found fertile ground for their ideas and freedom of aspirations, the artistic trends achieved success in America and abroad at the hands of artists from Europe, France, Japan and England. Their influence extended to the countries that joined the newly global capitalism, such as Cuba and China, as promotional art using images of communist leaders and advertisements for American products whose effects spread to Europe and the world (Stalabras Julian, 2014).

Therefore, when observing the American contemporary arts, it was not put forward to create the American artistic model and create effects in the artistic orientations on the world because it is the sovereign artistic issuing body. Rather, the artistic topics were in order to try to Americanize minds and admire the American consumer-capitalist culture as the most powerful, attractive and sophisticated model. Therefore, we see the promotion work carrying pictures of famous cinematic, sports, artistic figures or cultural symbols in a beloved

advertising format, as did pop art or the themes of urban and rural platforms, high-rise facades, bridges, tunnels and the urban industrial scene, as did Superiorism

Analysing the research sample

1- West Quay - by Frederic de Maggio – 2024 - France1



source: <https://www.artmajeur.com/federika-di-maggio/fr/oeuvres-d-art/17919928/quai-ouest>

The main boat occupies the centre of the painting and is painted in white and shades, while the background appears to be part of concrete pillars or a pier. The work refers us to an important point in the history of art and the Impressionist period through the adoption of colours and details of the painting and its subject matter, such as concrete pillars. The work refers us to an important point in the history of art and the Impressionist period in particular, through the adoption of colours, the details of the painting and its subject matter such as unrefined reflections, light and water movement. At the same time, the other link is the appearance of a truncated part of the shape of a boat, which reminds us of the methods of the Impressionist artist Edgar Degas; according to these data, the artist has addressed his locality by returning to the methods of the Impressionists even in their preferences for subjects, so it is clear that the style of the Impressionists is still in vogue. This stems from the artist's love for his country and his desire to perpetuate the momentum towards Impressionism, confirm the propaganda for France and seek to attract people tastefully to French standards, meaning that the love of Paris may be influential, which makes the artist produce according to a model similar to the Parisian taste and this is not called a tasteful approach but a tasteful attraction towards his own region, with a message loaded with love for France and the necessity to maintain the momentum towards it to maintain it as an artistic centre as it was and still is.

2- The Tracker - by Robert Rauschenberg – 1964 - USA .



Source : <https://www.artchive.com/artwork/tracer-robert-rauschenberg-1963/>

Helicopter warplanes occupy the upper left part of the painting, while in the upper right, a nude female figure is seated, and her facial features are reflected in front of a mirror placed in front of her, and next to her,

geometric structures float, and in the centre of the painting is a print of an eagle bird, while in the lower right quarter, a street scene with a sign for the phrase (CAFETERIA), perhaps a reference to consumerism, topped by a scene of two birds standing quietly. The artwork reveals a complex creation that makes it easy for the viewer to trace the work back to its American identity, because the artist intentionally employed vocabulary specific to his identity, such as the American eagle as a national symbol that expresses the power and freedom promoted by the American regime, as well as images of helicopter-type aircraft, which is an American industry, as evidence of military and technological power and has the ability to maintain control over the air and land due to its ability to fly at low altitudes, as well as employing scenes from the daily life of the American individual America, with its military and technological power, which the artist likened to airplanes and geometric squares, is capable of achieving freedom and peace, and the same power is capable of achieving the American dream, which he promotes as being as beautiful as the beauty of the Greek goddesses that have become a reality inside homes, which he portrayed in the form of women with ideal features and goddesses of beauty such as Venus.

We note that the artist used the technique of fusion, whether by technique, such as silk screen printing on canvas with oil painting, which is a relatively old artistic means, or by mixing contrasting materials and themes, such as urban vocabulary with vocabulary from ancient art history, such as Rubens's painting. The message is clear propaganda and boasting of the American centre's pride in its contemporary power and combination with the ever-present Greek mythology. It was intended to signify American hegemony and its ability always to dominate the world.

3- Sundial (Sundial) - by Hong Liu – 1999 - China.



Source: <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/hung-liu-liu-hong-sundial>

A part of an ancient archaeological building dominates the centre of the painting. At the top of the painting is a sundial, an ancient invention that tells time by shadow. On the left is a Chinese man in traditional costume, standing at the end of the archaeological pillar. To the right of the foreground are branches and a tree trunk, the end of which rises to look like a mythical animal, and behind these details is a traditional Chinese building.

To achieve local identity, it was necessary to choose vocabulary with a special connection to Chinese identity, folklore and Chinese culture as vocabulary commonly used in ancient traditional Chinese art. The artist tried to collect all the signs with historical specificity, and what distinguishes these signs is that they can be exported to achieve propaganda and self-aggrandisement. The artist did not adhere to the traditional Chinese painting method, known for its flatness and colour spaces. However, he managed to refer to them through the use of earthy colours and the general character of the painting is represented by the artist's adoption of stereotyping, depth, colour gradations, strokes, clear lines and a structural composition similar to the formations of Chinese socialist realism, thus the artist relied on international experiences and this shows not addressing local methods but addressing them with vocabulary that can be China is known as a highly self-centred country with its high localism. Yet, it can walk within the global system and have the upper hand, as the artist introduced the world to what they have in a simple and universal language; it is propaganda for Chinese power, and propaganda must be understandable to others.

4- The man who flew into space from his apartment - by Ilya Kubakov – 1982 -1984 - Russia.



Source: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/ilya-kabakov/the-man-who-flew-into-space-from-his-apartment-1984>

A scene of a small room containing a bed with a catapult-like device in the centre, fixed to the corners of the room by laces and surrounded by walls full of old propaganda posters referring to the Soviet Union and scientific diagrams of the project to manufacture the innovative take-off tool and clarify its path, in the middle of the room is a table with materials scattered on the floor such as newspapers, cans, remains of roof debris and a pair of shoes that appear to be what remains of the man who took off through the dilapidated ceiling of the room after it made a large hole in it. The artist has utilised his living room as an art workshop. The overall design and the surrounding of the walls inside the room with pro-socialist posters are signs of his nationalist affiliation.

In his installation, the artist wanted to invite the viewer to see traces of an event that happened earlier within the confines of this carefully designed room to develop his dream project of escape, taking the idea of launching into space as a possible reference to the progress made by the Soviets in the field of space research. The scene is a conceptual shot that will shock the viewer's mind and take him to a new intellectual space. The work may carry marketing and publicity for the artist's country because it is based on a critical idea, but it carries the specificity of belonging. Access to space is a fixed idea in the world's memory from the first time the Russians reached the moon's surface, and they were always proud of this pioneering achievement. This indicates that it was presented to the world as a Russian identity and thus was one of the soft weapons in addressing the global consciousness through the aesthetic medium.

Results:

1. Despite the prevalence of globally agreed stylistic models in contemporary art, artists addressed local styles in varying proportions. However, the degree of reliance on local style varied across art export centres.
2. National ideologies and affiliations influenced some art export centres by choosing vocabulary and employing international styles to present their ideas and reach the recipients' highest acceptance and understanding.
3. Whenever the artist wants to use the artistic medium to communicate his direct and hidden message, he adopts the simplified and easy method and avoids the coded method, so he turns to the universal methods understood and read by the recipients.

Conclusions:

- 1- The deeper the civilisation of the broadcasting centre in terms of historical extension, the wider the artist's choices regarding the opportunity to dominate aesthetic discourses.
- 2- Messages of exclusivity, dominance, and hegemony are the highest represented in the aesthetic hegemonic discourses prevalent in global artworks.

3- Discourses of aesthetic hegemony in contemporary art have revealed that artists, in many of their representations, have turned into propaganda vehicles, even without realising it and in their pursuit of uniqueness.

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