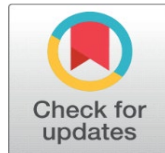# TREND OF INFLUENCE AS APPROPRIATION IN DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

The ability to identify beauty directs designers to appreciate the artworks around them and also to get inspired from them. Designers often get influenced by surroundings, other art forms, nature, philosophy etc. The concept of influence can be seen in the artworks/products since long time. In this process, many times designers are influenced by other artworks or use an existing element in their creation.

Using the existing elements to make a new design with new context is called as „Appropriation". It has two ways. First it changes the interpretation of artworks. In other words one can say it reframes the original artwork without eliminating its aesthetics. The second way is where designers use the elements in a way which deviates from its original intent. This trend can be seen in modern art and Design.

Since appropriation allows new context and meaning to designs, it opens new ways for interpretation. Borrowing other elements from different cultures increases the chances of appreciation of new designs globally. It has its pros and cons. Influence and appropriation in the field of design is more common and AI is also probably used for that. The purpose of this

study is to pinpoint how influence and appropriation has affected the trends in art/design. Primary and secondary data will be used for this study. Mix method along with grounded theory will be used for this study. This study is focused on the consequences of it hence it aims to identify challenges in adopting appropriation and aesthetical influence of it on viewers. To conclude appropriation as influence may be seen through the lenses of evolution wherein some inherited qualities may retained and modified or re-contextualize according to newer environment to adapt the design trends and function successfully.

Keywords: Influence, Aesthetics, Appropriation, Art, Design, Inspiration

1. INTRODUCTION

There is an inevitable will in human beings to express and create something new.

Hence everyone tries to express themselves through various kinds of arts. Visual arts are part of them. One can see variety of artworks around us. It has been observed that human beings try to join or connect the dots of different contexts to create their own story. Most of the times, design or art begins from inspiration. According to Jasmine Rosten Edwards, a London based Interior designer and art curator, "all artists are inspired by other people, art movements and artists through times" (HUNT).

There are several implications of the word "Appropriation". According to the Cambridge dictionary, appropriation means "The act of taking something for your own use, usually without permission" (Cambridge University).

2. APPROPRIATION FROM THE ARTIST'S POINT OF VIEW

Artists are copying their surroundings since ancient times. In fact imitation was considered as good aesthetics in the western world. The history of appropriation goes back to ancient times. Egyptian and Indian geometrical motifs inspired many arts around the world. The art of Rococo was inspired by Chinese designs of flora and fauna. One can observe appropriation in earlier products and arts for long time. It can be seen in variety of media like painting, sculpture, photography and digital art. Since this research is focused on visual arts thus, most of the examples are encompassing the visual domain. Artists have been following each other since decades. There are many examples where appropriation
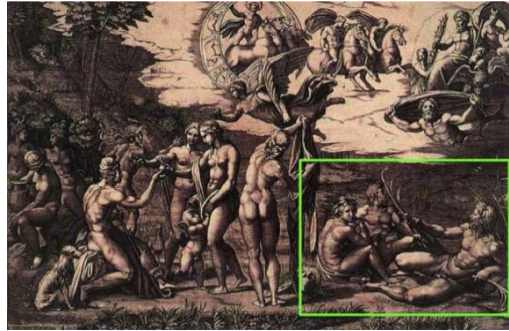
1 Judgment of Paris by Raphael, 1515 (Parc)

in composition, colours, and visuals can be found. One can see the repetition of the similar composition inspired by Raphael, an Italian painter and architect then Manet, a French impressionist artist and then followed by Picasso, a Spanish painter and sculptor.

Fig. 2 The Luncheon on the Grass by Manet, 1862 (Wikiart)

Fig. 3 The Luncheon on the Grass, after Manet, 1960 by Picasso (Wikiart)

Dadaism can be a good example of it. Marcel Duchamp, a French painter and sculptor used urinal for his concept of "Ready – made". He used it as an art piece which was originally created for some other purpose.

Fig. 4 Fountain by Marcel Duchamp, 1917 photograph by Alfred Steiglitz (word)

Later Sherrie Levine, an American photographer, painter and conceptual artist again used appropriation in her art inspired by Marcel Duchamp. She was known for reproductions of canonical male artists" works.

Fig. 5 Fountain in Bronze (After Marcel Duchamp), 1991 by Sherrie Levine (Artnet)

American pop artist Roy Lichtenstein used comic book illustrations as inspirations. Pablo Picasso used some objects in his art which were not previously created for art. Andy Warhol, an American artist used pre-existing objects or photographs for his art. American art critic & theorist Rosalind Krauss"s book „The Originality of Avant-Garde and other Modernist Myths" in 1985 questioned the originality in the modern world.

3. APPROPRIATION IN ART AND DESIGN

Ruben Pater, a Dutch designer and researcher thinks that "As a designer, you simply cannot stop yourself from being inspired". Jeff Koons, an anti-modernist artist is inspired by balloon animals/inflatable toys. He questioned the authenticity of the artworks and what it means to be an artist.

Fig. 6 Balloon Flower (Red) 2006 by Jeff Koons (The Art History)

Steve Jobs once inspired by designs of Dieter Rams. He has influenced the look and feel of many Apple products. For example one can see the similarity of Apple iPod 1 and Dieter Ram"s Braun T3 pocket radio.

Fig. 7 Apple iPod 1, 2001 and Dieter Ram"s Braun T3 pocket radio, 1958. (Design is fine. History is mine.)

Indian Graphic designer Kawal Oberoi, concerned about the dying out of Indian local art and graphic patterns. Moved by the fear and frustration about vanishing of it, he introduced Swatch Bharat online platform to identify and promote traditional "desi aesthetics" (Long). Here one can see the appropriation of cultures; pop art and Indian desi graphic patterns.

Fig. 8 Desi Aesthetics (Oberoi)

Steel objects are integral part of Indian kitchens and household. Subodh Gupta has used utensils and other steel objects for his art.

Fig. 9 Very Hungry God 2006 by Subodh Gupta (Wikipedia)

There are many rituals and festivals in India where one can see different kind of idols. Indian artist G Ravinder Reddy who is known for his large scale head sculptures is inspired by Indian traditional practices and popular culture.

Fig. **10 Gilded Head 2007 by G Ravinder Reddy (Contemporary Indian Art)**

These examples prove that many artists, sculptors, designers can be seen implementing the appropriation for their creation. Appropriation artists would not just copy the ideas they also change the scale, composition, colours according to their context of art.Pablo Picasso and Steve Jobs both were of the opinion that, „Good artists copy, great artists steal" (Naudus).

4. APPROPRIATION THROUGH USER'S MINDSET

This thought of appropriation can be seen in symbols, metaphors, meaning in everyday objects. Semantics helps to draw meanings and context with symbolic qualities of the products. When one uses the products in different context the meaning changes accordingly. The designer cannot control the user regarding how user will apply the designs or products. This change in intention changes the context. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) advanced the definition of sign as the unity between a signifier (the actual sign embodied in some material form such as words, shapes) and the signified (what the sign is supposed to mean or signifies) The tendency to use the products for multiple purposes can be seen in every culture. India is a country with people having diverse mindset. In India the term "Jugaad" is used for

these innovative ideas people create. This is one type of appropriation from the user. It happens when people do not afford the expensive solutions for the problem.

Fig. 11 A carton has been used as back seats (Pandrangi)

Fig. 12 A man has created holes in a cap to spray the water. (Rao)

5. APPROPRIATION IN AI

Nowadays AI is also using the same technique. When one provides prompts of various irrelevant or relevant words within same or different cultures AI generates the art combining all the prompts. Today appropriation is at peak in all aspects. Use of AI in art is revolutionary development which raises the question of authorship of art. AI takes this process of appropriation to a new level. Appropriation artists prompt to reimagine the familiar imagery with the fusion of concepts, contexts, cultures, visual language. Artists have
to think about the ethical consideration of it. Excessive use of internet has increased the cultural appropriation in visual arts also.

Fig. 13 If Van Gogh redesigned the packaging of Indian Products (Midjourney) (Reddit)

Fig. 14 Putin Selling Samosas (Midjourney) (Reddit)

Fig. 15 Saree, Saree, Saree! The Desi „Friend-saree" Trio! AI generated Friends characters in Indian attire (Sengupta)

One can observe the endless creation and huge quantity of visual creations per minute.The cultural appropriation happens when a dominant culture takes something from other culture and uses it without regard of the original meaning or context (HUNT).

6. CONCLUSION

One can conclude that appropriation has been used for three different purposes, for inspiration, for changing the intention of the objects and for amalgamation of the cultures. These three purposes are fulfilled through the designer"s point of view, through the user"s point of view and the lastly through AI. Today appropriation is at the peak because of AI. Art and design generated through appropriation can be helpful as resources for next art. It is a circular process. As seen in the above examples the dominating visuals take over the rest.

One can observe that there are two aspects of appropriation in visual arts and design. Many artists have used some previously created product or preexisting image as it is to create art works with new contexts and some of them got inspired by some other artists" artworks, surroundings, other arts, designs to create their own art. This combination of thoughts, contexts, expression and cultures can be seen in appropriation. This happens when already existing visuals or products can serve the purpose of expressing thoughts, creating new designs or telling a story. There is a thin line between inspiration and copying. Appropriation is the amalgamation of both. As this is a visually saturated world; creating an entirely new visual not inspired by any previously created pictorial is nearly impossible. Artists imitate each other. One can conclude that the boundaries of culture, countries, region cannot stop human beings to do appropriation. The trend of using AI for irrelevant cultural appropriation is increasing.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None

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