

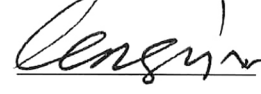
**FROM BEING TO BECOMING:
BODY – IMAGE – SIMULATION**

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
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IN
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

By
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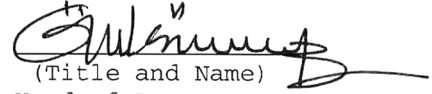
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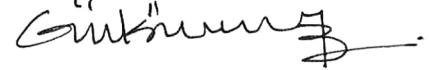
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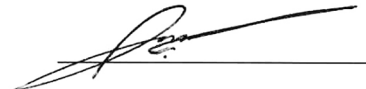
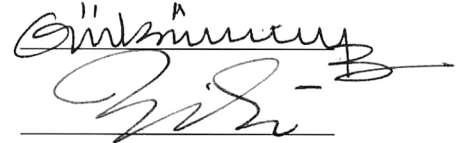
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ABSTRACT

FROM BEING TO BECOMING: BODY – IMAGE – SIMULATION

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MDes. in Design Studies

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Contemporary Western culture is marked by advanced digital technologies and proliferation of images that mediate social relations and experiences. Being both the producer and the product of this context, the body emerges as a theoretical area in relation to its image. Today, due to the extended use of devices, prostheses, plastic surgery, and genetic researches, the boundaries of the body are questioned at an unprecedented extent. Simulation is an opulent concept in order to approach critical issues relating the image and the body because different approaches to simulation have presented different understandings of the relationship between the body and its image. These differences have significant implications in the social and political realm. The aim of this study is to investigate the relation between the body and the image in the contemporary era via simulation theories of Jean Baudrillard, and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. The thesis argues that the contemporary era witnesses a passage from the terminology of being to becoming that offers a critical potential to theorize the relationship between body and image.

KEY WORDS: Body, Image, Simulation, Being, Becoming, Consumer culture

ÖZET

VARLIKTAN OLUŞA: BEDEN – İMAJ – SİMÜLASYON

Işıl Ezgi Çelik

Tasarım Çalışmaları, MDes.

Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Gülsüm Baydar

Mayıs 2012

Çağdaş Batı kültürü, gelişmiş dijital teknolojiler ve günümüzde sosyal ilişki ve deneyimi biçimlendiren imajların hızlı artışıyla karşılaştı. Bu bağlamın hem üreticisi hem de ürünü olan beden, imajla olan ilişkisi çerçevesinde zengin bir teorik alan sunmaktadır. Bugün, yaygın cihaz kullanımı, protezler, plastik cerrahi ve genetik araştırmalar dolayısıyla bedenin sınırları daha önce görülmemiş bir ölçekte sorgulanıyor. Bu çerçevede simülasyon, imaj ve imajın bedenle ilişkisine dair eleştirel bir tutuma katkıda bulunabilecek zengin bir kavram olarak ortaya çıkar. Tarih boyunca farklı simülasyon anlayışları imaj ve bedenin imajla ilişkisine farklı açılımlar getirmiştir ve yol açtıkları farklı yaklaşımların sosyal ve politik düzlemde dikkate değer yansımaları vardır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, çağdaş dönemde beden ve imaj arasındaki ilişkiyi Jean Baudrillard ve Gilles Deleuze ve Felix Guattari'nin simülasyon teorileri aracılığıyla incelemektir. Tez, çağdaş dönemde varlık terminolojisinin yanı sıra beden ve imajı eleştirel bir zeminde teorize eden bir oluş terminolojisinin ortaya çıkarılmakta olduğunu ileri sürer.

ANAHTAR KELİMELER: Beden, İmaj, Simülasyon, Varlık, Oluş, Tüketim kültürü

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The motivation behind this study lies in my daily experiences. The image and the body are two notions that take my full attention. As I majored in philosophy, my approach to their relation is philosophically grounded although I mainly tried to contribute to the domains of visual culture and cultural studies.

I am grateful to my thesis advisor, Prof. Dr. Gülsüm Baydar, who gave patiently and generously of her time. The impact of her expertise and personality on my studies and on my vision is immeasurable. I am also very thankful to all my faculty professors who were always willing to answer my questions and encouraged me to ask more questions. I was especially influenced by the lectures of Asst. Prof. Dr. Aren Emre Kurtgözü and by our discussions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROBLEM DEFINITION

Due to the proliferation of images and the considerable impact of new technologies upon the body it seems that the image and the body appear as key concepts in contemporary critical discourses. The contemporary era is marked by the rapid development of communication networks, expanded markets, global companies, scientific innovations from genetics to technology and questions about the impoverishment of cultural differences and the proliferation of such concepts as post human, inhuman, transhuman, apocalypse, utopia, fear, hope, and cynicism. These are concepts that need to be understood historically in their given contexts.

In *On the Use and Abuse of History for Life* (1874) German Philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche presents the historical human as someone who cannot totally envelope the present and who leaves traces just because of that incapacity. He says that, “The beast lives *unhistorically*; for it ‘goes into’ the present, like a number without leaving any curious reminder. It cannot dissimulate, it conceals nothing, at every moment it seems what is actually is...” (2010:5) He continues the argument stating that,

History, regarded as pure knowledge and allowed to sway the intellect would mean for men the final balancing of the ledger of life. Historical

study is only fruitful for the future if it follows a powerful life-giving influence, for example, a new system of culture-only, therefore, if it is guided and dominated by a higher force, and does not itself guide and dominate. (2010:12)

It is already a problem to choose among an immense literature of human history and make connections through the paradox of thought because the clearer it seems, the more obscure it becomes. For me the problem is to interpret the contemporary era, trying to understand what is written and what is told, combining the ideas doubtfully, to find or to create a basis to rethink the body in a meaningful way. Trying to catch a flow of images that surrounds me and my entourage; trying to understand and to imagine the present, the future, and the possibilities of my own body mean, to me, to contribute to an imperfect historical narrative, and critical thought.

The body gains its meaning historically in a given social and cultural context. As Heidegger once said, “The fundamental movement of modern times consists in conquering the world-as-picture.” (Heidegger quoted in Kockelmans and Kisiel, 1970: 198) The contemporary era continues to face the dominance of images, at an accelerating pace. This social context is accompanied by new image production technologies that create immense possibilities for the production, manipulation and diffusion of images to the point that even the concept of Real is discussed around the proliferation of images as digital images are to be conveyed fast and are open to manipulation. For instance, In 1994, when a football star O.J. Simpson was arrested as a suspect of a murder case, the police’s mug shot appeared on the covers of two American magazines: *Newsweek* and *Time* (**Fig. 1**). American media, culture and communication critics Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright consider the publication

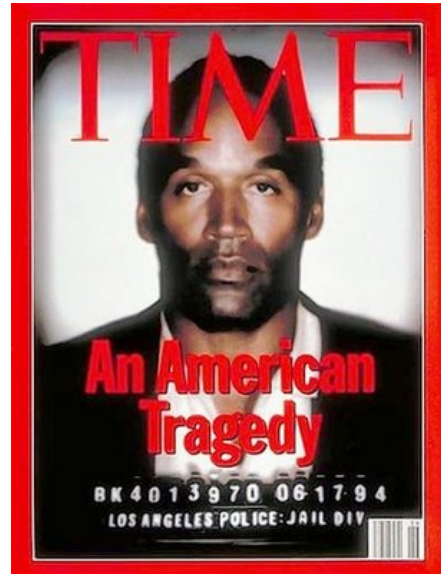
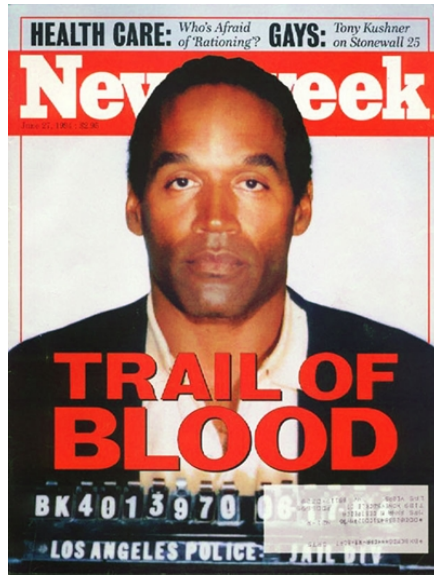


Figure 1, O. J Simpson, Police Mug Shot, 1984, appeared on the cover of Newsweek (left) and Time (right)

of a mug shot on the cover of a magazine as a predominant connotation offered to the viewers prior to their understanding of the case in question. They say, ‘Frontal and side views of the suspects’ unsmiling, unadorned faces are shot. These conventions of framing and composition alone connote to viewers a sense of the subject’s deviance and guilt...’ (2001:24)

In the example of O. J. Simpson, the digital image is used in order to manipulate and distort the event in such a way that the significance of what is lived is overshadowed by how it is shown and seen. The collective memory of the event is reduced to the image. *Time* was also criticized for blackening Simpson’s skin digitally. This was seen as an attempt to emphasize Simpson’s guilt before being judged in court. Although *Time* declared that the attitude of blackening was done for aesthetic reasons, the magazine was confiscated on account of the fact that its attitude was supporting a historical and discriminative approach that presents a connection between guilt and dark skin. (Ibid: 24)

With the concept of Real, however it is seen or conceptualized, corporeality and the bodies inevitably come to the scene. As we experience the world through our bodies, the relation between the body and the image seems crucial to understand what happens to the body, how it is re-conceptualized in the era where the experience is dominated by images. At the age of seven I remember watching the Gulf War (1991) on the television. I knew that I was watching something real, attracted by the comfort of the voyeur. While trying to imagine the horror lived there I was lost in the seduction of visuals. The way we experience visuals creates another reality that has nothing to do with the experienced real. It is important to underline that what is seen is not simply a representation of a reality but rather a remake that presents a reality of its own. This study problematizes the nature of the new reality that is produced by the image in the light of contemporary theories.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

French theorist Guy Debord in *Society of the Spectacle* (1967) argues that contemporary social life transforms being into having, and having into appearing. He says,

The present stage, in which social life has become completely dominated by the accumulated production of the economy, is bringing about a general shift from *having* to *appearing* – all “having” must now derive its immediate prestige and its ultimate purpose from appearances. (2006:11)

With respect to the ambiguous cultural boundaries of the contemporary era, the study aims to focus on Western thought during the late capitalist period that witnesses a consumer society that is surrounded by images, in which the social relations are mediated by images and where the body image is privileged as a commodity.

This study aims to investigate the relation between the body and the image in the contemporary era. In order to avoid an immense and endless debate on the Real it approaches to the subject via the concept of simulation. It mainly presents how the image and the body are conceptualized and related to each other in different ways regarding two contemporary approaches to simulation that are formulated by Jean Baudrillard and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari respectively. These two approaches are not considered contradictory but their difference is shown via their relation to Plato's founding theorization of simulation. In other words contemporary simulation theories are investigated around the original/copy dichotomy that Plato devised and that has been considerably influential in the history of Western thought. On one hand the thesis presents the Baudrillardian critique on the cultural implications of the contemporary developments; and on the other hand, the Deleuze-Guattarian approach to contemporary society that emphasizes a new field of possibilities awakened by these developments.

Although there are several thinkers and philosophers that can be mentioned concerning the subject of the image and the body, the theories that are presented here are limited with respect to the aim of the study which looks for answers to the following questions: How is the original/copy dichotomy established and how does simulation function within this dichotomic perspective? To what extent is the image

a copy or a simulacrum? Has the body been merely reduced to an image or has it disposed of its so-called original limits? What are the implications of such theoretical formulations?

It is important to mention that this thesis does not look for a general definition to contemporary body images. It only criticizes the understanding of the body as a consumer good in relation to its image. That is why the characteristics of body image that are mentioned and exemplified are also limited to the criticism of Baudrillard and Massumi on consumer culture or more generally on contemporary Western culture. Similarly, body without image is considered as a critical concept that questions the limits of the body, and the thesis focuses on the political implications of this investigation without trying to give a general definition to the body without image.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As discussions on simulation lead to questions on the original/copy dichotomy that is related to Plato's Ideas and Appearances, the present study is based on the domain of ontology. Hence, its theoretical background is philosophical and it is related to visual art and design studies, visual culture and body studies. The philosophical approaches to simulation are used to construct a basis for different image and body conceptualizations. Also actual and possible cultural impacts of these approaches are presented using concrete examples under two main sections: The Body Image and

The Body Without Image. These examples include purposeful bodily transformations through plastic surgery as well as sculptures and installations that involve such transformations. The first section begins with Plato's approach to simulation and the simulation theory of Baudrillard. It outlines the fundamental differences and resemblances of these two philosophers. It then considers the body with respect to Baudrillard's theory of simulation and critique of consumer culture. The second section is dedicated to the concept of simulation in terms of Deleuze and Guattari as a critique of Platonism. It tries to explicate what gives the image an autonomous character beyond the original/copy dichotomy and to present the shift from the body image to the body without image in the same context.

Different approaches to simulation present different conceptualizations of body and image. It is obvious that how the body is conceptualized has considerable impacts on the ethical and political realms which inevitably relate to power relations. Studies on the body are crucial because the body is often at the center of power politics as exemplified in the O.J. Simpson case. As such, it is directly related to identity politics that are based on biological and social determinations. Recent developments in scientific, technological, and cultural fields not only changed our understanding of the world and the body, but also imposed unprecedented ways of experiencing the body.

In the contemporary era, the proliferation of images and the mediation of experience via images necessitate investigations on the notion of the image in its relation to the body considering the implications of these relations on the cultural realm.

2. THE BODY IMAGE

2.1 THE SIMULATED IMAGE

Throughout the history of Western thought the notions of real and reality are considered from various aspects. Ancient Greek philosopher Plato is inevitably cited in all discussions on real and reality as he is “...the first to set up the theory that forces the real into a pre-existing frame that exists already at our disposal.” (Bergson, 1984:49) The Platonist attitude of conceptualizing the real and reality according to *a priori* frames opens the path to rationalism that dominates the Western thought. Theorization of the notions of body, image and simulation are all initiated by Plato and criticized by a line of philosophers. Some of these philosophers that are critical of the Platonist approach are mentioned in the following sections ranging Nietzsche to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. This section introduces the general framework of Platonist thought around the Platonist understanding of image and simulation in order to present the basis of the criticism of the following philosophers and thinkers.

Plato does not consider the everyday world of matter as real. For him what is perceivable through corporeal senses is nothing but appearances. Appearances are

distorted reflections of an immaterial realm of Ideas that can be known only through the intellect and only the latter are considered as real. He depicts his theory of Ideas and appearances by the cave allegory. (1991:193,194)

According to this allegory, men are prisoners in a subterranean cavern and their legs and necks are chained from childhood, so that their sight is limited with the cave wall in front of them as the chains prevent them from moving and turning their heads. They see the shadows on the wall and believe that what they see is the only reality. However a fire burns behind them and between the fire and the prisoners there is a parapetted platform that allows puppeteers to walk along. The puppeteers hold up puppets that cast shadows on the wall of the cave. As the prisoners are unable to see these puppets, they consider the shadows as real objects. Hence, what the prisoners see is nothing but the shadows and what they hear is only the echoes cast by objects. As the objects themselves are invisible to the prisoners, they mistake their appearances for the real things.

Using this allegory, Plato depicts the sensible world as the underworld of shadows. In his viewpoint the general terms of our language do not address the sensible objects that we can see but their Ideas. However, as men do not know the Ideas, they take the names of the Ideas for the names of the shadows. Referring to the prisoners Plato asks: “And if they were able to discuss things with one another, don’t you believe they would hold that they are naming these things going by before them that they see?”(1991:194) According to him, the names belong to the everlasting and purely intelligible Ideas that we cannot see but that we can grasp only with the mind and

with language. Bergson asserts that the Ancient Greek philosophers suspected the flux around them, instead of suspecting the constructed nature of language and reason. For him reality is a flux. He says, “The flux of time is the reality itself, and the things which we study are the things which flow. It is true that of this flowing reality we are limited to taking instantaneous views.” (1984:344) Referring also to Platonism, he emphasizes the attitude of Ancient Greeks and says: “Rather than lay blame on the attitude of thought and language toward the course of things, they preferred to pronounce the course of things itself to be wrong.” (1984:314)

Plato’s theory of Ideas separates the intelligible and the sensible and devalues the latter. For Plato the flux is not the reality but the sign of imperfection as it is not stable. On the other hand, everlasting Ideas that are beyond time and change are flawless and thus perfect. This hierarchical and dichotomist/dualist point of view separates form and matter, mind and body, original and copy. Some things are closer to the original than some others; the intelligible original is the most valuable entity whereas appearances should be avoided as they are copies and distortions of the real. After Plato, the dualist model and the original/copy dichotomy have reigned according to his metaphysical philosophy that influenced a considerable proportion of Western thought.

Plato’s approach to image and to body is in tandem with his perspective constructed on binaries and dichotomies. His view of the image is understood through his view of visual arts which is based on his theory of Ideas and the notion of imitation that follows. In *Republic* he considers nearly all forms of art as imitation. (1991:63-81)

As the world that surrounds men is already the world of appearances, as it is already a copy; art as imitation of these appearances is more devalued than the appearances. Plato exiles almost all arts from his Ideal State where only reason reigns. For him especially the visual arts should be avoided as he considers the image as two times degraded from the original. Images are copies of copies, they are simulacra. Simulacra appeal to the emotions and make men straggle from the way of intellect that is connected to the Ideas. According to Plato simulacra are dangerous as they are related to the Ideas only by an external relation; an extrinsic likeness that has the power of ruse and so simulacra can be mistaken for a faithful copy of the Idea and can doubly mislead men as they are doubly degraded.

In order to understand Plato's view of simulacrum better and to create a basis for the following discussions on simulation, it will be useful to refer to the *Sophist*. In this work, Plato unmasks the arts as he unmasks the sophist. The aim of Plato for his Ideal state is stability. In order to keep the State under control, he exiles what may provoke the emotions that are less reasonable thus more chaotic. Benjamin Jowett, English theologian and translator of Plato in the introduction of *Sophist* says that "The sophisms of the day were undermining philosophy; the denial...of the connection of ideas, was making truth and falsehood equally impossible." (1999:3) The Sophist has an unstable character because he is not occupied in the pursuit of knowledge but in the pleasure of appearances. The sophist comes to the scene as a sign of corruption. Jowett says,

The Sophist in Plato is the master of the art of illusion; the charlatan, the foreigner, the prince of esprits-faux, the hireling who is not a teacher, and

who, from whatever point of view he is regarded, is the opposite of the true teacher. He is the 'evil one,' the ideal representative of all that Plato most disliked in the moral and intellectual tendencies of his own age; the adversary of the almost equally ideal Socrates. (1999:7)

According to Plato, the relation of the philosopher to the truth is disinterested. However the sophist is not tied to any upper wordy concepts such as truth. In other words while the philosopher is faithful to truth, the art of the sophist creates the truth by simulating the Platonic truth. Hence, Plato defines sophistry as an imitative human art that produces copies and appearances, thus as insincere and deceptive. In his own words, the sophist is defined as follows,

The art of contradiction making, descending from insincere kind of conceited mimicry, of the semblance making breed, derived from image making, distinguished as a portion, not divine but human, of production, that presents a shadow play of words - such are the blood and lineage which can, with perfect truth, be assigned to the authentic sophist. (Russell, 2004:82)

On this basis, for Plato the Sophist and arts -especially visual arts- resemble each other with a slight difference. Although the Sophist simulates the truth voluntarily, the nature of image as copy of a copy is already simulated. So, both the sophist and image production must be avoided.

Jowett indicates that the meaning of the term 'sophist' has been used in a neutral way in the tragedies and some other ancient Greek thinkers' writings "...for a contriver or deviser or inventor, without including any ethical idea of goodness or badness. Poets as well as philosophers were called Sophists..." (1999:9) In the following chapter, it

will be shown that the passage of the term 'sophist', within its relation to Platonist simulation, from a neutral meaning to a devalued one in the philosophy of Plato is reversed in the philosophy of French philosophers and thinkers Deleuze and Guattari. The latter have liberated the concept of 'simulation' from its devalued meaning in Platonist philosophy to a creative one.

Consequently, the most important contribution of Plato to Western thought is his metaphysical and hierarchical approach that is based on binaries. Separation of the intelligible and the sensible and the devaluation of the latter have deeply marked Western philosophy, culture and art. In a world view based on the original/copy dichotomy, simulation is considered as a second degree, descended copy that should be avoided. Also the visual arts, especially images, need to be avoided because they are simulacra and can mislead men by presenting themselves as faithful copies of the original although their relation to the original is only external.

Plato's view has continued and is criticized by many Western philosophers and thinkers. For some of them the philosophy of Plato is considered as an illness that strikes Western civilization. German philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche can be considered one of the most critical among these philosophers. His critique is mainly directed against the metaphysical separation of the intelligible and the sensible, and the idea of an Ideal world that cannot be lived but known. In *Beyond good and Evil* (1886) Nietzsche asserts that this separation and this hierarchical metaphysics have impoverished Western thought and civilization. Influenced by the critical thinking of Nietzsche against Plato, Deleuze and Guattari also present their

thinking as the reversal of Platonism. However before them French philosopher Jean Baudrillard should be mentioned as he stands between the contradictory approaches of Plato, and Deleuze and Guattari.

The concept of simulation was central to the theories of Baudrillard in his critique of contemporary society and culture. His understanding of simulation is quite different than that of Plato although it is possible to say that they are constructed on a similar basis. In order to see the similarities and differences between the two, it is important to mention first of all that Baudrillard constructs his theory of simulation on a reality principle and highlights the difference between imitation and simulation. He explains this by stating that, "Whoever fakes an illness can simply stay in bed and make everyone believe he is ill. Whoever stimulates an illness produces in himself some symptoms." (1994:3) When someone fakes an illness the reality principle remains as the person is not ill but when simulation comes to the scene, the reality principle is eliminated. Simulation undermines the difference between true and false, original and copy. In Baudrillard's example, it is not possible to say if the person is ill or not, as in the case of simulation the person is both ill and not ill at the same time.

Baudrillard further explains simulation using the example of Iconoclasm. The iconoclast is against the representation of divine, for Baudrillard, not because the divine cannot be represented but because s/he is afraid that the representations of divine can replace divine itself. Baudrillard indicates that for iconoclasts, simulation is omnipotence and the omnipotence of simulacra can efface God from the

conscience of man because simulacra present the destructive and annihilating truth that God never existed, that only the simulacrum ever existed, even that God himself was never anything but his own simulacrum. (1994:4,5) According to Baudrillard if iconoclasts could have thought that the images only confuse or mask the Platonic Idea of God, they would have no reason to destroy them as one can live with the idea of distorted truth. However, the images do not merely copy an original and distort it by doing so; but they are perfect simulacra that are forever radiant with their own fascination. (1994:5) This is what the Iconoclast does not want to face. By his theory of simulation, Baudrillard undermines the Platonist Idea. He declares that neither the Platonic Idea nor God has ever existed. He also points out the reason for Plato's call for the avoidance of the simulacrum: It is not because the simulacrum distorts the Ideas, but it reigns in the absence of the Ideas and by doing so it justifies the absence of the Ideas. Plato tries to repress the simulacrum under the original/copy dichotomy by defining it as a false copy in order to avoid the simulacrum's power to cover the absence of the Ideas. He says,

Whereas representation tries to absorb simulation by interpreting it as false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation itself as simulacrum. Such would be the successive phases of the image:

1. It is the reflection of a profound reality.
2. It masks and denatures a profound reality.
3. It masks the *absence* of a profound reality.
4. It has no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum.

(1994:6)

In this classification whereas the second phase indicates Platonic simulation, the third phase is related to Baudrillard's critique of the Platonic Idea and Plato's version of simulation. The first three phases are quite different from the last one as they refer to a reality or to the absence of a reality. In the last phase however, the simulacrum stands for itself as reality does not exist anymore. Of course the last phase addresses Baudrillard's characterization of the contemporary era. Baudrillard says,

The real is produced from miniaturized cells, matrices, and memory banks, models of control – and it can be reproduced an indefinite number of time from these. It no longer needs to be rational, because it no longer measures itself against either an ideal or negative instance. It is no longer anything but operational. In fact, it is no longer really the real, because no imaginary envelops it anymore. (1994:2)

In this era as everything simulates itself, men are in a world of simulation in which reality also simulates itself. Baudrillard calls this 'hyperreality.'

Whereas the Platonist world is separated into the intelligible and the sensible, the Baudrillardian world is separated into the real world and the world of simulation. Of course, the separation of Baudrillard is not meant to structure human thought in its entirety as his approach is historical and cultural. Also, while being critical of the Platonic approach, Baudrillard also constructs his theory of simulation on a dichotomic perspective. Even when he indicates the autonomy of the image, he does not consider this autonomy as authentic. Actually it should be questioned if the successive phases of images do not overlap in history and if each phase defined by Baudrillard cannot be found in another. Although there are such gaps in the

philosophy of Baudrillard in general, his understanding of simulation leads to a highly influential critique of consumer culture which calls for further explication.

2.2 THE SIMULATED BODY

For Baudrillard contemporary Western culture and society is dominated by “floating images that no longer bear any relation to reality whatsoever.” (Massumi, 1987:90) Reality has disappeared and is replaced by what is realer than real, a phenomenon which Baudrillard calls hyperreality. In *The Transparency of Evil* (1990), he depicts modernity as a historical point of departure for contemporary Western culture and describes the modernist project as an attempt to transform values through the idea of progress and liberation. Although Baudrillard’s notion of liberation can be considered ambiguous, in this thesis it is considered as the liberation of traditional approaches from their historical contexts. By this way an absolute relativism emerges and results with the loss of values of any kind. Baudrillard says,

The glorious march of modernity has not led to the transformation of all values, as we once dreamed it would, but instead to a dispersal and involution of value whose upshot for us is total confusion - the impossibility of apprehending any determining principle, whether of an aesthetic, a sexual or a political kind. (1993:10)

He then proposes three stages to trace the development of value. The first stage is based on use value which is rooted in the natural use of the earthly resources. The term has been widely theorized by historical materialist German philosopher Karl Marx who states that,

The usefulness of a thing makes it a use-value. But this usefulness does not dangle in mid-air. It is conditioned by the physical properties of the commodity, and has no existence apart from the latter. It is therefore the physical body of the commodity itself...which is the use-value or useful thing. (1990:126)

Actually use value is subjective as usefulness that is related to needs varies between people. The second stage is the commodity stage which results in the emergence of exchange value. Exchange value emerges as socially determined in order to standardize the utility of an object. For Marx it is the "...socially recognized standards of measurement for the quantities of these useful objects." (Ibid: 125) For Baudrillard the content of exchange value has changed in the contemporary society, because the commodity also possesses a sign value that accompanies its exchange value. In this third stage, sign value loads the commodity with signs and creates meaning via arbitrary connections between commodities and identities. Whereas use value refers to utility and exchange value refers to equivalence, sign value is based on difference. (Mendoza, 2010:50) The sign value of the late capitalist era is rather metaphysical as value is not related only to the process of production including the quantity of labor, and the quality of the material but to the consumption of signs through commodities. One can differentiate himself/herself from the others, by consuming a commodity that is loaded by sign value. By this way, contemporary Western culture is organized on the basis of the consumption of signs rather than the

production of commodities. For Marx, “The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself.” (Marx quoted in Mendoza, 2010: 47) Mendoza indicates that for Baudrillard, in contemporary society the value of the commodity is based on consumption as the relation between subject and object has changed; the subject that consumes is objectified whereas the object consumed is subjectified and Baudrillard calls this relation as personalization. (2010:48) For him, “Consumption is surely not that passive process of absorption and appropriation which is contrasted to the supposedly active mode of production.” (Baudrillard quoted in Mendoza, 2010:48) The third stage of sign value is central to consumption and here, the commodity is produced as a sign and signs are produced as commodities. Hence the sign value which is endowed with exchange value is inherent to the commodity. (Mendoza, 2010:49) Having traced this development, Baudrillard announces the loss of value as a fourth stage which he calls the fractal stage. With the proliferation of signs, the consumer culture reduces reality to signs and images. Parallel to Baudrillard’s perspective, Debord says that “Everything that was directly lived has receded into a representation.” (2006:7) Baudrillard describes this as follows,

(...) there is no point of reference at all, and value radiates in all directions, occupying all interstices, without reference to anything whatsoever, by virtue of pure contiguity. At the fractal stage there is no longer any equivalence, whether natural or general. (1993:5)

In an atmosphere where everything is liberated actually or potentially from their referential bases no value is developed anymore. Properly speaking as there is no criteria of value anymore; it is now the dispersal of value. It is no longer possible to speak of ‘value’ at all, for this kind of propagation or chain reaction makes all

valuation impossible. (1993:5) Baudrillard explains this with an example stating that “The situation resembles that of a currency which may not be exchanged: it can only float, its only reference itself, impossible to convert into real value or wealth.” (1993:14, 15)

For Baudrillard (1993) modernity as the moment of liberation and progress in every sphere witnesses the production and even the overproduction in a large spectrum from objects to ideas. Although the contemporary era surpassed the objectives of liberation and progress because everything has already been realized actually or potentially, it pretends that the liberation process continues at an accelerating pace. Thus this era creates a culture that simulates the modernist era by hyper-realizing its features through simulation so that what has been already lived can be repeated interminably by entering in a circuit of reproduction. Canadian political philosopher and social theorist Brian Massumi resembles this to the movement in an aimless orbit around an empty center. (1987:90) In this era everything is transferred into simulation. For Baudrillard nothing, not even God disappears by coming to an end, by dying anymore. He continues,

Instead, things disappear through proliferation or contamination, by becoming saturated or transparent, because of extenuation or extermination, or as a result of the epidemic of simulation, as a result of their transfer into the secondary existence of simulation. Rather than a mortal mode of disappearance, then, a fractal mode of dispersal. (1993:4)

For Baudrillard the reason for this phenomenon is that as things are liberated from their reference, they enter an endless process of reproduction. The ideas of things disappear but things continue to function in what Baudrillard calls an ‘inescapable

indifference' whereby difference between them disappears. All disciplines and domains from politics to art lose their specificity as they reach an end and simulate themselves. Transpolitics, transaesthetics, transsexuality are generalized to the transitive concepts that denote the elimination of difference. He says,

Each category is generalized to the greatest possible extent, so that it eventually loses all specificity and is reabsorbed by all the other categories. When everything is political, nothing is political any more, the word itself is meaningless. When everything is sexual, nothing is sexual any more, and sex loses its determinants. When everything is aesthetic, nothing is beautiful or ugly any more, and art itself disappears. (1993:9)

In the scheme of Baudrillard even the body as referent cannot hold ground. It is re-conceptualized by the market, as an idealized image. The body is replaced by a simulated version of itself, by a 'hyperbody.'

The disappearance of conventional markers of sexuality or mainly the disappearance of referential points is directly marked on the human body. This phenomenon is best exemplified by surgical interventions that range from prostheses to sex changes. The purposeful loss of conventional corporeal markers surgically or symbolically calls for a re-conceptualization of the body. As Baudrillard states:

(...) whether the operation in question is surgical or semio-surgical, whether it involves organs or signs, we are in any case concerned with replacement parts, and since today the body is fated to become a prosthesis, it is logical enough that our model of sexuality should have become transsexuality, and that transsexuality should have everywhere become the locus of seduction. (1993:20)

For Baudrillard (1993) the scope of the hyperbody involves prostheses. Even sex is like a supplementary or mechanical part of the human, and the body is a device that can be partly modified. Baudrillard cites Michael Jackson and Andy Warhol to explicate his argument. Michael Jackson (**Fig. 2**) takes his place among genetically modified beings.



Figure 2, Michael Jackson, Album Cover: Michael , 2010

After several surgical operations that Jackson had undergone and medical interventions that had whitened his black skin that supposedly changed his genetic constitution, his transformation points towards the abolishment of race in an ideal future through his reconstructed, idealized hyperbody. Baudrillard explains the motivations for constructing an ideal appearance by saying,

(...) Michael has had his face lifted, his hair straightened, his skin lightened - in short, he has been reconstructed with the greatest attention to detail. This is what makes him such an innocent and pure child - the artificial hermaphrodite of the fable, better able even than Christ to reign over the world and reconcile its contradictions; better than a child-god because he is child-prosthesis, an embryo of all those dreamt-of mutations that will deliver us from race and from sex. (1993:21, 22)

Andy Warhol is also presented as a mutant that will bring, for his part, an aesthetic that will abolish aesthetics through a supposed hybridization of art. Baudrillard says for Warhol,

Like Jackson, he is a perfectly artificial personality: he too is innocent and pure, an androgyne of the new generation, a sort of mystical prosthesis or artificial machine capable, thanks to its perfection, of releasing us at one blow from the grip of both sex and aesthetics. (1993:22)

Warhol says that all works are beautiful - so he does not have to choose between them; all contemporary works are equivalent and art is everywhere-therefore it no longer exists. For Baudrillard, Warhol gives in fact an accurate description of the shape of the modern aesthetic, an aesthetic of radical agnosticism. So, Baudrillard says that "We are all agnostics, transvestites of art or of sex. None of us has either aesthetic or sexual convictions any longer - yet we all profess to have them." (1993:22)

It is obvious that Baudrillard is unsympathetic to the idea of liberation and hybridization as such. For him the idea of indifference is nearly apocalyptic and the new liberated system is not much different from the previous oppressive one in

its functions. The new system is not based on a radical critique of the previous one as long as it emerges as a myth and the myth of liberation is now materialized in transvestism.

This prosthetic phenomenon renders the media and devices that the body uses as its natural corporeal parts but it can also make the body the prosthesis of such devices. For instance, the use of a computer does not only facilitate the task of contemporary subjects, but it imposes itself on its users. The computer shapes the latter's way of living, experiencing and even thinking. Computers give tasks to the subjects in order to guarantee their own survival and development. For example computer programs and systems demand the update of new features developed for them. The user has to click on a button which appears on the screen to complete this task. Computers are 'devices' that assign tasks in their own terms. Similarly social media applications that have been largely used in the internet function independent of the will of their users. They change their interfaces or update new features automatically or even autonomously and impose new organizational models. From then on the users should adapt themselves to the decisions, functions, and criteria of a computerized system. The human body that practically becomes prosthesis of the devices s/he uses does not develop an identity through a subjective, historical memory anymore. The more the memory span shortens, the more the identity becomes an appearance that is useful in public relations. Baudrillard says,

We no longer have time to search for an identity for ourselves in the archives, in a memory, in a project or a future. Instead we are supposed to

have an instant memory to which we can plug in directly for immediate access to a kind of public-relations identity. (1993:23)

As everything is liberated, every difference is abolished and the body is prosthetic, what is left behind the identity is appearance. The body as the field of human experience is reduced to an image or a succession of its momentary images which means exteriorizing the look. The subject is not the one who looks but s/he is rather the one that is looked at. Baudrillard says,

Everyone seeks their look.¹ Since it is no longer possible to base any claim on one's own existence, there is nothing for it but to perform an appearing act without concerning oneself with being - or even with being seen. So it is not: I exist, I am here! but rather: I am visible, I am an image - look! look! This is not even narcissism, merely an extraversion without depth, a sort of self-promoting ingenuousness whereby everyone becomes the manager of their own appearance. (1993:23)

A similar criticism is offered by English sociologist Mike Featherstone. As everybody looks for their appearances, the images come forward as consumer goods and are related to bodies. He says that,

¹ Baudrillard defines the look as a sort of minimal low-definition image referring to the concept of , the tactile image of Canadian philosopher and communication theorist Herbert Marshall McLuhan. The tactile image that McLuhan introduces requires of the eye a degree of involvement as touch. (Gordon, W.T., 2010:16) Baudrillard says, similar to tactile image, the look is a sort of, "...image which draws neither attention nor admiration - as fashion still does - but is no more than a special effect, with no particular significance. The look is no longer a function of fashion - it is a form of fashion that has been overtaken. It no longer even appeals to a logic of distinction, it is no longer founded on an interplay of differences: it plays at difference without believing in it. It is, in fact, indifference. Being oneself has become a transient performance with no sequel, a disabused mannerism in a world without manners." (1993:23)

The perception of the body within consumer culture is dominated by the existence of a vast array of visual images. Indeed the inner logic of consumer culture depends upon the cultivation of an insatiable appetite to consume images. (1991:178)

With this insatiable appetite, even the body turns into a consumable image.

2.2.1 THE FRAGMENTED BODY

In Western cultures it is possible to consider a semiotic reciprocity between the body and the soul or self, known as physiognomy. (Anthony quoted in Wegenstein and Ruck, 2011:28) The beautiful face and the healthy body have been related to divinity or goodness, whereas physical deformation, ugliness, sickness and weakness are considered as signs of cursed evil souls or moral corruption. Even Plato (1991) assumes a correspondence between a beautiful disposition of the soul and the correlating beauty of bodily form. This approach is often seen through the history of Western culture. For instance Johann Caspar Lavater, a Swiss physiognomist from the 18th century clearly announces the connection between the physical beauty and moral inner self, by stating that,

Beauty and ugliness have a strict connection with the moral constitution of Man. In proportion as he is morally good, he is handsome; and ugly, in proportion as he is morally bad. (Lavatar quoted in Wegenstein and Ruck, 2011:30)

This historical fact is accompanied by image technologies that created considerable consequences within their related cultures. For instance American social critic Christopher Lasch explains the role of cameras on the experiences of modern life as follows,

Cameras and recording machines not only transcribe experience but alter its quality, giving to much of modern life the character of an enormous echo chamber, a hall of mirrors. Life presents itself as a succession of images, of electronic signals, of impressions recorded and reproduced by means of photography, motion pictures, television and sophisticated recording devices. Modern life is so thoroughly mediated by electronic images that we cannot help responding to others as if their actions - and our own - were being recorded and simultaneously transmitted to an unseen audience or stored up for close scrutiny at some later time. (Lasch quoted in Johnston, 2001:84)

In a social atmosphere that borrows the eye of the camera as its own, the traditional notion of physiognomy seems to be transformed. As the relationship between the body and the inner self begins to function in favor of the former, instead of a beautiful body as the reflection of the inner goodness, the transformed body is now seen as the reflection of the inner self. Thus, the motivations of consumer culture to

attain beauty, youth, and health are commodified and marketed as the guarantee to renew and attain a better inner self. The consumer culture presents the body as a body image that can be attained with sufficient effort and the constructed image is expected to bring desirability, and hence happiness. American cultural critic Stephen Kern says,

Ours is an age obsessed with youth, health and physical beauty. Television and motion pictures, the dominant visual media, churn out persistent reminders that the lithe and graceful body, the dimpled smile set in an attractive face, are the keys to happiness, perhaps even its essence. (Kern quoted in Hatty and Hatty, 1999:23)

In consumer cultures, marketing specialists try to persuade the consumers that with sufficient effort everyone can achieve a desired appearance and be happy as a desired individual in society. How one looks, is almost related to one's ethical responsibility. Here, we return to Baudrillard and his understanding of the body in consumer culture as a simulated, hyperbody. Baudrillard presents the hyperbody as a metaphysical concept. He says that "The body as instituted by modern mythology is no more material than the soul." (1998a:136) For him, it has literally taken over the moral and ideological function of the soul as the object of salvation that comes with the idea of punishment and culpability. "If you don't make your bodily devotions, if you sin by omission, you will be punished. Everything that ails you comes from being culpably irresponsible towards yourself (your own salvation)." (Ibid: 130) It is not any more God who punishes but one's own (hyper) body. That is why Baudrillard considers the body as the finest consumer object as it is fed by the motivation of salvation and / or fear of punishment. For instance he points out the imperative of consumer culture to look good through the relation between the female body and beauty as follows,

For women, beauty has become an absolute, religious imperative; Being beautiful is no longer an effect of nature or a supplement to moral qualities.

It is the basic, imperative quality of those who take the same care of their faces and figures as they do of their souls. (Ibid: 132)

Of course, in consumer culture, this marketing logic envelops not only women but men and transsexuals as well. In other words, in the understanding of consumer culture, ethics requires one to try to make himself/herself desired and finally to objectify oneself by their looks. Baudrillard explains what one should do as follows,

(...) revert back into one's own body and invest it narcissistically 'from the inside', not in any sense to get to know it in depth, but, by a wholly fetishistic and spectacular logic, to form it into a smoother, more perfect, more functional object for the outside world. (Ibid: 131)

Thus cosmetics and plastic surgery, beauty, fitness and leisure industries proliferate in order to create and respond a demand for physical and psychic transformation.

Featherstone says,

Day-to-day awareness of the current state of one's appearance is sharpened by comparison, with one's own past photographic images as well as with the idealized images of the human body which proliferate in advertising and the visual media. (1991:178)

Consumer culture views the body as malleable material in order to encourage the consumers to change their appearance as a means to change their lives. Even biological determinations are not determinate anymore due to plastic surgery and genetic research; the skin is detached from its biological, social, historical determinations and references and becomes dress-like. An anonymous acquaintance

once said “Michael Jackson is one of the unusual white people that has the voice of a black person.” Here, the subject is not ignorance or naivety but the extreme confusions in a world without context. In the case of Jackson is it possible to say that plastic surgery and genetic modifications function in behoof of liberation from determinations or rather do they present, in terms of Baudrillard, the transformation of rational Western culture to a hyperrational culture that practices the limits of rationality at the limits of irrationality? By changing his skin color, does Jackson show that the human being is not subject to even biological determinations, and s/he can practice an extreme self destruction in order to submit himself/herself to dominant discourses of desirability?

Liberation from biological and cultural determinations is a myth that does not bring any liberation at all but more determinations if it is not critical against discriminative ideologies. Liberation means nothing if the dominant ideology will continue to function anyway at the core of that liberation. Nowadays determinations are based less on biological or historical origins than on appearances. Especially advertising takes advantage of this detachment from original contexts and makes seemingly unlimited arbitrary connections. Today every identity is for sale; advertisements are capable of producing meaning by creating artificial connections between qualities, identities and goods. On televisions, billboards, the internet, in magazines and in newspapers it is announced who is beautiful, who is healthy, and who is attractive. It is also announced that nobody is condemned to his/her body and that as the body can be modified. These announcements are followed or accompanied by prescriptions for beauty, health, happiness or attractiveness. Everyone can choose the person s/he

wants to be and purchase the necessary equipments. Even unattractiveness can be seen and sold as attractiveness because of the lack of any stable criteria.

In *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989), Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic Slavoj Žižek indicates that the ideology of the contemporary era does not function by misleading but rather by a kind of cynicism. He points out that the ideology is not any more ‘they do it because they do not know it’ but rather ‘they know it but they do it.’(1989:21) From the Baudrillardian perspective (2008), today any ideology is possible for the same reason as ideology is based on illusions. On the other hand the world of simulation is based on hallucinations and hyperrationality. Hence, the ideal of liberation of modernity, following an idealized, metaphysical notion of body has been functioning in favor of consumer culture as it is not accompanied by a critique of dominant ideologies. The latter did not liberate humanity, but served to condemn humanity to consume and to be consumed.

In this context, the commodified body freezes into an image that can be fragmented and reconstructed. The inner experience of the body is exteriorized as happiness is related to attractiveness and one’s identity is defined by the impact of a continuity of photographic images of the self. Hence the body becomes an endless photographic project but the photograph that one wants to attain changes continuously with exterior interventions of marketing in favor of the continuity of consumption, because “The body sells products. Beauty sells products. Eroticism sells products.” (Baudrillard, 1998a:135)

The contemporary body is fragmented so that it can create a seemingly unlimited extended market. For each fragmented and separated corporeal part such as the eyes,

legs, hair, and skin many products are produced and sold catering to the motivations of consumer culture towards beauty, health, prestige, happiness and attractiveness. These parts are not only bodily parts but are also charged with cultural, political, ethical and symbolical functions. In a series of advertisement created by American clothing and footwear brand Nike, it is obvious how the language of advertisement fragments the body and loads all the fragments with meanings that are created via arbitrary connections (**Fig. 3**).



Figure 3, Nike's Advertisement Series, 2005

Some other examples can be given from the international political arena. The Italian parliament witnessed an Italian porn star depute, Anna Ilona Staller who offered to have sex with Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, in return for peace in the region. A state in America witnessed an over emasculated Hollywood star, Arnold Schwarzenegger as governor. It would be naive to think that these celebrities were in the political arena because of their abilities in the domain of politics. It was their sheer popularity that had been gained due to extraordinary dimensions of breasts and muscles and their symbolic meaning in the society corresponding to sexual pleasure and power.

2.2.2. THE LIFE-LESS BODY

Throughout the history of Western thought, due to the dominance of Platonist rationalism and the contribution of Christianity, what is living, what is in process, what is continuously changing is considered as imperfect. Once the body is reduced to body image that seeks for an ideal, and for perfection; once body is fragmented and the skin is considered dress-like, then the indications of life are also exteriorized from the body. Baudrillard mentions a second skin that emerges as a metaphysical and ideal notion and covers the body. He says,

The skin itself is defined not as 'nudity' but as an erogenous zone, a sensuous medium of contact and exchange, a metabolism of absorption and excretion. The body does not stop at this porous skin, full of holes and

orifices; only metaphysics institutes it as the borderline of the body. This body is denied in the interests of a second, non-porous skin that neither exudes nor excretes, that is, neither hot nor cold... (1998b:106)

The second skin is worn and envelops the body as a costume and points out the attempt to hide the fact that the skin transpires, injures, and gets ill or old. The body cannot even be nude anymore because nudity is also loaded by signs and worn as second skin. At this point it is possible to question if the body was ever nude. English art critic John Berger in *Ways of Seeing* (1972) mentions a distinction between nakedness and nudity made by English art historian Kenneth Clark's *The Nude*. (1972: 53) For Clark, to be naked means simply to be without clothes, whereas the nude appears as an art form. Berger develops Clark's approach and says that, 'To be naked is to be oneself. To be nude is to be seen naked by others and yet not recognized for oneself. A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become a nude.' (Ibid: 54) For Berger, beyond being simply an art form, nudity is rather a way of seeing in general that objectifies the depicted subject. In this context the Baudrillardian nude resembles the notion of nakedness more than unity i.e. the fact of not having clothes rather than being undressed for a voyeur. Berger mentions that in the history of Western art, loved women are depicted more or less naked, i.e., as a subject rather than an object offered to the male gaze. Baudrillard's nudity, on the other hand, seems to extend the notion of nakedness. In his view, the second skin appears already as an object covering the body. Even in the case of nakedness, there is no way to see the skin as it used to be. Baudrillard says that "Even in nudity, the body turns back on itself, shrouding itself with an ethereal and ineluctable censorship: the second skin." (1998b:106) The body is covered with the second skin and that object like skin is neither alive nor dead but constructed.

The body image resembles the second skin in terms of Baudrillard. Body image is life-less like an object or an image and it excludes the indications of life such as transpiration, aging, and sickness.

Life-less bodies are arguably best represented in the traveling exhibition, *Body Worlds* (**Fig. 4**) prepared by German anatomist Gunther von Hagen. Preserved by Hagen's plastination technique, dead bodies are injected with plastics and displayed in life-like compositions like playing basketball, dancing, and running.



Figure 4, Gunther von Hagen, Body Worlds

It is possible to say that especially the American culture is familiar with the spectacular displays of the dead human body due to the open casket funerals where

the handiwork of the embalmer blurs the boundaries between life and death. American art historian Monica Ines Huerta says,

The embalmer's main objective is to blur the boundary between life and death—what is living and what is not living—by physically reconstructing—through makeup, clothing and accessories, and hairstyle—the illusion of life onto a person's corporeal remains. (2010:2)

She sees a resemblance between the work of the embalmer and of a sculptor who renders a three-dimensional copy of life to create a human-like presence. But the difference is too clear to overlook. When the embalmer displays the dead body, it is to make people who encounter the body remember that the body was once alive. The sculptor, feeding from the same blurring between life and death, questions the boundaries between these two, as it will be discussed in the following chapter. However for now returning to *Body Worlds*, it should be mentioned that the exhibition of plastinated bodies is quite problematic. It can be considered at the intersection of science and art without being exactly one or the other. Considering Baudrillard's critique of categories and disciplines that are generalized to the greatest possible extent, it is possible to say that at this intersection neither art is art nor science is science anymore. Huerta depicts the bodily experience that the exposition creates for the viewer as, "A palpable slippage between the life-like and the death-like locates von Hagens's bodies and body fragments in an object-subject purgatory." (Ibid: 42)

It is possible to consider the exhibition's function, differently from the work of embalmer and very differently from that of sculptors. The bodies displayed in *Body*

Worlds are not only bodies that had lost their life but also their death. Situated at an object-subject purgatory they are plastinated bodies that are neither hot nor cold. They are "...purified from their corporeal secretions, excretions, desires and identities."(Baydar, 2010:22) These plastinated bodies create a sense of reality by eliminating corporeality, death and life from the body and present an extreme example of body image. As Turkish architectural historian and theoretician Gülsüm Baydar points out, the most critical part of the exhibition may be the video that visualizes the process of plastination. She says that the bodies that are plunged into paraffin resemble the bodies that are descended to grave. (Ibid: 22) Only, the latter is the burial of the dead human body, whereas the former is the burial of the notion of the real body in order to enable the birth of a hyper body. It seems like the passage from corporeal bodies to simulated bodies implies disappearing without dying, by becoming images. Baudrillard indicates the obsession of this era towards immortality and perfection, in other words towards lifelessness by stating that,

The vitrification of nudity is related to the obsessional function of the protective wax or plastic coating of objects and the labour of scrubbing and cleaning intended to keep them in a constant state of propriety, of flawless abstraction. In both cases, vitrification and protection, it is a matter of blocking secretions (patina, oxidisation, dust), preventing them from collapsing and maintaining them in a sort of abstract immortality. (1998b:105)

Consequently Baudrillard depicts Western consumer culture after modernization through his theory of simulation. After the endeavor of liberation, a value and identity crisis breaks out. Difference is eliminated from every domain of life and things end up losing their referents. The consumerist approach that is related to the

crisis of values makes things enter and be repeated endlessly in a circuit of reproduction as consumer goods. In this era everything is valuable and so nothing is valuable. In the consumer culture the presentation of the body is based on the body as an object of demand. The liberated body and liberated sexuality after modernisation has consumed both the body and sexuality.

Finally Baudrillard furthers the problem and defines the consumer culture's understanding of body as nearly apocalyptic. For him the hyperbody and even this social construction suffer from metastases because it encounters an interior resistance. He says,

Saddling the body with replacement parts and abandoning it to genetic whims inevitably dislocates its systems of defence. A fractal body whose external functions are fated to multiply is, by the same token, fated to suffer internal proliferation at the cellular level. Metastasis occurs - and internal and biological metastases are paralleled by the external metastases constituted by prostheses, networks and ramiform systems. (1993:63)

For Baudrillard liberation of everything does not bring more freedom but self-destruction and the body turns against itself. He contends that "By becoming transparent in its genetic, biological and cybernetic being, the body even develops an allergy to its own shadow." (1993:122)

Consequently, in the contemporary era the prevailing attempt throughout Western thought to organize life around supposedly *a priori* and idealized concepts ends up

with the notion of body that is seen as an image. Although Baudrillard does not use the term 'body image' his criticisms of the body that becomes a hyperbody refers to the body image that emerges in consumer culture. His criticism is fundamentally on the consequences of the Platonist ideal in his contemporary society that ends up in a world of simulation.

When the question is the oppressed body another important French philosopher that should be mentioned is Michel Foucault. According to Foucault the body is produced within power relations. This viewpoint presents a powerful critique against the essentialist understandings of the body. Especially *The Care of The Self* (1988) is presents a profound criticism on the political implications of the oppressed body. Foucauldian criticism of the body is not included directly in this thesis due to the limitations of the study to issues of simulation.

3. THE BODY WITHOUT IMAGE

3.1. THE AUTONOMOUS IMAGE

What if the image can be seen beyond the original/copy dichotomy as an autonomous entity? The attempt to give the image an autonomous character influences the relation between the body and the image in the contemporary era where the body is predominantly reduced to an image. French philosophers and thinkers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari are also critical of the Platonist ideal but their approach to simulation is quite different than Baudrillard. Whereas Baudrillard criticizes the consequences of the Platonist ideal in the contemporary era and considers simulation as a historical and cultural fact, Deleuze and Guattari propose the reversal of Platonism and assign simulation a positive character that emerges through the creative approach of the subject. This approach frees the image from being a devalued copy of the original and advocates its autonomy in terms of creativity beyond the original/copy dichotomy. Hence, their approach to simulation proposes a different concept of body that is also based on the reversal of Platonism.

Nietzsche defined the task of philosophy or, more generally, the task of the philosophy of the future as to reverse Platonism, says Deleuze. (2004:291) In *The Genealogy of Morals* (2003), Nietzsche considers Platonist dualism as an illness that depreciates Western civilization by distinguishing essence from appearance,

intelligible from sensible and original from copy. However, Deleuze, does not view Platonic dualisms only in these terms. For him, there is a subterranean dualism between two sorts of images: copies and simulacra. Deleuze introduces this distinction in *Logic of Sense* and says, “It is not the distinction between the Model and the Copy, but rather between copies and simulacra.” (Ibid: 4)

Platonic dualism considers copies as secondary. The same logic considers the simulacra as copies of copies that imply a distance from the original, a sort of deviation. So, the Platonic world does not only distinguish original from copy but through the same logic it distinguishes copy from simulacrum valuing the first term over the other. Deleuze points out,

Copies are secondary possessors. They are well-founded pretenders, guaranteed by resemblance; *simulacra* are like false pretenders, built upon dissimilarity, implying an essential perversion or a deviation...Platonic motivation: it has to do with selecting among the pretenders, distinguishing good and bad copies or, rather, copies (always well-founded good images because they are endowed with resemblance) and simulacra (always engulfed in dissimilarity). (Ibid: 294)

The main point here is that for Deleuze, Platonism considers resemblance as an internal relation between original and copy. The original addresses the Idea in the Platonic world. So, “...the copy truly resembles something only to the degree that it resembles the Idea of that thing...” says Deleuze. “...it is the superior identity of the Idea which founds the good pretention of the copies, as it bases it on an internal or derived resemblance.” (Ibid: 295) The copy is a well-founded pretender because it is

attached to the original, to the idea internally. Its relation to the original is a relation of resemblance. On the other hand simulation resembles its model only through an external relation. Thus simulation does not truly resemble its model as long as its resemblance is only an illusion, and a surface effect. Whereas the copy is faithful to representing the Idea through an internal relation to the Idea, the external resemblance of the simulacra contains a mad element that has nothing to do with imitation. Deleuze points out that the simulacrum cuts its relations with its model by internalizing its difference from the model. He says that simulacra,

(...) still produces an *effect* of resemblance but this effect is completely external. Simulacrum is built upon a disparity or difference. It internalizes dissimilarity, thus it can no longer be defined in relation to a model. (Ibid: 295)

Whereas the copy is an image endowed with resemblance, the simulacrum is an image without resemblance. Deleuze exemplifies this relation with the catechism that accentuates the demonic character of the simulacrum. According to the catechism God made man in his image and resemblance. However through sin man loses the resemblance but maintains the image. That is how man becomes simulacra.² (Ibid: 295)

As the resemblance produced by simulation is a surface illusion, simulacrum is not simply a copy of a copy -that would evoke the artificial. (Ibid: 303) According to Deleuze the difference between the copy and the simulacrum is in their nature. Simulacrum is a false pretender which undoes the nature of original and model in

² At this point it is also possible to question the position of woman in relation to man in a further analysis. If man marks the beginning of creation as a faithful copy of God, maybe woman was always considered as simulacrum.

order to differentiate itself from the model. In this way it turns against its model as it does not fall under the original/copy and model/simulacrum dichotomies but exists in its own terms. That means that the pejorative sense of the false of Platonism turns into a creative element in Deleuzian terms: Simulation embodies false as power.

3.1.1 FALSE AS POWER

Deleuze indicates two different points of views that conceptualize simulation differently, a change of perspective from false as pejorative to false as power. In the philosophy of Plato simulation comes into the picture as “destined to take on a pejorative sense to the extent that it is now only simulation, that is applies to the simulacrum and designates only the external and nonproductive effect of resemblance, that is, an effect obtained by ruse or subversion.” (Ibid: 296) Similarly catechism, that is inspired by Platonism says Deleuze, considers the deceptive character of simulation as evil. On the other hand Deleuze’s approach to simulation is rather positive. Simulation functions as a Dionysian³ machine, instead of falling under original/copy dichotomy. Simulation,

(...) involves the false as power... in the sense in which Nietzsche speaks of the highest power of the false. By rising to the surface, the simulacrum

³ As Deleuze points it out; the simulation is inseparable from the Nietzschean concept of eternal return. Deleuze presents the eternal return in this sense as becoming mad and mentions the Dionysian sources in the same context (Ibid.:292)The Greek mythology confronts Dionysus and Apollo as the God of madness and that of reason.

makes the Same and the Similar, the model and the copy, fall under the power of the false. (Ibid: 300)

In order to further the analysis of the false as power Brian Massumi mentions how mimicry, pretention, and false function as power in nature. “Imitation is an indication of a life force propelling the falsifier toward the unbridled expression of its uniqueness.” (1987:92) says Massumi. He states,

An insect that mimics a leaf does so not to meld with the vegetable state of its surrounding milieu, but to reenter the higher realm of predatory animal warfare on a new footing....There is a power inherent in the false: the positive power of ruse, the power to gain a strategic advantage by masking one's life force. (1987:91)

For Plato, the observer cannot master the dimensions, depth and distances that simulacrum implies and ends up with detaching from the original itself that leads to the loss of good sense. So, the false as power functions against the truth of the original. On the other hand for Deleuze, “...there is in the simulacrum a becoming-mad, or a becoming unlimited...” (2004:296) It includes the differential point of view, and the observer becomes part of simulacrum itself, which is transformed and deformed by his point of view. By this way the false as power renders itself truth as it is interiorized by the subject. In the differentiated experience of the subject, simulacrum is not determined as false by an exterior distinction of the original and the copy, rather it presents itself as truth.

Paradox and becoming mad are critical elements at the core of simulation. In *Logic of Sense* Deleuze refers to Lewis Carroll's famous game with logic in *Adventures of*

Alice in Wonderland, Through the Looking-Glass (1865) in order to provide a general framework for becoming mad, Deleuze indicates that Plato distinguishes two dimensions,

- (1) that of limited and measured things, of fixed qualities, permanent or temporary which always presuppose pauses and rests, the fixing of presents, and the assignation of subjects (for example, a particular subject having a particular largeness or a particular smallness at a particular moment); and
- (2) a pure becoming without measure, a veritable becoming-mad, which never rests. (2004: 3)

The simultaneity of becoming already implies a paradox as its time is not linear but cyclic. It does not consider a starting and finishing point, but overlapping layers. For instance, Deleuze indicates the becoming mad of Alice. Alice gets bigger. Then she gets smaller. At any given instant she is smaller and bigger at the same time depending on different instants of becoming. Becoming mad is the power of joyfully affirming that paradox and the ensuing chaos. It does not imply the terminology of being as Alice is small now and she was big before embodying the paradoxical simultaneity of becoming. Becoming mad "...moves in both directions at once. It always eludes the present, causing future and past, more and less, too much and not enough to coincide in the simultaneity of a rebellious matter." (Ibid: 3) It is nourished by Dionysian sources that are ignored and repressed by Platonism. (Ibid: 301) This is how simulation functions against Platonism, by carrying the Dionysian sources via false as power, paradox and becoming mad.

In conclusion, Deleuze provides two formulas in order to distinguish the world of copies and that of simulacra: "...only that which resembles differs' and 'only differences can resemble each other'." (Ibid: 299). For him these two distinct readings of the world imply to think difference from distinctly different points. Whereas the former bases difference on a previous similitude or identity; the latter manifests the similitude and even identity as the product of a deep disparity. So 'to reverse Platonism' means to make the simulacra come to the surface and affirm the simulacra among copies. It is not the distinction between essence and appearance or model and copy as long as these distinctions belong to the world of the original/copy dichotomy. Rather, it is the subversion of the world of representation. (Ibid: 299) It means to affirm the false as power, and paradox and becoming mad as a new territory.

3.1.2 REALER THAN REAL

Brian Massumi furthers the analysis of Deleuze and Guattari and proposes it as an alternative against Baudrillard's approach that he considers as apocalyptic. The distinction between the copy and the simulacrum is no longer one of degree for Deleuze but of nature. The simulacrum is less a copy twice removed than a phenomenon of a different nature altogether: it undermines the very distinction between copy and model. (Deleuze quoted in Massumi, 1987:91) Massumi offers a further analysis of the power of the false that simulation implies. He uses a scene

from Ridley Schott's film *Blade Runner* (1982) in order to deepen the understanding of Deleuzian simulation. In the film, the off-world replicants that are created as human simulations return to earth to find out how to undo their pre-programmed deaths. What Massumi emphasizes here is that the aim of the replicants is not to blend in with the indigenous population and remain on earth as imitation humans, but to "...flee back to their own vital dimension of interplanetary space to see things no human being ever has or will" and live full lives on their own terms. (Massumi, 1987:93) In a critical instance in the film, a replicant makes a statement to the man who made his eyes and says: 'If only you could see what I have seen with your eyes.' For Massumi (1987) that can be taken as a general formula for simulation because their imitation "...is only a way-station en route to an unmasking and the assumption of difference" (1987:92) Massumi points out what is the best weapon against simulacrum quoting Eric Alliez and Michel Feher. According to them what can be done against simulation is not to unmask it as a false copy, but to force it to be a true copy. Resubmitting simulation to representation means to oppress it by the mastery of the model where it changes its nature once more towards the copy. For instance in *Blade Runner* the corporation that built the replicants introduces another version with second hand human memories so that this version does not know that it is a not a human and it lives like one. For Alliez and Feher this version is not a simulation, it is a copy that is resubmitted to the original/copy dichotomy. (1987:92) According to Massumi simulacra are not copies, they are "...real as real, actually realer than real, because they carried the real back to its principle of production and in so doing prepared their own rebirth in a new regime of simulation." (1987:98)

For Deleuze a copy of a copy is what is artificial. And artificial is what should be pushed to the point where it changes its nature and is reversed into the simulacrum. (2004:303) The copy of a copy as artificial can be reversed into simulacrum with a change of perspective, via the understanding of the subject. For Deleuze, Pop Art examples are simulacra that have been successfully freed from being copies, i.e. from being artificial, and pushed to the point where they became simulacra. Massumi explains Deleuze's example of Pop Art emphasizing the different circuits that the simulacrum enters rather than being a copy that stands in for its model:

(...) the multiplied, stylized images take on a life of their own. The thrust of the process is not to become an equivalent of the "model" but to turn against it and its world in order to open a new space for the simulacrum's own mad proliferation. The simulacrum affirms its own difference. (1987:91)

Pop Art interrogated the popular culture of 1960s by taking it as the subject of art. In the history of art, pop art announced a rupture as it caused life and art to become closer. Its subject matter was rooted in daily life reflecting contemporary reality and cultural changes. By the means of art it produced a discourse within the atmosphere of the 60s where contradictory sentiments were paradoxically held together. While the idea of progress caused a hopeful excitement, there was also a pessimistic and even catastrophic outlook of this progress. Pop art performed a balancing act between these contradictory sentiments of the era. (Osterwold, 2003:7)

One of the key figures among the Pop Art artists, Andy Warhol produced mass produced images of pop icons like Mickey Mouse and Marilyn Monroe (**Fig. 5**).



Figure 5, Andy Warhol, Marilyn

By this way, he carried consumer culture to the domain of art. He celebrated pop culture by criticizing it. His paradoxical framework also questioned the original/copy dichotomy due to the offset lithograph technique. With this technique, the original work is produced as copies and every copy is rendered as original. In his works, Warhol kept the popular form and replaced the colors with non-representational colors that referred to the consumer culture rather than the aesthetic choices of the artist because the popular elements of consumer culture were not representing any reality but producing one. By this way they were not representing their models but functioning for their own existence by erasing the reality of their model. For instance public images of Marilyn Monroe do not represent a corporeal being but what is attached to its image. On the other hand Mickey Mouse goes beyond being just an image and refers to a culture. Taking these popular images as subject of his art, Warhol did not only produce a discourse on the problematic character of the original/copy dichotomy but also emphasized and celebrated the autonomous

character of images. Due to the subversion of the original/copy dichotomy what is disappearance of real in Baudrillard's analysis is what gives the image an autonomous character in Warhol's works.

Photorealism that is inspired by pop-art also uses the images of mass media but photorealist artists prefer to copy photographic forms without any criticism (**Fig. 6**). They benefit from the camera in order to create the exact reproduction of an instant appearance. Their attempt to replace the human eye with machine eye and human subjectivity with the machine objectivity changed the relation of the artist to the subject and photorealist painters produced photo like paintings.



Figure 6, Gerhard Richter, Betty, 1988

Various subjects that can be depicted by photography were chosen in order to imply this stylistic approach and many photorealist painters used found photographs in order to avoid any subjective touch while depicting their subject. American literary critic and political theorist Frederic Jameson considers photorealist works as simulacra in Platonic terms. He says that, "The photorealist painting is a copy of not reality but of a photograph which is already a copy of the original." (1984:75) On the other hand Massumi responds to Jameson from a Deleuzean approach. He declares that "...the production and function of a photograph has no relation to that of the object photographed, and photorealist painting in turn envelops an essential difference." (1987: 91) In fact already the photograph is never a copy of the original. It has a different agenda as an image functioning autonomously as long as what is photographed is not a copy of the reality but produces a reality of its own. The painting that recreates the photographic reality does not imitate a photograph but points out the internal differences of external similarities.

Hyperrealism that is considered as an advancement of photorealism furthers the technique used in photorealism but it is contrasted with the literal approach found in traditional photorealist paintings. Hyperrealism, although photographic in essence, often entails a softer, much more complex focus on the subject depicted, presenting it as a living, tangible object. Objects and scenes in Hyperrealist paintings and sculptures are meticulously detailed to create the illusion of a reality not seen in the original photograph. The reason is first of all their technical scope. Photorealism uses analog photography while hyperrealism uses digital imagery. By this way, hyperrealist works are capable of confronting the viewer with meticulously manipulated high resolution images and so they create a new sense of reality based

on the simulation of reality that fits Massumi's definition 'realer than real.' In these works "textures, surfaces, lighting effects, and shadows appear clearer and more distinct than the reference photograph or even the actual subject itself." (Meisel, 1980:12) The sensation they create is more than an illusion as a convincing depiction of reality. Hyperreal paintings and sculptures create a kind of tangible solidity. Subjects are depicted technically with details that are clearer than in nature.

The subject depicted plays an inseparable role in order to create this new sense of reality. Characteristically hyperrealist artists focus on the simulation of living organisms especially humans questioning the multiple and critical dimensions of corporeality. Although many photographic works were produced, hyperrealism was embraced mostly by sculptors. For instance Australian sculptor Patricia Piccinini creates compositions between human and unknown or fictive creatures through her hyperrealist sculptures in order to tell what 'might' or 'could be' instead of what 'is' (Fig. 7).



Figure 7, Patricia Piccinini, Eulogy

Similarly, Australian hyperrealist sculptor Ron Mueck reproduces the minute details of the human body, but plays with scale to produce disconcerting visual images. He uses ordinary figures in extraordinary dimensions (**Fig. 8**).



Figure 8, Ron Mueck, Boy, 1999

Huerta mentions that in the history of art, the use of mimesis and realism was repeatedly dismissed as a method to make art quickly and easily digestible for art world outsiders, who are presumably only interested in the artist's skill in reproducing reality. (2010:26) On the other hand the mimetic character of hyperrealist works functions quite differently. For example in Mueck's works the mimetic practice does not only manifest the artist's advanced technical skills in imitating reality and the ultimate technology of mimicry but rather invites viewers to

a paradoxical encounter with his sculptures. This encounter is more than an experience of confronting a palpable object.

Mueck provides convincing simulations of human bodies, viewers are aware, after an initial moment of mistaking the realism for actuality, that they are not real and that there is a complex game of perception afoot. When they choose to engage in this game, viewers are motivated to continuously explore the possibility that the sculptures could become, are in the process of becoming, or had been at some point in the past, something other than just an object. (Huerta, 2010:186)

Mueck emplaces his sculptures into a transitive zone between subject and object. His sculptures are not life-less; they are neither alive nor dead. They are artificially produced bodies that stand for a real of their own. This uncertain slippage that blurs the boundaries between the human body and an artificially reproduced life-like body, between life and death is central to Mueck's sculptures. He catches the viewer's attention with the extreme connectedness between these non-human beings and the human condition. This point makes Huerta relate these sculptures to Sigmund Freud's concept of the uncanny. In Freudian (1919) terms, the uncanny marks an instance in which something seems both familiar and strange simultaneously. The slippage between life and death, and real and artificial is fundamental to the concept of the uncanny. The uncanny operates in Mueck's sculptures due to an engagement between two seemingly contradictory elements. For instance approaching to life and then to death, to real and then to artificial but never firmly holding on to either. "Sculptures that are cradled between the death-like and the life-like, never quite pinning down an exact location" says Huerta. (2010: 186)

The role of scale in what produces uncanniness is fundamental in Mueck's sculptures. He plays with the viewer's understanding of real by,

(...) employing dramatic alterations of scale, from gigantic to miniature, which continuously remind viewers that what they see is not a person turned into sculpture but a sculpture that is meant to mimic the form and presence of a real person, while simultaneously questioning the very nature of such an illusion.' (Huerta, Ibid: 25)

One of Mueck's early hyperrealist works, entitled *A Puppet Who Wanted to Be a Real Boy, Pinocchio* (1996) (**Fig. 9**), is the embodiment of the famous character of Carlo Corradi's *Pinocchio* (1883) interpreted via the technical and artistic talent of Ron Mueck. Pinocchio stands approximately thirty-three inches tall with his canny stature. The sculpture wears only a pair of white underpants, like many of Mueck's sculptures in order to expose the construction of the bodies to the smallest detail. Huerta defines the very attentive work by stating that,



Figure 9, Ron Mueck, Pinocchio, 1996

Mueck worked anatomical detailing into and onto every external surface, defining as much as mimicking the organic soft and hard textures of the boy's body. Undulations in the surface of the sculpture give viewers the sensation that beneath the epidermis-like covering exist muscular tissues, skeletal framework, and a nervous system. (Ibid: 152)

Actually Pinocchio has hitherto been destined to be related mostly to lies, to exaggerated stories, tall tales; to what is false. His autonomously lengthening and shortening nose that functions as a lie detector on behalf of truth does not let the unreal boy tell unreal/false stories as if unreal necessitates the real. However what is questioned here through Mueck's sculpture is neither the literal value of the story nor its several interpretations. What follows is limited to the relation of Pinocchio and a sense of reality that is realer than real.

Unlike his other sculptures, Mueck depicts the story of a life-size puppet who wanted to be a real boy. Considering the role of scale in his works, his choice of size is a meaningful point to start to think about this work. In Mueck's depiction, with its life-size dimension and carefully worked details, Pinocchio looks like a real boy rather than a wooden puppet. Huerta says,

Flushed cheeks and pinkish lips, folds of skin that break softly over kneecaps, brittle and opaque toenails all give the viewer the illusion of encountering *Pinocchio* as a physical body, not a lifeless puppet. (Ibid: 152)

So, why is that occupation to introduce Pinocchio, a puppet known due to its relations to false as real? Is the sensation of real as realer than real, that Mueck creates in his many sculptures by manipulating with dimensions, created in this sculpture by creating it in life size?

What is a puppet, if not a copy? It can neither live nor die. It imitates being alive and it imitates being dead. But what means being real for a puppet that is endowed with life? For an artist who tries to give life to his sculptures like the blue fairy whispers life to Pinocchio that should be an interesting question. A puppet that wanted to be real is seemingly more than a copy. Being real, for a puppet, demands a process of becoming where it looks for a life of its own. In Deleuzian terms, this is the point where the puppet changes its nature and is reversed into simulacrum. Being alive for Pinocchio is nothing but the condition of being and/or becoming real. Mueck's approach to the subject looks like a referral to Deleuzian simulation. A puppet that is endowed with life is real when it is not looked through the original/copy dichotomy; when it does not imitate its so-called original, but when it cuts its roots with the original.

Mueck usually gives the sense of realer than real to his sculptures by depicting them in monstrous dimensions. Yet in this case, he gives the sense of realer than real to what is known as unreal by depicting it in life size. Mueck depicts Pinocchio not as a copy that truly resembles its original but as a simulation that becomes real by erasing its original. This is a unique way of becoming real that cannot be understood under the original/copy dichotomy but rather in terms of Deleuzian simulation. Because a puppet is a copy; a puppet endowed with life is also a copy with a difference in

degree. A puppet endowed with life who wants to be real is a simulation as long as it stands on its own without trying to imitate its original. Turning back to *Blade Runner*, the difference is the difference between two sorts of Replicants who live among humans ignoring or without knowing that they are not human but can pretend to be one and who want to avoid their pre-programmed death and live full lives in their own terms. Whereas the former is a faithful copy, the latter is a simulacrum beyond the original/copy dichotomy. Similarly, a puppet endowed with life who wanted to be real is not more but different than a copy.

In conclusion, from a Deleuzian perspective, *A Puppet Who Wanted to Be a Real Boy* exemplifies a simulacrum that is realer than real. Mueck's way of depicting the subject interrogates the relation between the original and the copy and opens a path that gives the so-called unreal a chance to transform itself into real.

3.2 THE BODY WITHOUT LIMITS

In terms of Deleuze and Guattari, to consider the simulation as a creative element and the image as autonomous present the attempt to think beyond the original/copy dichotomy which indicates the reversal of Platonism. Hence, their approach also implies a different understanding of body that proposes to think the body beyond the boundaries of conventional framework. This approach to the body emerges as a political attempt that tries to resist the reductive approaches of the contemporary era

that is considered apocalyptic by Baudrillard. This attempt uses contemporary phenomena such as plastic surgery and prosthetic body extensions and incorporations in order to free the body from preconceived boundaries such as body image.

French multimedia artist, Orlan can be cited as one of the most powerful agents of this approach. As she quotes from *The Dress* (1983) of French Psychoanalyst Eugénie Lemoine-Luccioni, before her *Opera Surgery Performance* (**Fig. 10**) in 1991, Orlan says,

I have an angel's skin, but I am a jackal; a crocodile skin, but I am a puppy;
I have black skin, but I am white; a woman's skin, but I am a man. I never
have the skin of what I really am. There is no exception to the rule, because
I am never what I have.



Figure 10, Orlan, Opera Surgery Performance, 1991

This performance is one of the several plastic surgeries she has undergone. Via the plastic surgery, Orlan makes her own body the subject of her art and performs against the common understanding of the fragmented and life-less body image in order to point out that not only the cultural but even the corporeal body does not have limits. Due to the new technologies, her provocative art asserts the body without limits not only as a critique of the contemporary Western eye that reduces the body to an image in the consumer society, but also produces a political discourse towards a change of perspective that implies a passage from the body image to body without an image.

The limits of the body have been one of the central subjects of phenomenology. Merleau Ponty (2003:165), for instance, considers the cane of the blind man as an extension of his body through what he perceives. Similarly, Heidegger uses the hammer example in order to question and depict the use of devices for human as extensions of bodily parts. These philosophers point out that the limits of the body are not necessarily defined by the corporeal body and the body extends itself through the use of devices. More recently, in *Cyborg Manifesto* (1991) American theorist Donna Haraway adapts this approach to a techno future considering the cyborgs as post human beings in which an assemblage of organic and artificial elements function together. More than being a eulogy to a mechanized future, this point of view announces a political approach that indicates the body as a virtual entity instead of a biologically determined one. For instance the Cypriot-Australian performance artist Stelarc realizes performances that are based on the use of prostheses as bodily extensions. He emphasizes the transgression of the boundaries of the corporeal body to the so-called artificial realm. The cyborgs and the use of prostheses for limbs

necessitate a change of perspective that shifts from seeing the body in terms of biological determinations to viewing it as an undefined assemblage.

The inevitable intersection between the organic and the artificial, the living and the lifeless that is announced by the proliferation of new technologies, opens up a horizon beyond the oppositional binaries of Being and can be understood through a new terminology of Becoming. In the Deleuzian sense, becoming embraces the overlapping of elements, the intersection of one element with another, creating amalgams, disentangling and recomposing continuously. In becoming pieces of an assemblage are drawn into new territories within the assemblage. They change their value as element and they construct a new unity. The process of becoming changes the original functions of elements. Deleuze and Guattari say,

(...) becoming is not to imitate or identify with something or someone. Nor is it to proportion formal relations. Neither of these two figures of analogy is applicable to becoming... (1987:272)

The perspective of becoming reconstructs the body as the BodyWithoutOrgans (BWO) in Deleuze-Guattarian terms. Actually Deleuze and Guattari borrow BWO from French writer Antonin Artaud's radio play *To Have Done with the Judgment of God* (1947). "Man is sick because he is badly constructed." says Artaud. "When you will have made him a body without organs / then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions / and restored him to his true freedom." (Artaud quoted in O'Bryan, 2005:96) The body without organs for Arthaud is what would allow him "...to both abandon and transcend his corporeality, even while he insisted that he was nothing but a body." (O'Bryan, 2005:96) What inspires Deleuze and Guattari in

Artaud's understanding of body is this unlimited, undefined quality. "Only one occupation left: to remake (him)self" says Artaud.(1976:84) Similarly Orlan declares that due to the plastic surgery techniques she gives herself an image of her self, an image that she chooses, changes, transforms against the body image that is given to her by the dominant Western gaze. In order to further her critical attempt she implants into her body the facial parts of art historical beauty icons that are representations of the phantasies of the (male) gaze. For instance she adorned herself with the forehead of Leonardo Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* (1503-1506), the chin of Sandro Botticelli's *Venus* (1486), and the nose of Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Psyche* (**Fig. 11**).



Figure 11, Olan, Portrait by Elyasaf Kowner, 1998

By doing so, Orlan separates these facial parts from their context and recomposes them in another context where they change their value and functions. Artist Jill O'Bryan resumes,

Orlan creates her own version of a body without organs by exhuming a fantasy that doubles back and materially superimposes itself onto her given body to form a multivalent incarnation. (2005:96)

The BWO is the virtual dimension of an actual body which is a boundless reservoir of potentials and possibilities. This concept attempts to free the body from its own organs because the body is fragmented by its own organs and the functions of the latter are strictly determined. The Body with Organs is reduced to organizational functions. Hence, The BWO indicates what remains from the body beyond its well defined organs, and what is oppressed by the functions of the organs. It is an assemblage with no underlying organizational principles. Deleuze and Guattari say that “The BwO: It is already under way the moment the body has had enough of organs and wants to slough them off, or loses them.” (1987:150)

Hence the BWO does not only present a different concept of body but also challenges the body with organs as it already inhabits the body with organs as a potential. As a virtual power it is ignored, oppressed and forgotten under the weight of a generalized gaze, of a limited and uniform approach and a limited and well defined body. Deleuze and Guattari depict the virtual power of the BodyWithoutOrgans. They say,

The BWO is what remains when you take everything away. What you take away is precisely the phantasy, and significances and subjectifications as a whole. (1987:151)

O'Bryran considers the anesthetized body of Orlan during her surgical performances as what remains when you take everything away, in Deleuze-Guattarian sense, as "...a sculptural medium that discloses a maximum number of possible forms." (1999:56) Orlan shows that her body is a field of possibilities. The appearance that governs the contemporary era is instant; however everything including the subject is in a process of becoming that cannot be caught by an image or a series of instant images. The appearance of her body does not tell much about the self. By changing her appearances she gives an image to herself. Her attempt is not lead by consumer culture's motivations such as attaining a conventionally attractive body but a motivation to criticize these standardized canons and to resist them. She visualizes the possibilities of self through her image reconstructed by plastic surgery. This approach to the body considering its virtual dimensions avoids the understanding of the body that is formed by elements whose functions are well defined. According to this approach the human body is not an aggregate of its organs or parts. Even the function of its organs are not limited and defined in themselves.

Similar to Deleuze and Guattari, Massumi points out the dimensions of the body that do not fall under a limited entity as an image. He theorizes his critical concept of body via perspectives of vision: The mirror-vision and the movement vision. The mirror-vision relates to seeing oneself as others do and is based on frozen poses. Movement-vision, on the contrary, does not consider the body as a generalized subject, a self-identical observer who recognizes itself as if it recognizes the object. Rather the subject - object symmetry of mirror - vision is broken and the space of movement and dislocated perspectives and transformation is revealed. Massumi sees the accumulation of relative perspectives as involving the transformation of subject -

object relations, giving rise to the body without an image. (Featherstone, 2010:208, 209) He says,

The body without an image is an accumulation of relative perspectives and the passages between them, an addictive space of utter receptivity retaining and combining past movements, in intensity, extracted from their actual terms. It is less a space in the empirical sense than a gap in space that is also a suspension of the normal unfolding of time. Still, it can be understood as having a spatiotemporal order of its own.

In its spatial aspect, the body without an image is the involution of subject - object relations into the body of the observer and of that body into itself. (2002:57)

Here, the body gains a charge of affect which is different from the cool surgical gaze. The body, from this perspective, cannot be measured or fragmented like a frozen image but it is seen in motion, i.e., in process which points to the body without image. This approach to the body necessitates a shift from the body image that the consumer culture undertakes, to the body without image that is capable of embracing and integrating the new media to its incomplete and unlimited boundaries. Featherstone also indicates the body that is inhabited by limitless possibilities. This body is not formed by consciousness or by the structure of language. Neither can it be illuminated by traditional reason.

The opening up of the body image reveals the potential creative experience for our own bodies of the encounter with new intensities and affect through the new media...to think through the body in consumer culture by questioning the conventional sense of body image, as something fashionable

and actively constructed by the range of body transformative techniques promoted. Against this can be placed the affective body without image, the more incomplete and open body, which is affected by other people's bodies in a variety of ways, which bypass the alleged 'all-seeing eye' and work beneath the level of consciousness and language. (2010:199)

Orlan, in her art, takes plastic surgery out of its known context and makes it function as a political medium. As one of the transformational techniques of the consumer culture, plastic surgery promises a renewed body and a renewed self, in order to be able to enjoy the full range of pleasures that consumer culture offers. Orlan's art does not serve consumer culture but attacks one of the fundamental elements of that culture, which is the body image. Orlan destroys her own body image in order to emphasize the fluent self that cannot fit into a constructed, stable image. By this way she also criticizes social determinations and identity politics related to the body as they are not capable of realizing or encouraging the potentials of the body without limits, i.e., the body that is also the body without organs or the body without image.

To sum up, in recent cultural theories and practices, the biological limits of the body have been questioned. With the proliferation of new technologies the limited understanding of the body is expanded and a critical discourse against the latter is being developed. This discourse embraces the body as a fluent entity and an assemblage of changing perspectives. By doing so, it challenges the prevalent body image of the consumer society which reduces the fluidity and multiplicity, of the body and human experience itself to a pre-defined, constructed, and uniform image.

It also challenges identity politics that are based on biological and social determinations.

This new approach to the body does not only present a shift from the body image to the body without image, but from a broader perspective, it presents a different basis for thinking in general. While Deleuze and Guattari base their critical discourse on the virtual powers of the BWO, Massumi underlines the multiplicity of perspectives and fluidity of movement that a body manifests. By this way, the latter criticizes the monocular vision and the former criticizes the monocular Being that construct the basis of traditional thought. Their critique entails a form of thinking that embraces multiplicities and fluidity. In Deleuzian terms, this approach is based on the terminology of Becoming rather than Being. Stable, concrete, and constructed entities are questioned and deconstructed in order to surface the oppressed qualities of human experience such as multiplicity and fluidity.

CONCLUSION

Different approaches to simulation present different conceptualizations of image and body that have considerable impacts on the social and political realm. The image is one of the most dominant elements of this era and the body is the field of experience. This thesis explored the relationship between the body and the image in contemporary Western culture via theories of simulation by Plato, Baudrillard, and Deleuze and Guattari.

It is argued that Plato's general approach to any subject is metaphysical and hierarchical as he refers to Ideas as *a priori* frames in order to construct the basis of his philosophy. His dualist approach is organized around the original/copy dichotomy. The original, which is identified with the world of Ideas, is more valuable than the copy. Among the copies the ones that are more faithful to the original are more valuable than the others. Simulation produces twice degraded copies. Hence simulacra are twice devalued because they distort the real world of Ideas.

Baudrillard's theory of simulation on the other hand historicizes the Platonic notion of real. For him, the real is based on a reality principle and historically Western culture has attained a period where the reality principle is replaced by simulation. This era presents the world of simulation where the appearances of things replace

things themselves. For Baudrillard the real is socially constructed and the contemporary world has lost its authenticity. However, although his theory is quite different than that of Plato, it is also constructed on dichotomies. Baudrillard presents simulation as what undermines the relation between the original and the copy, but he takes this Platonic duality for granted. For him, the images are simulacra and today the images replace the real and produce the hyperreal. Hyperreality is characterized by inferiority as it is marked by the loss of origin and essence. Baudrillard bases his critique of contemporary culture on his theory of simulation.

Different approaches to simulation and image present different approaches to the body as well. In the consumer culture appearances and images mediate human relations. The image of the body emerges as a powerful notion in this respect. In the most general sense, this notion refers to the image of the body through an exteriorized look; it objectifies the body and promotes it as a consumer good. A new industry emerges that is fed by the notion of body as an object of consumption. This industry divides the body into parts and tries to sell a product for each part. This fragmented body comes to the scene as a metaphysical notion that looks for perfection and the criteria for perfection is defined continuously by market mechanisms. In this process even life is exteriorized from the body because the living body presents the course of corruption towards death, temporariness, and instability. In Baudrillard's terms the body is simulated and becomes a hyperbody.

In this thesis the hyperbody is used as a theoretical basis for the critique of the dominant notion of body image. Plastic surgery is considered as a phenomenon directly related to the body and image relation and the use of plastic surgery in

behalf of body image is exemplified by the physical transformation of Michael Jackson. By whitening his skin and reconstructing his face via several aesthetic operations, Jackson changes his appearance to fit the prevailing beauty canons. By this way he practices the possibilities of plastic surgery with the aim of perfection.

On the other hand Deleuze and Guattari propose a different approach to simulation that radically changes the basis of image, body, and their mutual relation. According to that approach, simulation is considered beyond the original/copy dichotomy. Thus the copy's difference from the original is not that of degree but nature. This perspective reverses Platonism that is based on dichotomies and proposes an act of deterritorialization in order to free the concepts of original, copy and simulation.

Actually what Deleuze and Guattari propose is a radical change of thought. They propose to change the way of thinking from a Platonic, static thought to a nomad one where the concepts are in process of change as life itself. They aim to create a new terminology of becoming; instead of applying the terms of language and reason that are based on the notion of being.

Massumi uses Deleuze - Guattarian notion of simulation in order to find a political ground that makes any valuable act possible in the era where Baudrillard announces the end of the reality, the time of arbitrariness and a meaningless flow around an empty orbit. He proposes a change of perspective, by calling Deleuze - Guattarian notion of simulation as positive simulation that would lead to creative and political interventions. Positive simulation reigns in the absence of any fixed reality. As a creative element it can make any act valuable. For Massumi, in the moment of Pop

art simulacrum has unmasked itself for the first time in painting, and now, it is being unmasked in popular culture as a whole. He recalls Deleuze and Guattari's arguments on late capitalism and indicates that in this new transnational level old identities and territorialities should be dissolved. Objects, images and information embody a potential of mobility and combinational possibilities more than ever before. (1987:96) For Deleuze and Guattari what is realized at the moment of Pop Art is the autonomy of the image. For them, the image functions autonomously when it is not forced to go under the original/copy dichotomy. On the other hand, the body is a field of potentials that should not be oppressed under organizational principles. Their approach to simulation gives birth to completely different notions of body and image in order to create a political critique.

This point can be well illustrated by another use of plastic surgery that is exemplified by Orlan. Differently from Jackson, she uses the possibilities of bodily transformations to reconstruct her appearance in order to construct her practice on a critical basis. From Deleuze-Guattarian perspective she exemplifies her body as BodyWithoutOrgans by underlining the virtual powers and possibilities of the body beyond organizational principles and cultural determinations.

For Deleuze and Guattari every process of deterritorialization ends up with one of reterritorialization anyway. However it is important to understand that from Deleuze-Guattarian perspective there is not a final answer to any question or a perspective that should reign as absolute. This is way Massumi is optimistic in regarding this point and says,

(...) this deterritorialization is effected only in order to make possible a reterritorialization on an even grander and more glorious land of worldwide capital reborn. But in the meantime, a breach has opened. The challenge is to assume this new world of simulation and take it one step further, to the point of no return. (1987:96)

In the analysis of Massumi, Deleuze-Guattarian approach to simulation makes possible a political statement that frees human thought from pre-existing frameworks and frees the image from original/copy dichotomy and the body from limited and reductive understandings of identity politics. Via positive simulation the image is considered as autonomous, the body without limits. The shift from simulated image to autonomous image, from the body image to body without image; and more fundamentally from simulation as second degree copy to simulation that concerns false as power is the consequences of a shift from Platonist thought to Deleuze-Guattarian nomad thought as a shift from being to becoming. It is important to underline that there is not an absolute being or absolute becoming. These terms are transitive. However the terminology of being does not allow the transition from one term to another. This is why the terminology of becoming emerges as a political scene in order to envelop the possibilities that have been left outside. Finally, a new vocabulary on the body and its image is part of a larger vocabulary on identity politics towards an ethics based on the recognition of radical difference.

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