

From Medieval Ages to Postmodernism: Nudity in Video Art

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Abstract:- After the emergence of the concept of nudity as an approach describing the divine beauty with Ancient Greece in Western art, its evolution to another dimension with the effect of different social and historical changes over the centuries has been given through the arts of painting and sculpture, from the gradually changing art movements to the postmodern art understanding, today's concept of nudity is examined within the scope of video art. The evolution of the concept of nudity has been taken as the point to focus on, and the reasons affecting the change of the concept have been tried to be examined through art movements and social changes. From medieval ages to postmodernism, this study focuses on the concept of nudity in human forms. In postmodernist era, it focuses on video art and questions the approach of this art to the nudity. As a result, it is possible to say that video art, a psychological medium in which internal and external dialectics can be conveyed, embraced the concept of nudity with its changing perception and helped to shape this perception, which is reduced to the body as an object of consumption, within the concept of art.

Keywords:- Western Art; Nudity; Style; Video Art; Human Body.

I. INTRODUCTION

After the emergence of the concept of nudity as an approach describing the divine beauty with Ancient Greece in Western art, its evolution to another dimension with the effect of different social and historical changes over the centuries has been given through the arts of painting and sculpture, from the gradually changing art movements to the postmodern art understanding, today's concept of nudity is examined within the scope of video art. The evolution of the concept of nudity has been taken as the point to focus on, and the reasons affecting the change of the concept have been tried to be examined through art movements and social changes.

The perception of nudity has been interpreted in different ways through men and women since Ancient Greece, while male nudity was glorified in Western art, its focus shifted towards female nudity and eroticism over time. The perception of human and nudity, which has changed in the processes of modernism and postmodernism, has evolved towards the human body with the disintegration, traumas, major social changes, wars, youth movements, technological

advances and the spread of mass media and the body has become the object of art.

The aim of this study is to examine the concept of nudity through the changing art movements since Ancient Greece, when it was first used in Western art, and to show how it evolved today and how it took place in video art with examples. It is also within the scope of the study to emphasize the indisputable effect of social events in the process of changing from divine nudity to the body, which is the object of art. It is concluded that the concepts of the nude, naked in art and as used today, the naked body, which has been emphasized throughout the study, has been transformed into an image-body on which power concentrates, based on changing human perceptions, perspectives, psychological processes and interest relations over the body that turns into the object of consumption.

The evolution of the body is linked to our understanding of the Enlightenment age, the rise of industrial capitalism, imperialism, wars, and the explicit articulation of modern sexual subjectivity, the naked and embellished human form becoming the field of study. Nudity has turned from a clear and plain reality to a discourse filled with ideological concepts. During the evolution of the concept of nudity in art from the past to the present, only Western art was taken as a basis, and the branches of art focused on were painting and sculpture in which nudity was widely used. In order to explain briefly the understanding of nudity in different periods of art, a limited number of examples were chosen, while today's nudity is limited to video art. The reason for the selection of video art is the rise after the social mobility in the 1960s, the effective use of the concept of the body, which was fragmented and filled with ideological discourses, by artists for the purpose of protest, and the ability to easily record images about the body instantly without the need for a second person. It is an art that allows it to be easily shared.

This study, which describes the evolution of the concept of nudity in art, examines the development and perception of nudity from Ancient Greece step by step through art movements, while it is important in analyzing how divine and plain nudity became a bodily and sexual perception in art and in the postmodern age the body turned into political belongings and the object of expression of human psychology. The fact that the concept of nudity is transformed from an ideal and divine body into a body stuck with ideological

discourses and transformed into a commodity through stereotypes is another important point of the study.

II. METHODOLOGY

The words naked and nude used throughout the study were used in line with the definitions of Kenneth Clark. According to Clark (1972: 1), being naked means being devoid of clothing that covers our bodies, and the word nudity expresses an embarrassing situation for many of us. On the other hand, the word "nude", on the other hand, has a more academic use than nudity, and it has no disturbing or embarrassing usage. It can also be expressed as a state of being naked for art and it is a way of seeing nude art. Nudity, which has started to be used within the perception of modernism and postmodernism, has turned into the concept of the body, it has become a commodity for art, rather than being naked, it has become a discourse based on sexuality, power, pain and ideology. The purposeful sampling method was chosen as the method of the study. In this direction, examples were taken from painting, sculpture and video fields to support the issue of nudity and these examples were analyzed by content analysis. This study, which covers a brief history of the evolution of the concept of nudity in video art in certain movements throughout art history, and in modernism and postmodernism, is supported by the concepts of psychology and narcissism in the video art section and emphasized that video art is intertwined with postmodern art perception.

III. DISCUSSION

A. The History of Nude and Nudity

Nudity is the state of not covering, coating or closing the body with any substance, which has existed since the earliest days of humanity. Today, when we say naked, what is meant is the human body that is undressed and free of clothes. The nude in art is the naked human figure, which is the equivalent of the word "nude" taken from French. Nudus is the Latin origin of the word of naked. The words "naked" and "nude" (naked figure / nude in art) in English, which are derived from the word Nudus, summarize the intended situation in the best way (Açan, 2013:2). Kenneth Clark (1972:1) explains the difference between being undressed and the nude figure in art:

Being naked means being devoid of clothes that cover our bodies, and the word nudity expresses an embarrassment to many of us. On the other hand, the word "nude" has a more academic usage, unlike nudity, and it has no disturbing or embarrassing usage. The popular image we create in our minds does not make us think of a naked body without defense, on the contrary we imagine a balanced, confident and successful body; his body reshaped.

According to Clark, "nude" is not the starting point of the picture, but a way of seeing the picture reaches. To John Berger (1973: 53-54), "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. Nakedness reveals itself. Nudity is placed on display". The nude makes it talk to be watched. Being naked is to be open. Appearing to be seen means that the skin of a

person and the hair on his body turn into a kind of coverage that can never be removed in this case. Nudes will never be naked. It is a kind of being in dressed. The first examples in Western art of "nude" depicted by Clark as an art form discovered by the Greeks in the 5th century can be seen in sculptures, vases and wall paintings made in ancient Greece and Rome. Clark explains why the body sought to be perfected naked in these words: "A pile of naked bodies leads us to frustration and despair rather than feeling empathy with the body. We don't want to create imitations; we want perfection". Stating that a naked body is not a subject that can be directly transferred to art such as a tiger or a snowy landscape, Clark emphasizes that in this context, nudity was far from the modern understanding of nudity in the Ancient Greek and Roman period.

B. Nudity in Ancient Greek and Rome

Wall paintings and sculptures, which are the best depictions of nudity in the ancient Greek and Roman periods in Western art, are an indication that nudity was in the middle of daily life in the ancient period. The progress of the concept of nudity through the art of painting in Ancient Greece and its continuation is due to the fact that every detail of the drawings in the art of painting - color, light, decor, clothing, nudity - has the best visual material conveyed to the emotion that is intended to be expressed.

The daily life, depicted in pictures in the periods when history was engraved on the walls, is depicted with naked characters praying to God and dedicating altars to him. Praising the body and nudity is a long tradition in Ancient Greece. The concept of nudity, cult in Greek history, is full of cultural, philosophical and religious meanings. Beyond the divine beauty in Greek philosophy, which defends the freedom and worth of the individual, nudity is synonymous with wholeness. When nudity was first appearing, Greek art praised what it knew best in everyday life; handsome and beautiful male form.

In ancient Greece, being naked in public was commonplace and normal for men who participated in athletics competitions, exercised in the gym and appeared in baths. The principle of a solid head in a solid body, idealized by the Greeks, was achieved in gymnasiums, which were the center of education and athletics. The centers of all philosophy schools were in the gymnasiums. Clothes were taken off for exercise and to be able to think without any hindrance. The fact that nudity is so much in daily life played an important role in the fact that the understanding of nudity had a central position in art throughout the Ancient Greek period and in the future, the understanding of nudity in painting art with reference to Ancient Greece. In short, Greek philosophy treated nudity as a precondition for physical and mental freedom.

In his book *The Nude*, Kenneth Clark (1972) sums up the views of Greek philosophy on nudity as follows:

According to the Greek belief, being completely naked was very important. Nudity was a kind of abstention from original sin. We can associate the comfort of the Greeks with

their bodies and nudity with their life philosophy; their belief in human integrity that is above all. Nothing associated with a human being can be isolated and avoided from each other.

Greeks paid attention to their nudity. In order to distinguish themselves from the barbarians, it was a rule to take part in the Olympics naked, and as is known from the vase paintings, the contestants at the Panathenaic festivals VI. they had raced naked since the century. Anthony J. Papalas (1967) supports this situation in his article titled "Greek Attitudes Toward Nudity" as follows:

When a Greek wanted to dance or work, he would take off his clothes and get to work. It was very natural and no one would be afraid to see someone dancing or running naked. Archaeologists found many completely nude vases among workers performing at festivals and working in the fields.

The belief that the soul and body are inseparable and that the beauty of God takes place in the human body caused the Greeks to perfect the nudity and to do many studies on this subject. The feeling that the soul and body are one, which is the most familiar of all Greek characteristics, is manifested in the value that the Greeks gave to abstract ideas in the form of emotional, palpable and mostly human form. While for the Greek gods and men nudity was such a vaunted and divine state, the same nudity was not the case for women and goddesses. While Apollo's nudity was part of his holiness, Aphrodite seemed to have been wrapped in cloth according to traditional religious ceremonies and taboos. Restrictions in society were very harsh. While young Greek men remained naked to exercise and customarily wore nothing but a small cloak in their daily life, Greek women were clad from head to toe and were traditionally condemned to housework. The Spartans alone were an exception in this regard. Spartan women created scandals in the rest of Greece by showing their hips and competing in athletics competitions.

Contrary to the Greek philosophy of nudity, looking naked was a serious taboo for all other people in ancient times. The Romans, like all other people of antiquity except the Greeks, had a fundamental taboo against the appearance of naked among the people, and it seems that this taboo has not been abandoned throughout their long history. During the empire, with the increasing popularity of public baths, nudity became more and more acceptable - at least for men, and possibly only when they were actually bathing. On the other hand, it was unpleasant for a venerable Roman woman or man to be considered forever to appear naked in public, except in baths. According to the Romans, getting undressed and presented to the public was something to which convicted criminals or slaves who were displayed for sale were subjected. Accordingly, the first and most obvious meaning associated with public nudity in Roman society was associated with punishment or humiliation (Halleth, 2005).

Being completely naked among Roman men, like the Greeks, was never an acceptable situation, although they had taken on many of the Greeks' traits. Unlike the Greeks, it was shameful to dance naked in public areas, to exercise naked, to stand naked in the bathhouse except when they were washed

and oiled or massaged by their slaves. While the situation was so strict for Roman men, nudity for Roman women was not that different from that of Greek women. Like the Greeks, the Romans believed that women should always be veiled in society at all times, and even partial nudity was undoubtedly out of the question for respectable women. Women who could be seen naked in Rome were just otherwise: slaves or prostitutes. And under normal circumstances, even these women could only be seen naked on stage either in slave markets or brothels, or once a year at the goddess Flora festival (Halleth, 2005:83-84).

In Western society, the Greeks' equating body and nakedness with a divine beauty came from their efforts to feel themselves like gods. Recreating the naked man in the best way and immortalizing him in the most perfect way caused the Greeks to adapt the nakedness, that is, the natural, beautiful and divine body, to art. They tried to find the perfection of the body in mathematical values and tried to create the perfect divine body instead of adapting the real human body. The passion of the Greeks towards mathematics was also reflected in the arts of painting and sculpture, finding the measurements of the ideal human form and trying to idealize beauty and body measurements were the main starting points of nude art works. However, according to Açıkan (2013:2), in response to the nudity in ancient times, the Middle Ages transformed nudity into a piece of sinfulness, the re-discovery of nudity with the Renaissance, the concealment of Baroque and nudity behind fabrics again, the emphasis of the ancient understanding of nudity with Neoclassicism, and Modernism and nudity are both a The rebellion and its transformation into an inseparable part of sexuality have led to the definitions of nudity and nudity in art to be written and reinterpreted more than once.

C. Nudity in Fine Arts

The fact that the nudity in Western art is based on Ancient Greece and was accepted here is due to the fact that the nudity in Ancient Greece was associated with a divine beauty. The modern Western world approves of 'artistic' nudity in men or women, because the remnants of the Classical period and the Renaissance and Neo-Classical, which revived the Classical period, set the stage for this (Bordman, 1985:238). Unlike our age, the nudity in antiquity, covering the Greek and Roman periods, was not intended to emphasize "eroticism." On the contrary, the aim was to reveal the ideal understanding of beauty (Dierich, 1993:10).

Unlike today, the fact that the naked male body is at the center of art has left women in the background until a certain period and the male body has been used to create the divine beauty. The reason for this is the admiration towards the male body of Ancient Greece, which we regard as the beginning of Western art. In ancient Greece, it is inevitable that the desire for male bodies due to social, cultural and religious reasons manifests itself in nude sculpture and painting (Açıkan, 2013:5). The main reason why the naked male body is emphasized and its anatomical structure is transformed into a sculpture by elaborating it in Greek art is that in the Gymnasium, nude sports men can be examined in detail by sculptors. "Anyone who looks at a Kuros statue erected in a temple knows;

because he saw how all the muscles in the running champion's body played in the race" (Bonnard, 1959).

In the Archaic period, when the ideal human type began to be sculpted, there are sculptures of clothed women called Kore and naked male figures known as Kuros. These sculptures do not belong to a particular person and reflect a superficial realism. With the Classical period, which started at the beginning of the 5th century BC, the first truly artistic examples emerge. Greek sculptors began to make natural-looking sculptures with fine curves instead of dull sculptures during this period. The statues of naked men and clothed women are shown with a young, healthy, athletic body and a worry-free face. Seen from this point of view, Classical period sculpture sought to find the ideal human type rather than being completely realistic. Classical sculptors' desire to idealize the naked male body first appeared in Athens. The idealization effort resulted in the destruction of the individual characteristics of the figure and the creation of the ideal face and ideal body (Açan, 2013:8).

There are no 6th-century statues of "nude" women in Greek sculpture and only a few examples from the 5th century. This inadequacy has both religious and social reasons. IV. Even in the century, the naked Aphrodite has been portrayed as a source of shame. Although naked female figures, which were not seen in glasses and vases since the middle of the 5th century, began to be depicted as more attractive, the ideal beauty continued to be identified with the male body (Clark, 1972:73). Nevertheless, Praxiteles, the famous sculptor of the age, for the first time depicts Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, treats the female body with a sexual appeal. In order to provide a more sensual look, Praxiteles applies the "S" stance that it applies to nude male figures. This "S" shaped stance will become widespread as a stance expressing desire for female nudes (Şenyapılı, 1992: 61) and a new era will begin in nude sculpture in the Hellenistic period. According to Sönmez (2008: 79), Praxiteles had now brought to light the eroticism of both his own subconscious and the subconscious of men in society. With its sexual appeal, elegance and soft forms, the sculpture pioneered the expression of the male self and the female portrait created in the Hellenistic period with these features.

The Aphrodite of Venus de Milo or Melos (named so after its discovery in 1823), made in the Hellenistic period, is one of the most important sculptures of naked women. Her naked body made this statue known as Aphrodite, the Roman goddess of beauty and love born from the foams of the sea, and with this sculpture, Greek art enabled the birth of nude female works of all Western art. The acceptance of male homosexuality in the society has an important effect on the way of praising the male body and depicting it with a divine beauty in Greek sculpture (Clark, 1973: 74). At a time when the love of two male lovers was considered more noble and normal than the relationship with the opposite sex, men turned away from women and sought to elevate the male body by seeking their satisfaction and enthusiasm in their fellow men (Türcke, 1997:73).

The Romans adopted the arts of sculpture into their own lives as well as the everyday life styles of the Greeks, and even "Roman emperors and / or their leading administrators did not see any harm in placing their own heads on the" ideal "naked bodies realized by Greek artists, and they saw no harm in having them erected in cities (Şenyapılı, 1992:59). The devotion and belief in the ideal and divine beauty in Greek culture is not seen in the same way in Roman sculpture. "While the Romans had Greek artists to make the rare works of Greek sculpture, Roman sculptors did not hesitate to express people with their flaws in daily life" (Açan, 2013:13). Unlike the Greeks, although sculptures are no longer depicted as naked, "in women's reliefs, it is seen that the toga, that is, the dress, does not hide the body shape much. Breasts and abdominal muscles are always expressed in beautiful measurements and forms (Turani, 2011:199).

In public baths where nudity is seen most commonly, the Romans took one step closer to nudity, although women and men did not use the baths naked at the same time. However, "many frescoes of nudity and sexuality have been seen to encourage customers in the brothels located among the ruins of the Pompeian city and on the walls of the changing rooms of the baths." "Paintings and figurines of sexual objects are common even in private residences. Wall paintings showing the sexual secrets of urban culture have a semi-sacred quality (Davies, 1998:215).

Although nudity entered the everyday life of the Romans, in sculptural art only the divine could be considered nude; nudity was only under the jurisdiction of the gods and was acceptable in the hero fighting for the naked body land. While their adoption of the polytheistic religion allowed the Romans to depict nudity through their gods, the birth of Christianity and the Romans' beginning to adopt the monotheistic religion led to the transfer of the nudity they accepted in Greek art to a completely different dimension, and with the Middle Ages, nudity fell into darkness for a long time.

D. Nudity from Middle Ages to Postmodernism

The medieval period covers a very common period in art history (4th century-14th century AD). All aesthetic values in medieval art are directed towards the religious dogmas suggested by the church and the nobility. For a thousand years, the idea of ideal beauty, which was shaped by the thought and cultural structure of ancient Greece, has been forgotten. Art is formed in an abstract understanding of the other world, closed to the realities of the world. While nudity was the most used depiction method in classical period art to praise the divine and beautiful, with the advent of Christianity and the beginning of the Middle Ages, nudity became a hateful and disgusting concept. With the Christian religion, not only the concept of nudity, but also the perspective of women, men and many social values have changed and the understanding of art adopted by Christianity has prevailed for a thousand years. The consciousness of sin and nudity, which the woman brought to all humanity by eating the forbidden fruit, caused the expulsion of human beings from paradise, and thus all kinds of pleasurable and sexual acts were deemed forbidden. The nudity, which was praised and glorified in

Ancient Greece and Rome and which was at the center of art, has come to an end. To Caner (2004), the era of goddesses such as Inanna / Ishtar, a holy prostitute, or Aphrodite, a symbol of sexual attraction, has come to an end. The inhibition of social memories on goddesses was also the end of the age of desire. The death of the goddesses also ended respect for the creative nature of the female body.

With the exclusion of nudity in the Middle Ages, the sculptors, who experienced the uncertainty to what extent to show nudity, when necessary, sought a new form. In this context, they preferred to place the naked figure in architectural structures so that it cannot be seen until approached (Toman, 1997:344). Nudity has only been used limitedly to remind people of their sins. In the Middle Ages, sacred nudity was interpreted as a symbol of purity (Açan, 2013: 16). Again, in medieval icons, leaving the breast exposed was accepted as a sign of asking for help from God. Women who are deemed dangerous and obligatory to manage begin to gain some respect with the figure of the Virgin Mary, but the scientific, ethical and political thought of the period was that the woman should either remain chaste or devote herself to reproduction. "The Virgin Mary has replaced Eve's negative image as a respectable figure, but of course not as 'naked' but dressed. Of course, even if he is dressed, without hiding his femininity (Şenyapılı, 1992: 61).

Christian art preferred a symbolic expression. While depicting demons in animal form, he also made use of nudity in his figures to emphasize that sexuality is devil and sinful. In accordance with the symbolic narrative of the Christian world, Luxuria is the representation of evil as Toman (1997:344) states her body is naked and her sensuality is highlighted with a more realistic feeling with her long wavy hair. [...] Her accused actions are narrated with snakes. The snakes that bite the inside of their breasts, which are the usual symbols of evil, symbolize this state. Medieval art, in accordance with the social structure of the age, developed the dogmas that they put forward religiously and accepted unconditionally by the people in a linearist (colorist) aesthetic arrangement. The first reaction to the medieval world view and thought, which lasted for roughly a thousand years, will be in Italy. The new thought and world view that emerged as a result of this reaction will also constitute the New Age art. This is the Renaissance.

Sandro Boticelli (1445-1510) was the first painter to reveal the true female nudity in the Renaissance. In the painting "The Birth of Venus", Venus is naked. The re-entry of female nudity into art has led to the emergence of the concepts of female beauty and ideal woman. While it was considered ideal to be "thin, narrow hips and small mammals" in the Middle Ages, it left its place to the "female beauty model with large hips and big breasts" with the change in the understanding of nutrition in the 16th century. Fatness was considered "beautiful" as a sign of wealth and health. A new understanding of beauty emerged from this period and will last for 300 years. In depictions of naked women, Venus is seen to be reinterpreted in various ways. The wonderful mature girl body lying in the shade at the foot of a slope, or the paintings reflecting the "sexual provocation of naked mythological

women" bring up the interpretation of female nudity approaching eroticism.

E. Art and Nudity in Modernism and Postmodernism

Modernism was first used in the literary circles of Latin America in the 1890s, but social, political, etc. Unlike a modernization, a cultural or, according to some historians, the concept of "aesthetic modernism" has been on the agenda since the 1950s. Many historians and thinkers symbolize the beginning of modernism with the French Revolution of 1848, because with the 1848 revolution, art abandoned its mission of political and social revolutions and transformations that had been assigned to it until then.

Autonomy in art takes place, on the one hand, by the emancipation of the church, palace, giants, and mesens, by organizing its own museums (history), schools, theory (criticism), philosophy (aesthetics) and market, and on the other hand, by challenging the dominant world of politics and thought. France, which reached the Age of Enlightenment with the approach of thinkers such as Descartes, Leibniz, Kant, Hume, Bacon, Locke, Voltaire, Rousseau, who advocated rational thought, took the first steps of modernization.

On the other hand, the Industrial Revolution, which took place with the discovery of steam power in England, strengthened economies and brought quality and labor problems with it. It is seen that France made an intellectual leap while England was going through the strictest and conservative period of the Victorian Age during this search period. Paris continued to be the capital of Modern Art for nearly 100 years, then replaced by II. It was left to New York as the reality of a new production process with World War II.

The concept of nudity has also begun to change shape gradually, the naked body that exists as an imaginary, mythological and divine has assumed a living reality that lies with blood and looks into the eyes of the viewer (Yılmaz, 2005:287):

As the church and then the nobility began to move away from power, the female body was brought to the fore rather than the naked male body. Thanks to the recklessness of the bourgeoisie, the veils on the female body such as religion and mythology were discarded one by one, leaving only an invisible tulle called aesthetics. In reality, apart from its aesthetics, the painting is nude; arousing, desiring, not bothered to be watched; on the contrary, it is an earthly nude that uses it. It is now both an imagined object that can be watched as much as he wants, and a subject that takes advantage of the weakness of the beholder, hunts the eyes of others, and poses sparingly. His eyes are surrounded or not on us; now he knows he is peeping.

In post-Renaissance Europe, almost all sexual images are shown from the front - either actually given from the front or projected forward - because the real sexual hero has the audience looking at the picture. The strangeness arising from this inflation of masculinity reached its apex in the academic art of the nineteenth century. Statesmen and businessmen

were doing business discussions under such pictures. When one of them felt defeated, he looked up at the pictures for consolation. What he saw in the picture reminded him once again that he was a man (Berger, 2013:63).

At the beginning of the 20th century, the intertwining of nudity and sexuality and the depiction of real female bodies purified from mythological elements in erotic forms brought up the debates on moral understanding. Manet's depiction of a woman who lives with a real name in his work *Olympia* caused criticism that the naked woman became prostitute (Berger, 2013:64):

In modern art, the nude genre has lost its importance to some extent. Artists themselves have now begun to doubt this significance. As in many ways, Manet is considered a turning point in this regard. If we compare Manet's Olympia with Titian's, we see that Manet opposes this place with a certain rebellion in the traditionally fitted picture of women. The ideal woman icon is distorted. However, what has been put in its place is nothing more than the "reality" of algae - the constant woman of the early twentieth century pioneering painting. Tradition has been maintained in academia painting.

As one of the modern art movements, Surrealism and the importance of the subconscious have been brought to the agenda, the issues of women, sexuality and eroticism have been included in the works of Salvador Dalí, Renè Magritte and Paul Delvaux, who were the artists of the period. Salvador Dalí's painting of the fragmented parts of the female body, especially in his paintings, brought up the interpretation that he turned the female body into an object. "Worldly nudity, which was once extremely natural but later considered sin and shame, has now been legitimized through art. What has humanity done, has definitely found the way to strip the figure. Western art history is essentially the history of this evolution (Yılmaz, 2005:289).

The British historian Arnold Toynbee wrote in the fifth volume of his *A Study of History*, which he wrote in 1939, that the modern era ended with World War I and then the postmodern era. According to him, the interwar period was the beginning of the postmodern period. Both wars were clear signs that the modernist project was desperate to save the world (Yılmaz, 2005: 339). Although there is no consensus on the concept of postmodernism, it can be said that postmodernism is a transition process, the cultural structure of the post-industrial society, the cultural logic of late capitalism, the pluralist movement and the pluralist understanding of politics, the rapid change and fragmentation in the information society, the abandonment of ideals and it contains each of them.

Unlike modernism that abandoned the traditional, Postmodernism art (Antmen, 2009:277):

It puts polyvalence against monovalency, impurity versus purity, intertextuality against the "uniqueness" of the work. In contrast to the importance that modernism attributes to the artistic subject and individual stylism, postmodernism

embodies approaches that oppose certain modernist principles such as originality and uniqueness. As a result, the whole of artistic approaches seen in the process described as postmodern has created a new conceptualist understanding of art with different forms of expression such as painting, sculpture, installation and photography, regardless of a particular medium, by putting an end to the dominance of a single art branch - for example, painting - over others, interdisciplinary and pluralistic brought an understanding.

On the other hand, nudity has diversified more than ever in history, and the concepts of perfection, mediocrity and imperfection have been rewritten over the body over and over again. The concept of ideal beauty alienates the naked body, and the body is tried to be shaped according to the demands of society and culture (Vigarello, 2016: 208):

More active postures, more colorful make-up, more flamboyant and more protected skin; each of these emerge as individual affirmations. This shows that beauty and comfort are united as the dominant purpose. Physical delicacy, which is always more dynamic, almost corresponds to social expectations. However, the apparent triumph of the individual makes the combination of individual and collective references more complex and more incomprehensible: the trajectory of failure, whirling in the practices of adornment, the responsibility of a person who becomes responsible for everybody's inaccessible beauty, even his own appearance and freedom in every respect the "insufficiency" attributed to his decisions increases.

The divinity and glory of the body in Ancient Greece has turned into a commodity in the postmodern world and the body functions as an object. "The body is an area where pleasure, desire and aesthetics meet in the consumer society. This idealized image body - cleansed, decorated, made-up, made sporty, free of unnecessary hairs, wrinkles removed - is an aestheticized body created in the market. Like other goods, the image-body is also put into circulation and marketed. The function of the image-body is to create desire. Everyone should have such a body, should look after such bodies and stay close to them (Yılmaz, 2005:290).

Along with this thought, according to the new understanding of humanism, man should be loved not because he has sublime feelings and thoughts, but because of his imperfections and deficiencies, because the philosophy that man exists and is valuable with these defects has played an important role in the development of arts that are idealized, eroticized and marketed to protest the body (Şener, 1993:88). Especially in order to destroy the idealized "beautiful" nudity, the body is used to get rid of the symbolic and language, that is, to get rid of everything that language-centered Western culture encodes (Yılmaz, 2005: 299) and the nudity and the ordinary body are transformed into art itself. "Over the last few decades, the body has transformed from being the subject of traditional imagery to an active presence in lively and participatory organizations. Art historical, social, political and cultural developments, from the radical feminism movement of the 1970s to today's

scientific advances, have all had a profound effect on artists' approach to the human body and body representations.

In today's art, where the postmodern process continues, the boundary between the human body and the world has become blurred, variable and often difficult to define (O'Reilly, 2009: 8). The effects of large-scale social events on individuals have led to alienation and fragmentation, and the body, which has become the object of the consumption age, has moved away from the meaning of nudity used in Ancient Greece. The development of technology and the diversification of mass media have caused the concept of nudity to shift from the art of painting to the electronic environment, and in the meantime to differentiate. The large-scale wars that took place until the 1960s created an anti-ideological consensus among the masses, and the primary questioned situation was the transformation of the human body into a political belonging. The concept of nudity, filled with an ideological discourse, has been reshaped in the video art environment where the concepts of body and psychology are used extensively, and the body has become the direct object of art. The concept of objectified body and nudity appears with its meanings that are reproduced, consumed and recreated again and again with the presence of art in the new media world.

IV. FINDINGS

F. The Art of Video and The Nude After: Electronic Age and Video Art

The moment of transition between the end of an entire era and the beginning of a new one was summed up by an exhibition in 1968 called *The Machine Seen at the End of the Mechanization Age*. Apart from being a cultural response to the abandonment of modern production societies based on production machines, this exhibition also briefly introduced computer and video electronic media studies as the new face of representation. The most important feature of these powerful mass media is the ability to transmit information over long distances that invades the sound, image and every phase of contemporary life, deeply influences the public's consciousness, and pushes the modernist visual arts culture dependent on the pressure of the outside world to an end (Lovejoy, 2004: 62).

In this context, new media has become the beginning of a new field of postmodern situations and problems. Electronic image (video) has a historical background that includes the accumulation of audiovisual devices, photography, radio, film, gramophone, sound recording device in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. With the discovery and introduction of portable video cameras and recording devices in the 1960s, the video had the chance to escape from the domination of the television industry and take its first step into the medium of art. Thus, the environment of the video was made available to individuals individually (Kılıç, 1995: 10).

Video art, like other similar arts, is a technology-based artistic activity. The most important aspect that differentiates video art from other art occupations is that the form and content elements and artistic dimensions of the resulting art work are produced based on the unique possibilities of video

technology, expression features and video aesthetics. Altunay explains how video art completely transformed existing traditions and laid the foundations of new traditions (2013:19):

With the transition from mechanical production methods to electronic production methods, revolutionary results have been achieved in subjects such as image production, storage and copying. The differences between the original and the copy have disappeared, and the opportunity to produce simultaneous images, which previously seemed impossible, has been achieved. With the video, images of objects, people and places could be produced simultaneously with their real time, and these produced images could be reproduced on more than one surface at the same time, and countless copies of these images could be recorded and reproduced in more than one place.

The fact that video is a technology that almost anyone can have and can use, a camera that makes it possible to produce moving images, a technology that allows the viewing of video images at the time of shooting or immediately after shooting, and a useful and easy-to-reach tool for individual expressions to diversify the images produced by video (Yılmaz, 2005: 334), it has enabled it to spread easily and reach a large number of viewers in a short time.

The use of video as an art medium with its features that break traditions has been realized with the contribution of certain developments and changes in a historical and social process. While the Industrial Revolution changed the modes of production, it also affected the social structure and caused the concepts of pre-industrial and post-industrial societies to emerge. In the period before the Industrial Revolution, production based on human and muscle power was replaced by technology with the Industrial Revolution, hierarchical structuring started to appear, people were replaced by machines, rapid population growth and migration to cities started, and as a result, production and consumption patterns were structured.

In the post-industrial society, human relations have also started to be carried out through machines due to the technology developing day by day, "interpersonal relations have started to be realized by means of communication as well as face to face, and a new mass culture has been formed with the new communication technologies structured by the mass communication culture (Altunay, 2013: 27).

The 1960s, the years when the work on video art started, saw two world wars due to conflicts of interest between countries after the developments in the Industrial Revolution, and mass organizations against war appeared. The Vietnam War was watched with the help of televisions, and this war brought the masses, who had seen two world wars in the same century, to the streets and raised a consciousness. "The Vietnam War has become an important problem that shook America's system of values and beliefs, and the American dream that human beings and machines believed will create a new democratic utopia with the help of technological activity and development has been shaken. The mood of optimism and hope in the first years of the 1960s has

been replaced by anger and frustration in the out-of-control sea of events since the early days of the 1970s (Lovejoy, 2004: 72).

The freedom movements that emerged in the 60s made the 68 generation more resistant to the dominant ideologies and more confident. The rock age that developed with this period, mass media that gained a global power, and especially television broadcasting, developed cultural structures unique to Central Europe and America constitute the social foundations of the emergence of video art (Altunay, 2013:30).

The change in the social structure, during the 70's, many artists and their supporters who supported their arts and artistic institutions aimed to deconstruct the existing social order in order to rid the masks of the way art represented itself and to cleanse the art from its mysterious points (Sandler, 1996: 340). In this period, the focus has been on re-describing the alienated body and nudity and structuring it in a different way, with the ongoing violence and despair being given away from the divine nudity especially in ancient times and through the concept of the body where language, culture and social analyzes are made.

The concept of the body, which has transformed from a biological phenomenon into a project and performance with social, cultural and individual differentiation, has become widespread with its developing video art and its nature that is suitable for common use by everyone, causing the nudity to be re-questioned in an environment where individuals can exist with their body images.

G. Human-Body Phenomenon and Nudity in Video Art

The concept of today's body exists in a new kind of representative environment where time and space become obsolete and our physical perception changes (Lovejoy, 2004: 80). The postmodern individual experiences a great transformation in perception and consciousness. Towards the end of the twentieth century, the body has become a highly-contested region over which today's societies are fighting for control (Hancock, Hughes, 2000:1). In today's societies, the subject of body is in every field. Especially in the field of art, performers who tend to act based on the body draw attention to the existence of the body in the artwork. The performances of the artists, who turn to the body through action, aim to reconstruct the body established as the other against the power. Artists also benefit from the imaging techniques of the age, as it allows the audience to participate in the activities they perform with the body.

In the auto-portraits, where artists focus on subjects such as recognizing themselves, resisting bodily alienation, examining the body formally and examining bodily change, the artist finds the opportunity to observe himself by entering into an intimate relationship with the camera (Altunay, 2013: 71). This field, which is considered as feminist video art, is important both because it can produce images instantly and without the help of any other user, and because it reveals the narcissistic aspect of the video. Most of the works that could be described as narcissistic video strangely are based on a strong

modernist aesthetic aimed at expanding the natural properties of the medium.

Rosalind Krauss explains how the body is used as the main material of video art and carries it to different dimensions and meanings through the Aesthetics of Narcissism (1976):

Simultaneous recording and reflection of the image and the use of the human spirit as a channel, all works revealed the existence of video art that uses the human body as its own material in a very short time. Considering the work on videotape, it can be seen that the artist's body is very often taken as the basis. And no matter whose body's practice is chosen for this situation, there is a more advanced state that is constantly present. Unlike other visual arts, video also records and broadcasts. The body is therefore as if a bracket is centered between two separators that open and close. The first is the camera, the other is the monitor that reflects the artist's image with the immediacy of the mirror.

The divine and unique nudity in ancient Greece has evolved into the concept of the body, which has been transformed into a commodity, through which politics, cultural analysis, advertisement is made and reproduced within this framework, recreated by making changes, disintegrated, subtracted from the integrity of its nature. The structure of video culture, which allows the capture of snapshots to be watched and shared easily, has played a role in making the body an object of art by taking images about the human body, on which the greatest war was fought today.

Fragmentation, which is an image embodied in the concept of postmodern, is not only in the industrial, technological and industrial sphere of change; It was effective in transitioning to a state of discontinuity, which is also valid in terms of tastes, choices and preferences (Yamaner, 2007: 22). According to Maureen Turim, the selection, aggregation and compositing of video, in other words, the "collage" function, can be said to be the greatest success of video, rather than creating a unique art language, it gives the momentum to change the boundaries and course of art (1990:332):

Products referred to as postmodern art are replicas of a copied style. The abundance of form and substance has pushed artists to reveal the themes of the theory rather than a theoretical intermediary... video is the most postmodern form... internal editing, easy and the ability to repeat video frames repeatedly within the image has made art a showy state.

Nam June Paik, one of the pioneers of electronic image art, organizes a series of performances with American cello and performance artist Charlotte Morman. She plays with the expectations of the audience, navigates the boundaries of conventional art forms, and often transcends these boundaries (Altunay, 2013: 92). These shows are important for the first time as pioneering works in which video footage is used as part of an artistic event in a performance. In these performances, called video sculptures, naked human bodies form the object of art.

Vito Acconci, who started to deal with performance and video at the end of the 1960s, is one of the pioneering artists who use his own body as an art object in his photography, film, video and performance works. Acconci in his radical work; The artist and the viewer enter into an intense dialogue between body and soul, public and private space, object and subject, and existence and non-existence. In her video work, Martha Rosler, one of the prominent feminist artists of the period, shows how the woman tests herself in the social control system, how social values are effective while performing these tests, and how these values structure our individual control system by using the body criteria of women as a metaphor (Altunay, 2013: 109).

From the youth movement of the 1960s to the destruction of the war on bodies, from the bodies that have lost their divinity to the feminist art that liberated the female body, the perception of nudity and body evolved into a new dimension by including the beauty, aesthetics and taste criteria that began to be questioned with postmodern art. The concepts of body and nudity, which are perceived with mathematical proportions and which have become the main object of consumer society by becoming an object of consumption by becoming an object of consumption, from the effort to recreate the most beautiful nude in order to reach the divine beauty of God, and most of all by selling sexuality, are the first concepts used in art today. they are far from their meaning.

How many actions, especially sexual acts have been in the past, was an extremely monotonous and boring repeat with no parallel development in the level of thought and understanding quoted by D. H. Lawrence in Michel Foucault's book *History of Sexuality* (1990). Now our job is to understand sexuality clearly summarizes the negative evolution of nudity from its banality to a strongly sanctioned discourse today. The reason for this is that the nudity in antiquity did not require control. When ideology started to mention nudity together with sexuality and eroticism by creating discourses over the concept and sanction of nudity, nudity was taken under control by the authority, discourses were produced in the desired direction and became rent.

Video art in the modern and postmodern age where alienation, separation, negative conditions, violence and destructiveness prevail over the body; it is a psychological medium in which the evolving concept of nudity can convey the feelings of the artist and reflect the internal and external dialectics of individual and social bodies. Nudity, on the other hand, is in this medium that is judged, categorized, objectified by losing its spiritual and divine beauty in Ancient Greece, and the options between externality and internality, existence and absence, concrete volume and schematized generalizations can be attributed to the power of the human soul, its relations and remembrances has become a concept.

V. CONCLUSION

Considering the history of Western art, the main starting point of this study is to examine the evolution of the concept of nudity, which was founded in Ancient Greece, to postmodern video art as a process. The periods when the

divine and divine perception of nudity began to break in historical processes, the reasons that triggered the break and the great psychological processes in which the social perception changed clearly show that the perception of nudity today is far from the philosophy of Ancient Greece. The concept of nudity, which is expressed as the absence of clothes that cover our body, is matched with the word nude when it comes to nudity in art. It has been determined that the transformation process of the phenomenon of nudity, which is seen mainly in the works made in the fields of painting and sculpture, in terms of art history is largely related to social processes. The concept of nudity was not filled with any ideological discourse because of its natural existence in daily life in ancient Greece. In parallel with the great social ruptures that have occurred throughout history, it is clearly seen that the phenomenon of nudity has been subjected to tides and has turned into a controllable discourse that is constantly forbidden and allowed again.

Nudity, which has begun to be covered, categorized, removed from divinity and naturalness and draw borders around it, has moved away from the way it was used in daily life in Ancient Greece and became alienated even to art for a period. The phenomenon of nudity, which the artists try to convey through hidden expressions and indirect expressions, has evolved both conceptually and visually as a reaction to the obstacles, diversified and continued to exist as a subject. The changing concepts of beauty and body measurements have also greatly influenced the perspective of nudity in different periods of art. In the consumer society where the concept of nudity turns into the exploitation of the body, individualization has come to the fore and individuals have turned to image-body symbols. The human body has become the dominant object of many fields, from economy to power, from being used as advertising to reconstruction. In order to react to the objectification of the body in the field of postmodern art and its transformation into a discourse with limitations, studies have been conducted in different branches of art. The works produced by the artists using their own bodies are at the top of these protest artistic works.

The fact that video art is open to individual work and the artist's ability to record his own body and turn it into a visual art without the need for anyone else has provided the artist with the opportunity to interpret the process that has evolved from mere nakedness to body protest in almost the best way. The fact that it is an art space that can be created over and over again, can be collage and can be shared and recycled quickly has played an important role in the ability of video art to convey the discourses created on the body in a versatile way by combining them with various other arts. Video art, a psychological medium in which internal and external dialectics can be conveyed, embraced the concept of nudity with its changing perception and helped to shape this perception, which is reduced to the body as an object of consumption, within the concept of art. Nudity, on the other hand, has been re-formed with a perception beyond the concept of being deprived of the clothes that cover our body. The concept of the body that contains nudity has turned into an image reality, it has been filled with many ideological configurations, especially sexuality discourse, and individuals

are alienated from their bodies. In the postmodern process, being naked is not just a situation of being deprived of clothes, but also being reduced to an image-bodily perception even while dressed.

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