MEDIA AURA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE MEDIATIZATION OF CONTEMPORARY IMAGES

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Media Aura *Mediatization* *Contemporary Images* *Grounded Theory* *Phenomenological Analysis* *Technology* *Reappropriation*	*The advent of digital platforms and new technologies of information and communication has transformed the manner in which citizens interact with art. Emerging as key actors, prosumers have (re)appropriated images, including traditional works. A qualitative model is presented to understand the mediatization of prosumers, revealing the significance of their new agency as producers. Grounded theory and socio-semiotic analysis are combined from a phenomenological perspective. This approach unravels the complexities of the mediatization of art in social networks. Its adaptability suggests its usefulness in contemporary image research, providing a framework for exploring the transformation of meaning in the digital age.*

1. Introduction

It is now common to see large groups of people in museums, rushing to take photographs of works of art. Once these reproductions are captured, they are shared through social networks. This phenomenon is a form of mediatization that artworks undergo due to their interactions with different technologies. However, this text will focus more specifically on the process of mediatization of art through social networks and the method of analysis that has been employed to analyze images that emerge from this phenomenon.

The value of analyzing contemporary images, such as those that emerge from photographing a work of art, lies in the fact that they involve a transformation of meaning inherent to mediatization. These changes influence both the interpretation of the work and society as a whole, because of the media's influence on multiple aspects of social interaction (Couldry and Hepp, 2017). However, this would only have been possible thanks to the current access to and ease of use of information and communication technologies.

Social networks have become one of the most popular and widespread tools today, which implies a massive participation in the dissemination of images. In this situation, the importance of the prosumer stands out as a central figure, and the act of (re)appropriating images, even of traditional works, has become a common practice. Greater and more varied participation is observed on the part of the general public. Consequently, a growing number of people feel empowered to share their artistic experiences through photographs taken with mobile devices and digital cameras. This phenomenon gave rise to what Brea (2010) identified as a new visual culture. This calls into question the role of traditional images because the artistic objects of the past now coexist in a world saturated with digital images.

The integration of works into popular culture through social networks facilitates their dissemination on a wider scale, thus altering their presentation and, consequently, their valuation[1]. In other words, digital platforms have facilitated the popularization of works, with the transformations in their circulation and appearances impacting the way art is experienced, both online and offline.

On the one hand, there is a growing recognition of the democratization of the media, which is amplifying opportunities for the dissemination and reception of discourses and allowing for a greater diversity of perspectives. Conversely, social networks are owned by media companies that generate profits through the extensive production of content and the collection of data from the platforms. In summary, these media companies amass considerable influence, yet at the same time, their hegemonic control over the culture of content consumption is diluted (Jenkins, 2008). In this context, there is a notable absence of analysis of this phenomenon, which should encompass not only institutional aspects and media devices, but also the examination of the popular discursive material generated and the forms of creative participation of the typical users of these technologies.

It is of great importance to emphasize the significance of images in the contemporary environment, given their pervasiveness and their active role in everyday life through social networks. They are key indicators of visual culture and, as such, it is essential to study them in order to gain insight into the evolution of forms of communication and culture in a global context. The analysis of these images would provide a more profound comprehension of the novel modes of visual expression, interaction, and consumption that are emerging in the present era. The objective of this proposal is to present a model of analysis of previous research that facilitated the understanding of contemporary image mediatization processes through a qualitative methodological approach.

The method presented here seeks to elucidate the potential meanings that prosumers as both producers and consumers attribute to works of art. In the contemporary era, the term "prosumer" is no longer limited to the reproduction of artworks[2]; rather, it encompasses a broader spectrum of interactions and actions. These interactions and actions often involve the linking of the artwork with the image itself, as exemplified by the phenomenon of selfies with artworks. The role of the public is

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[1] Some researchers express concern about how contemporary art can be seen largely as a visual commodity, leading to a possible trivialisation and depreciation of its cultural value. This is attributed to how the works are presented on screens, in contrast to the traditional method that required visits to museums or the observation of reproductions in books. However, in this reflection this change does not imply the end of art, but rather a transformation or redefinition.

[2] This research was based on Benjamin's reflections on the loss of the aura of the work of art with technical reproduction (Benjamin, 2018). This phenomenon is still current and has intensified with the arrival of new technologies such as social networks and smartphones, complicating the circulation of images by having multiple recipients and different times.

undergoing a transformation. Rather than merely observing, they are seeking to become more active participants.[3]

The importance of developing an appropriate method specifically for this research was due in part to the contemporary and unique nature of the phenomenon we sought to analyze. However, more importantly, it was due to the movement and constant transformation that characterizes contemporary images. In light of this perspective, the necessity for research tools that align with social change was identified, as traditional categories are unable to capture the fluidity of change and the diversity of today's society. A method was sought to understand the discourses that emerge from the blurring of pre-established genres into tentative and partial realities. This is to say that it is a "post structural and decidedly postmodern form of discourse theory" (Guba and Lincoln, 2012, p. 64).

Nevertheless, the model proposed in this research did not necessarily seek to entirely circumvent conventional methodologies; rather, it aimed to leverage their strengths by developing combined tools that facilitate dialogue and mutual reinforcement. Consequently, the integration of analysis with the grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin (2002) and the social semiotic analysis of Eliseo Verón (2013) was proposed. The objective of this approach was to establish connections between the observed discourse, employing the semiotic method for its analysis, while avoiding the formation of closed interpretations of meaning. Instead, an inductive approach, as offered by grounded theory, was incorporated.

It is important to note that this research commenced with a theoretical review that served to frame the analysis. However, its primary objective was to facilitate familiarity with the process of mediatization present in the images under study. However, the objective was to develop a new theory based on the images themselves, which could facilitate a dialogue between existing and emerging concepts in subsequent stages. In essence, the objective was to identify the changes in meaning of the works because of the visual discourse in the image, thereby enabling the recognition of potential trends in the meanings they acquire in their dissemination on social networks.

The objective was to examine the potential interpretations and appropriations of the works, as well as their influence on cultural tradition, with consideration of the possibility of these images destabilizing or disrupting established roles. Consequently, the images were regarded as complex and open systems, capable of functioning beyond mere representation and with a performative potential (Soto Calderón, 2020).

The premise was that the process of mediatization could open new meanings of the works and, eventually, generate interruptions in their tradition. Two modes of functioning of the images were established: the representational, based on pre-established schematic projections to perpetuate tradition; and that of performativity, which implies the opening of broader meanings without a causal or predetermined logic. Ultimately, the analysis concluded that the tradition or canonical meanings of the works could permeate the images, which could then be used as a reference point to break with the same tradition, or alternatively, to reinforce it.

This approach to analyzing contemporary images has enabled us to expand our understanding of their functions, moving away from reductionist or hierarchical perspectives. In this manner, the possibility of other forms of visual expression than that of simple representation is permitted, and a capacity for the formation and communication of images that transcends the limitations of a fixed or closed scheme is acknowledged (Soto Calderón, 2020)[4].

2. The Mediatization of Art in Social Networks

The term 'mediatization' was defined as a dynamic process of transformation of meaning or displacement initiated by a material disposition, which in this case are images. As these are reproductions of the works that, by circulating through social networks, reach various recipients asynchronously, this implies a constant updating and reinterpretation with each new appearance.

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[3] Benjamin (2018) referred to this as the quest of the masses to be part of what was previously excluded; today, this phenomenon can be interpreted not only as a desire to belong, but also as a willingness to actively participate by generating content around these traditions.

[4] This requires thinking about the action of images from other spheres, such as interruption, bifurcation and the unexpected.

This process generates temporal and spatial discrepancies in the reception of images, which alters the interpretation of the work with each displacement. In essence, mediatization entails variations with each reproduction, dissemination and reception of images that allude to the work in question and is a process to which art is continually exposed.

It is crucial to emphasize that this phenomenon is perceived as a complex process involving a multitude of instances, devices and influential agents. From the theoretical perspective adopted, it appears that the process lacks a concrete end point. In other words, the practices that define this process continue to perpetuate themselves through the re-appropriation of already mediatized images, which change over time. Consequently, images and the works they contain are regarded as open systems, perpetually susceptible to new interpretations and reconfigurations within the context of social networks.[5]

The mediatization of culture transforms the production and recognition of meaning. It allows the emergence of meanings through spatial, temporal and intersubjective leaps that would otherwise not occur (Cingolani, 2014, p. 12). Furthermore, the reception and meaning of the work depend on the context surrounding the process. This is why the displacements are explored from these three dimensions: time (T), space (S) and intersubjectivity (I).

New technologies introduce changes in the meanings of the works, both on an individual and collective level. Technology is seen as a force that generates discontinuities. In this sense, the capacity of media devices to influence and configure perceptions of time and space in the collective is highlighted. For this reason, a phenomenological approach was adopted, which, according to researcher Gastón Cingolani enables a detailed description of the mediatization process. The process of mediatization can be broken down into three dimensions, which enables the identification of qualitative gaps in the images identified as "temporal jumps, spatial distances, multiplicities and intersubjective divergences" (2014, p. 16).

In other words, ruptures of meaning between contemporary images and the tradition of the works, generated by the process of mediatization, were examined in the three axes mentioned above. These dimensions reflected transformations of meaning and gaps at different socio-cultural levels. Similarly, the transformation of meaning associated with the mediatization processes encompasses both the production and recognition of the images. Consequently, this phenomenological perspective on the process was integrated into both the theoretical approach of the research and the generation of the analytical model for the images, which is presented below.

3. New Methodological Approach for New Phenomena

It is challenging to provide a satisfactory response to research problems that address the social and cultural mediation of the Internet and digital platforms. One of the causes of this difficulty lies in the confusion between methods (the techniques of data and information collection) and methodologies (the theoretical motivation and analysis of research procedures). Method is usually identified, in general, with the two aspects mentioned above and often also with epistemological issues involving the validity of the knowledge obtained in research.

In the digital domain, quantitative metrics and data mining have been employed as novel research methodologies, with the focus being on the techniques employed rather than the context and meaning of the data being analyzed. Methodology is the theoretical reflection on the procedures that should be followed in conducting research and on the analysis of the problems posed by the object of study. The objective is to develop theoretical propositions that can be applied to a specific field of research. The second way of understanding methodology is open and in a state of constant evolution, because of the ongoing contributions of research. This is the field in which the present proposal is situated.

The object of study thus far presents a first methodological challenge: the messages in question possess multiple meanings, and the initial meanings are subject to subsequent resignifications that overlap and influence each other irremediably. A second challenge is posed by the breadth of Instagram, the communication channel under study, which is characterized by the convergence of millions of

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[5] It is worth noting the distinction between the two types of images within the same mediatization process. On the one hand, there is the work of art, considered as a traditional image or object image, and on the other hand, the technical image such as a digital photograph.

communicative actions, competing for social attention, and originating in diverse and even antagonistic social and cultural contexts.

In response to the first challenge, the research employs a qualitative approach, with a focus on the exploration of subjective and intersubjective social knowledge, as well as the active construction of knowledge (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013, p. 19). However, a methodological approach was required that would allow for a qualitative analysis of the observed images without reducing them to pre-established categorizations or genres. This is because it is considered that the mediatization of images today is very accelerated and promotes constant movement and transformation of the same phenomenon. Therefore, the method of analysis should be equally flexible.

As the research aimed to contribute a proposal for the analysis of specific contemporary images, and in accordance with Rose's (2019) recommendations on the combination of different methodologies in contemporary visual studies, a proprietary method was designed. The method comprised two complementary methodologies, which informed each other throughout the analysis of images.

The two principal methodological approaches of the method of analysis were grounded theory, as outlined by Strauss and Corbin (2002), and social semiotic analysis, based on Veron's theory (2013). This methodological approach enables the establishment of links between visual discourse and inductive approaches from a phenomenological perspective of mediatization.[6]

In relation to the second challenge mentioned, the depth with which the images were to be analyzed made probabilistic sampling an untenable option. As will be demonstrated, the selection of images for analysis is informed by the theoretical sampling approach of Glasser and Strauss. The final selection of images for analysis is made in a progressive manner, with each subsequent image being chosen based on the results of the initial observations made on a larger number of images.

3.1. Anatomy of the Methodology

3.1.1. Semiotic Analysis

Prior to embarking upon the conceptualization of the observed phenomena, it was necessary to employ tools that would enable the sorting and searching for meaning in the images as they were collected. Veron's socio-semiotic theory provided a robust framework for the analysis of visual content, acknowledging that the production of meaning is a social phenomenon that shapes reality (Verón, 2013).[7] In order to achieve this, semiotic analytical values were incorporated into the development of the initial observation sheets.

However, the objective was to establish connections between the discourse analyzed through the semiotic method and to avoid the formation of closed interpretations of the meaning of these images by incorporating the inductive dimension of grounded theory. In essence, this combination enabled a more comprehensive comprehension of the way meanings are conveyed in the images and their interrelationship with other nascent concepts.

3.1.2 Grounded Theory

This methodology permits the incorporation of work in progress and reconstruction in the domain of sensory analysis. Grounded theory is inductive in nature; therefore, the collection and analysis of data is fundamental to the development of findings. This contrasts with other methods that rely on pre-existing concepts and theoretical constructs. The objective of this method is to generate theory that provides a more comprehensive understanding of the social phenomenon under investigation. Although its creators indicated that it could be applied to both qualitative and quantitative analysis, its main use has been qualitatively (Alonzo and Zermeño, 2017).

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[6] The aim was to establish connections between visual discourse using the tools of the semiotic method for the analysis of images, avoiding a rigid interpretation of meaning, which is why we chose to incorporate an inductive approach, characteristic of grounded theory.

[7] This theory influenced not only the formulation of data collection forms and their analysis, but also the conceptualisation of the process of mediatization and the subdivision of the method into displacements of meaning along the axes of time, space and intersubjectivity.

It is important to note that grounded theory has been extensively utilized in social research pertaining to Internet culture. This is because the researcher, by being part of the context under investigation, facilitates an integrated analysis between observation and the resulting theoretical construct (Alonzo and Zermeño, 2017). Similarly, Charmaz (2013) emphasized that grounded theory encompasses both a method and a research product, demonstrating its analytical flexibility to focus data collection and develop inductive theories in changing environments such as Internet culture or Web 2.0. Consequently, this approach was deemed optimal for integrating diverse perspectives and explaining the heterogeneity of Internet users and their practices.

3.2. Phase Division

The study was conducted in three phases. Firstly, an exhaustive collection of images was carried out, comprising emblematic works. Secondly, a detailed analysis of the images was applied, both individually and collectively. Thirdly, grounded theory was used to analyze the processes and results from phenomenological perspectives, namely time, space and intersubjectivity. It should be noted that priority was given to the discursive aspect of the image, although the presence of other elements that could influence mediatization and generate new meanings was acknowledged. The following is a brief description of the study of the images, divided by phases.[8]

3.2.1. First Phase:

The primary objective of this preliminary stage of the methodology was to select images for analysis and to document the way these images were presented on the Instagram platform. The initial corpus consisted of a limited number of works of art, comprising five pieces in total. The initial corpus comprised Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and the *Last Supper*, Pablo Picasso's Guernica, Alexander of Antioch's *Venus de Milo* and Michelangelo's *Pietà* of the Vatican.[9] Furthermore, it was resolved to extend the scope of the analysis to any technical image that could be considered an allusion to one of these traditional works, in various forms, such as illustrations, paintings, graphic designs and photographs. The following tags were employed for this search: #Monalisa[10], #Guernica, #VenusDeMilo, #LastSupper and #Pieta. This enabled users to engage in discourse about each work, categorizing them under a single tag[11] .

A further limitation of the study was that the content analyzed was published by the general public, and thus excluded institutional pages, such as those of museums or other cultural or tourist institutions. This methodological decision was taken to gain insight into the phenomenon from the perspective of the average prosumer actors, who are less constrained by the process of constructing myths and traditions around the works.

The collection was conducted on a three-day-per-week basis, with one image selected per work on each occasion. The objective was to create a diverse collection of 180 images, with the images chosen based on their aesthetic merit or the detail that made them distinctive.[12]

Prior to selecting the images, a general description of the content that appeared under each label daily was recorded in the interpretation diary.[13] This was followed by completion of an image collection form. In addition to serving as a record of the images, the collection form enabled the researcher to make

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[8] All these phases were carried out over a period of approximately nine months throughout 2022.

[9] These works were selected for their traditional character in art and the aim was to make a varied selection of emblematic works belonging to Western cultural heritage, considering different traditional image techniques, such as painting and sculpture, as well as different museums in which these works are exhibited and different periods in the history of art.

[10] It was observed that #monalisa had the highest number of posts, reflecting its high popularity as the most reproduced work on Instagram.

[11] These works were sought to have more than 70,000 posts on the Instagram platform under specific tags.

[12] It is relevant to note that algorithms have an impact on the appearance of images on social networks, as these platforms organise information and prosumer content according to parameters customised by the recipient's digital behaviour patterns. Therefore, for this research we chose to create a completely new Instagram account, i.e. free of any previous algorithm configuration, and through this account (@igers_oat) we started the search for images.

[13] The interpretations diary started with a generic description of what was observed each day of image collection in phase 1, then evolved into a record of concepts that allowed for highlighting and reviewing repetitions between images. This was very useful when doing selective and axial coding, and finally, it was a record of relationships between the images and what was observed in them for the findings.

brief observations about the characteristics of the content, as well as to answer certain initial questions about the images, the social network, the prosumer, and the artwork.[14]

3.2.2 Second Phase:

The phase in question comprised four principal tools. Firstly, the axial coding of grounded theory on the interpretation diary was employed to establish categories that facilitated the selection of the twenty images analysed. Subsequently, collective analysis was employed to observe the interaction between the images, followed by the individual study of each image to analyse its morphogenesis from the appropriation of the works. Finally, an axial coding scheme was developed to filter, organise and better understand the observations made, following the principles of grounded theory.

The analysis of images focused on understanding how reproductions of traditional works were presented on Instagram, both individually and collectively, with a particular focus on their relationship to artistic tradition. In order to achieve this objective, twenty images were selected from the previous sample, based on the categories developed in the previous phase through grounded theory.

The objective was to gain insight into the way the images interact with the tradition of the works from a discursive and appropriation perspective. To achieve this, selective coding was employed to organise the information and construct a preliminary theory, which was represented in a conceptual map that visualised the connections between the categories identified. Subsequently, a detailed examination of each image was conducted, with a focus on its relationship with the tradition of the works from a discursive perspective.

Figure 1. Axial Coding
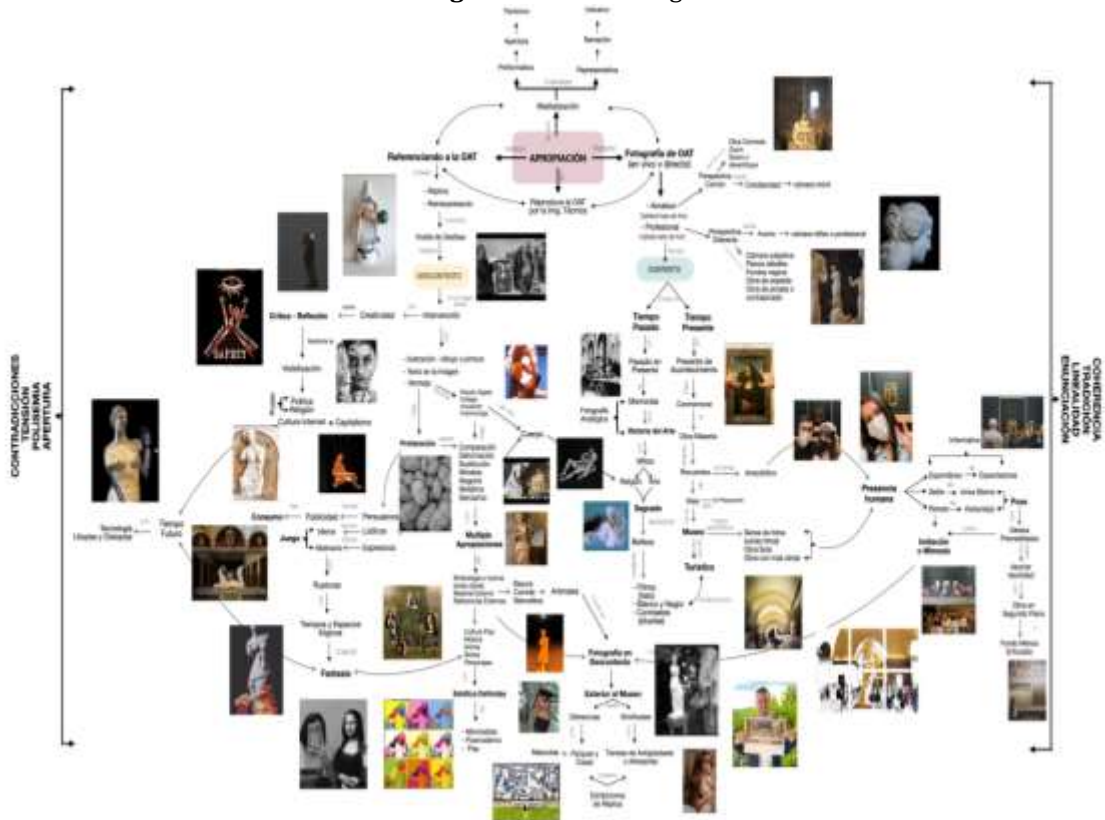
Source: Monroy Galindo, 2023.

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[14] Some questions revolved around whether there was a human form in the image, whether the image stood out as being different or common with respect to the rest, whether a filter or photomontage was used, among others. It is important to highlight that whether or not people appear in the image, and the way in which they are presented, were important variables in understanding the functioning of these images, as this allowed us to intuit some kind of link between the work and personal identities. Another relevant characteristic was to observe the semantic level, alluding to the tendency of the image to be more polysemic or monosemic.

The analysis, *Morphogenesis of Image Appropriation*, sought to examine the form and patterns of the images in question, with particular attention paid to their valuation in relation to the aura of the work. Consequently, the utilisation of the concept of feedback permitted the comprehension of the manner in which alterations in intricate systems can reinforce or challenge the previously conceived meanings of the works.

Figure 2: Morphogenesis of Image Appropriation

CONCEPTO	DEFINICIÓN	VARIABLES	DESCRIPCIÓN	MANIFESTACIÓN
RETROALIMENTACIÓN	Modos de los procesos de cambio y formación	POSITIVA	El sentido de la img. refuerza el sentido previo de la OAT. (Proceso de conservación)	Perpetuación: Continuidad mediante gestos de repetición
		NEGATIVA	El sentido de la img. vuelve en oposición al sentido de la OAT. Proceso de innovación.	Interrupción: Discontinuidad mediante un gesto.
CONFIGURACIÓN DE LA IMG.	Margen de indeterminación discursiva de la imagen o potencial dialógico.	REPRESENTATIVA	Condensar un enunciado en búsqueda de un efecto.	Cifrar: resumir algo con un fin.
		PERFORMATIVA	Detonar otro enunciado, sin un fin cerrado.	Engendrar: creación de algo.
APROPIACIONISMO	Uso de referente pasado (OAT) para la creación de un nuevo discurso.	ESTÉRIL	Cuando simplemente se busca la réplica de esquemas prefijados.	Imitación: reproducir mediante semejanzas.
		ACTIVO	Cuando las partes introducidas a la O.A genera diferencia de intensidades.	Transformación: alteración de algo en particular.
INTENSIDADES DEL AURA	Nivel de alejamiento de la tradición de la obra reproducida mediante la forma de la apropiación. Se observa las modificaciones cualitativas.	MAGNITUDES INTENSIVAS 0,1,2,3,4,5,6....	La obra de arte actual es el punto de partida (o atractor) o en este caso 0.	Punto atractor: Punto de donde parten la tendencia de aproximación o apropiación. La OAT crea tendencias virtuales.
			A medida en que el sentido de la imagen se va alejando del sentido canónico, mayor grado. Lo virtual en los objetos (G. Deleuze)	Virtualidad: Formas posibles de apropiación en distintos tiempos y espacios.
ESPACIO SUSTRATO	Espacio donde se conjugan las posibilidades.	Redes Sociales (Instagram)	Espacio donde se cruzan sentidos (red), compuesta por propagaciones con consecuentes mutaciones.	Intersecciones: Encuentros de metáforas y virtualidad de la obra mediante la apropiación.

Source: Monroy Galindo, 2023.

In the configuration section of the images, the representational potential and performativity of the works were examined, as well as the way they appear in the images, either as repetitive or transformative gestures. The concept of aura was also considered in relation to traditional artworks, with particular attention paid to their off-centring and radial expansion. This entailed an assessment of the qualitative leaps made by the works in terms of their meaning and stability. The authentic work was understood to act as a point of attraction, influencing its media reproduction. This generated new interpretations and temporal and spatial displacements in the images.

Figure 3: Intensities of auras I.
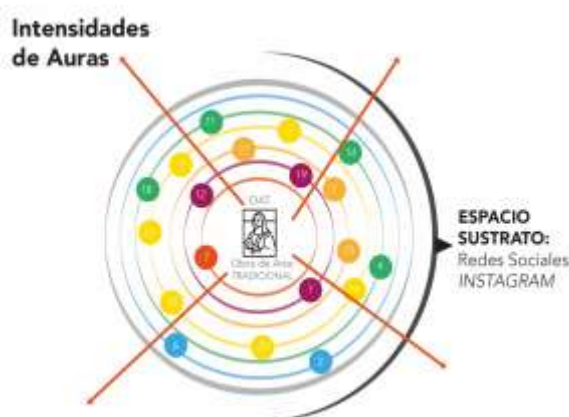
Source: Monroy Galindo, 2023.

The analysis also considered the concept of *becoming's*, as proposed by Gilles Deleuze, where transformations of meaning occur through diverse relationships. The social network was identified as a

space where these diversifications manifest themselves and intersect with reality, giving rise to new interpretations of works of tradition.

In conclusion, the model of analysis designed enabled us to comprehend the dynamics between images and traditional works, maintaining the meaning of images open due to their constant transformation and flux in the media context. The influence of technology and social factors on the production and reception of images was also considered. It was acknowledged that images can be subject to new appropriations and reinterpretations in a continuous process of mediatization.[15]

3.2.3. Third Phase:

In the third and final phase of the study, we sought to ascertain the influence of images appropriated from traditional works on social networks on social reality through mediatization along three axes: time, space and intersubjectivity. The analysis was divided into three sections, each addressing a separate dimension. Furthermore, the impact of the mediatization process on various areas of socio-cultural life was also considered.

The grounded theory method was employed, with the interpretation's diary and a division of the analysis into stages being used to facilitate this. This entailed open coding and a review of the axial and selective coding of the information collected up to this point, with a view to identifying qualitative gaps and the different perspectives mentioned. This phase of the study lasted three months, with one month of analysis dedicated to each axis. This allowed us to gain insight into how the process of mediatization of the works manifests itself in various aspects of social and everyday life. In conclusion, the study yielded findings regarding the images' formation of relationships and their role as mediators and mediatized influences on the collective, from the three aforementioned axes.

4. Findings of the Analysis

The central concept that emerged was that of appropriation, which then developed into categories, subcategories and characteristics that allowed connections to be drawn and new theory to be developed. A diverse array of creative forms of appropriation was observed, with similar gestures and techniques emerging from the outset. However, a more detailed examination of the material in the second phase revealed a number of more pronounced differences and particularities.

The analysis revealed the emergence of images that straddle the boundaries between different traditions, exhibiting characteristics that are both similar and distinct from the works they are derived from. This necessitates a focus on intensities in the analysis, allowing for the observation of nuances between the images. Furthermore, a tendency towards a middle ground between the representational and the performative was identified, evidenced by a zigzagging in the forms of appropriation of the images. The findings obtained in each of the phenomenological axes demonstrate the efficacy of the applied analytical model.

4.1. Temporary

The temporal dimension of the images serves as a link between the exhibited content and external aspects that place the events in a certain sequence. However, not all of the exhibited content maintains a linear temporality. The appropriation of traditional works in images evokes the past, yet the process of mediatization introduces temporal lags.

The temporal nature of the networks means that some images function as testimonies of the present, while others highlight the time lags of the works, generating contradictions in the face of the instantaneous nature of the platforms. The manner in which the works are appropriated can highlight, allude to, change or erase their past, present or future, thereby affecting the temporality perceived in the image.

Some images emphasize the present as an event, while others explore the future with fantasy and temporal tensions. In contrast, some images give weight back to the past and the tradition of the works.

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[15] Each repetition of the mediatization process could result in changes in the participating agents and thus generate different interpretations, even using the same methodology or process. Therefore, the analysis tool developed for this research aimed to visualise these qualitative changes or gaps, avoiding imposing a closed interpretation on the images studied.

Furthermore, the introduction of graphic elements can result in the formation of anachronistic connections and the emergence of novel interpretations, which may challenge established traditions.

The way the works are photographed within the museum can influence the perception of time. This can be seen in the use of professional photography to enhance the historical value of the works, or in photographs that emphasize the present of the moment of the visit. Two principal approaches to the appropriation of the works were identified when referencing the work or photographing it in situ. The first category of photographs is testimonial in nature and focuses on the present. The second category of photographs links the present work with its past, thereby reinforcing its traditional and heritage value.

Nevertheless, a considerable number of the images emphasize the presence of the work, particularly the act of visiting the museum. These photographs, which portray the actuality of the work from an amateur perspective, tend to focus more on the experience of the visit than on the work itself, perpetuating its tradition as an iconic figure. These images serve as a bridge between the museum and the public, reinforcing the institutional value of the works.

By foregrounding the present moment in the image, an attempt is made to bridge social time-space gaps. However, the image may also inadvertently highlight accidental gaps, such as unintentional noises. However, the image typically indicates that at that moment, the subject is in the presence of the work. Nevertheless, tourist images draw on a recognized past to link them to a personal identity, seeking reactions from the recipients.

Conversely, there are instances of photographs of replicas of the works, that is, copies that have been decontextualized and exhibited in different locations. These photographs were regarded as references rather than direct captures, which implies a greater indexical displacement. Such references may take the form of reinterpretations of the works in different formats. One example is the use of the mimetic body to mark a memory, which generates a dialogue between the past of the work and the habitual present in a playful way.

Image 1. Selfie in the mirror.

Source: Taken from *Alone but never lonely* [Photograph], by Carlina Maria [@carlinaamariaa], 7 July 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CRCkrkUH8Dh/).

The photographs frequently document spontaneous encounters in public spaces, thereby underscoring the pervasiveness of the works in society. Such works often generate curiosity and demonstrate temporal lags in comparison to the tradition of the works, due to their incorporation into a contemporary context.[16]

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[16] They highlight the popularity of the works and reinforce the notion of their perception as popular claims. They generate interaction through representations of real events and by highlighting time lags.

Image 2. Artwork and consumption
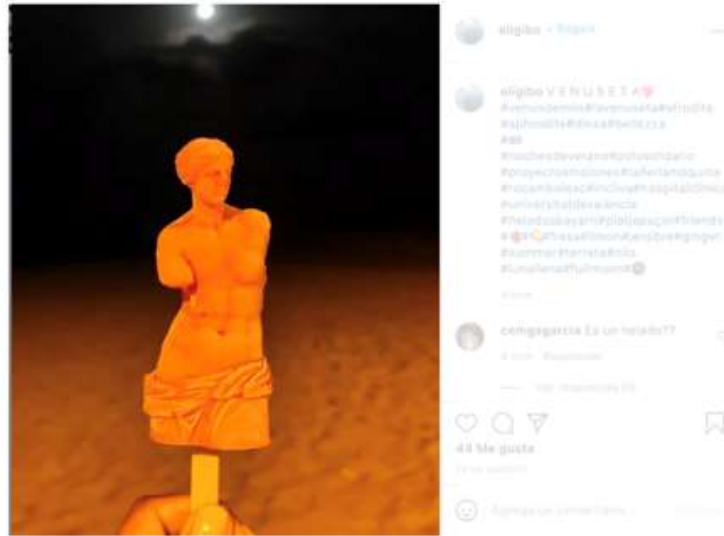
Source: Taken from *Venuseta* [Photograph], by Eligibo [@eligibo], 24 August 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CS-HAj0tFo8/).

The photographic technique can be employed to allude to the future from the present, as evidenced by images that focus on the technology surrounding the works, which generate future scenarios of coexistence between technology and heritage. The juxtaposition of the past and the present prompts a reconsideration of the future from the perspective of traditional works.

Image 3. Frame showing technology around the work.
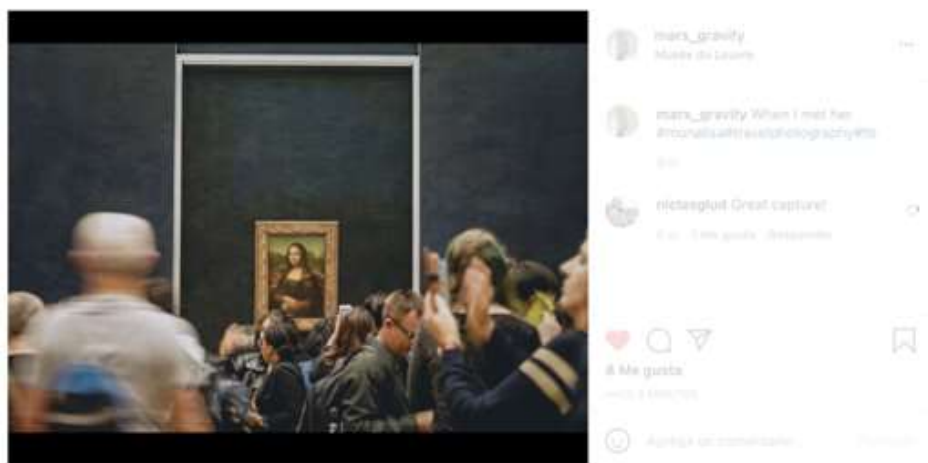
Source: Taken from *When I met her* [Photograph], by Mars Gravity [@mars_gravity], 4 June 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CPs4ES2n_S5/).

The images challenge the established conventions of the works and their institutional contexts by disrupting them through graphic interventions that prompt the emergence of novel perspectives and associations. On occasion, a detachment from the historical context and the tradition of the works is observed in order to satirize them or de-emphasize them, associating them with the day-to-day contemporary.

The photographic technique is presented in different temporal roles, including the generation of memory and the production of meaning in the present. Images were discovered that serve to highlight the works' past, thereby preserving them as part of the collective memory. In addition, images were identified that reinterpret the works in contemporary contexts or explore current themes.

The montages can generate contradictions and tensions between different images, allowing connections to diverse themes such as religion, politics or internet culture. A significant number of

images that evoke an imagined future employ montage, thereby generating new narrative perspectives on the works and opening imagined possibilities.

Additionally, images were identified that reinterpret the works through the use of the human body. Some of these images have an ephemeral temporality, while others have a deeper focus on current issues or collective interest. These reinterpretations introduce new discursive layers and recall the works in popular culture.

Image 4. Reinterpretation of political themes.

Source: Taken from *The project is inspired from one of the famous art works of Pablo Picasso 'The Guernica'* [Photograph], by Pearl Patel [@_pearl.patel], 22 July 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CRntf_ts1Ym/).

In essence, the images under examination demonstrate a coexistence between disparate temporalities, thereby establishing interconnections between the past, the present and the future in an anachronistic manner. The images permit the examination of novel perspectives on traditional works and their continued relevance in the contemporary cultural landscape.

4.2. Spatial

The analysis of the images revealed that the capacity to generate spatial openings is dependent on the form of appropriation of the works. It was observed that the quantity of information associated with the manipulation of the internal and external space of the technical image influences the viewer's perception. Images can be understood as enunciating from a logical space, such as the museum of the work, where the works are shown in their actual exhibition space. These tend to be informative and seek to capture the museum or the work from the indexicality of the museum or the work. Additionally, there are images that enunciate from spaces that are not aligned with the traditional context of the works. These are reinterpretations of the works in different locations.

One example of the displacement of the work to a non-conventional space is the outdoor replication of a work as a mural. In this instance, the reproduction of Guernica is situated in a more quotidian setting, such as a public park, thereby indicating a departure from the conventional museum context. This spatial rupture can serve to reinforce the recognition of the work in the discourses of popular culture.

Image 5. Exterior replica of work as a mural.

Source*: Taken from *Admiring this beautiful mural of Pablo Picasso's Guernica* [Photograph], by
Thecaptainthor[@thecaptainthor], 21 August 2021, Instagram
(https://www.instagram.com/p/CS1K2DPISma/).

This mural has the backing of the municipality, although it differs from that of the museum. However, the fact that this space is open allows for unusual encounters with the work, such as the one shown in the photograph of a dog posing in front of the work.

The following image illustrates another instance of a work being relocated to an unconventional setting, in this case, without the involvement of an institutional authority. This implies a greater discrepancy, as the work is situated in an unplanned environment, which results in a more spontaneous and less controlled impact on the surrounding space.

Image 6. Photograph of the OAT moved to a non-conventional space.

Source: Taken from *Face II (Harakka island, Helsinki)*, by Marcos Katz [@marcos.katz], 21 August 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CS1T4o4je9G/).

It is evident that the context in which the work is reinterpreted plays a pivotal role in the potential meanings that can be derived from both the image and the work in general, as well as the way it is

perceived in the present day. The relationship between the space and the work is coherent and can reinforce tradition or generate new interpretations.

With regard to the museum space, the analysis reveals a complex interaction between the pieces and their environment within the museum. The visual contrast between the works and their background serves to focus the viewer's attention on the central work. Furthermore, the analysis notes how the framing and composition of the images highlight specific aspects of the works, often comparing them with other pieces to highlight similarities and differences.

Furthermore, the analysis considers the influence of tourism on the photography of artworks, examining the visitor's personal experience and interaction with the works within the museum space. Furthermore, the analysis considers images that challenge traditional conventions, such as those that fragment the works or present them in unconventional settings.

Image 7. Division of the image space from and to the platform

Source: Taken from *"Can you be more famous?"*, [Photograph], by Mirtah+Nikon [@mirtahynikon], 5 August 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CSNlPaiMt_x/).

Images such as these challenge the notion of the preservation of tradition and prompt new discussions on the interpretation of art in the digital age. They also illustrate the growing influence of new technologies in the production and dissemination of artistic images.

In conclusion, the images under examination illustrate various approaches to spatial representation in relation to the works. The enunciations in question move from the museum to unconventional spaces, which influences the viewer's perception and interpretation of the works. The analysis offers a detailed insight into the manner in which images captured in museum environments reflect and contribute to the interpretation of art. It also provides an understanding of the crucial role of new technologies and social networks in this evolving practice.

4.3. Intersubjective

A consideration of intersubjectivity and its relationship to images of works of art prompts a series of fundamental questions, including the potential phenomenon of the banalization of these works through their appropriation and reproduction in different visual contexts. In this context, the term 'banality'[17], in this context, is understood as a variable of intersubjectivity that reflects the association of works with superficial or inconsequential meanings, far removed from their historical and canonical context.[18]

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[17] It is important to note that trivialisation can manifest itself both in the form of the images and in the very act of reproducing the works on platforms such as social media. That is to say that social platforms, being popular and in everyday use, can contribute to the trivialisation of the works by presenting them in a decontextualised way or as mere objects of visual consumption. However, this questioning will not be explored in depth in this text, because it requires a more complex development.

[18] It delves into the role of social media in the dissemination of these images, highlighting how capturing and sharing photos of art has become a common practice among museum visitors. It examines the traditional rituals and gestures associated with museum visits, and how these are reflected in the images captured, which in turn contribute to the construction of narratives around art and its public appreciation.

Nevertheless, the concept of banality is inextricably linked to the subjective perception of works and their interpretation by observers. The perception of banality may vary considerably between individuals, demonstrating the subjective and relative nature of this phenomenon. It is this subjectivity that allows for the delineation of certain parameters for reflection, although these parameters must be understood to be variable and complex within an interpretative framework that is itself variable and complex.

The analysis focuses on the leading role that the work assumes in the image, which influences the perception of its potential trivialization. The way the work is presented within the image, whether as a central element or as a discursive accessory, is of critical importance in this process. The trivialization of a work may occur when it becomes a mere visual complement, thereby losing its original relevance and significance.

Furthermore, the analysis emphasizes the significance of the format and production technique of the images in this process, as well as the discursive approach they adopt. Some images are presented in a narrative, expressive, and critical manner, prompting reflection on the works and their relationship to the present day. Such reinterpretations can challenge traditional conventions and open new perspectives on the works and their meaning.

It is crucial to emphasize the variety of discursive approaches that these images can adopt, ranging from the faithful reproduction of the original works to the creative and critical reinterpretation of them. In this context, photography serves as a powerful instrument for investigating and challenging the conventional meanings and interpretations of artistic works. Nevertheless, all images that allude to the works, whether in photographs or in reinterpretations, serve as intermediaries between the past and the present, and thus between a traditional and a contemporary culture.

Although initial observations revealed similarities, such as certain framing in photographs or the use of flat backgrounds in montages, a more detailed examination revealed a greater diversity. One of the most significant distinctions between the two types of art is the distinction between heritage or historical art and tourism.

The distinction lies in the differing perspectives of the image. One reflects a nostalgic gaze at the past (patrimonial), while the other perceives works of art as entertainment for the present (touristic). Nevertheless, this initial distinction is subtle, as both kinds of images refer to a traditional conception of the works.

Image 8. Professional photography.
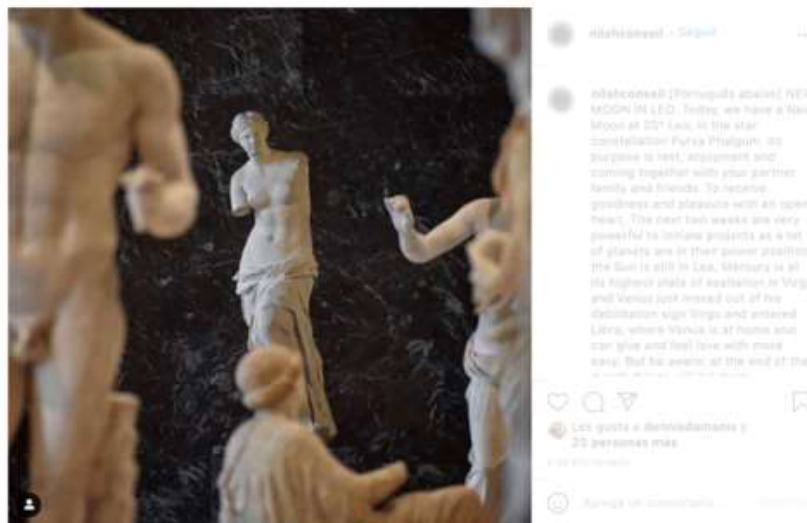
Source. Taken from *NEW MOON IN LEO. Today, we have a New Moon at 20° Leo, in the star* [...] *[*Photograph], by Alexandra Ciambra [@nilahconseil], 28 November 2020, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/ClgQky_OeV8/).

Image 9. Selfie in museum.

Source: Taken from *Monsa Lisa* [Photograph], by Dani Sugar [@mag.sugar], 8 August 2021, Instagram
(https://www.instagram.com/p/CSVzdIqDr5k/).

Tourism is based on heritage to highlight artistic objects, but its temporal enunciation generates an intersubjective change in the image. In both instances, a traditional temporal logic is observed, with a linear historical and representational narrative.

A significant proportion of the images observed represent perspectives on the works with great expressiveness, accompanied by playful components that fit the environment of circulation, especially in a social network such as Instagram. In some instances, the playful aspect emerges from the photographic gesture, with the body serving as a vehicle for recreation. In other instances, the playful element is introduced through subsequent post-editing or intervention.

The use of the human body in images is subject to censorship on platforms such as Instagram, which raises questions about the perception of the body and freedom of expression. In the context of art, the depiction of the human body in a state of undress can serve a variety of functions, ranging from the representation of beauty to the interrogation of social norms.

Image 10 . Use of the body for reinterpretation.

Source: Taken from *Last post deleted, so let's try second version od Prieta* [Photography], by Greg Lindeblom [@greglindphotography], 7 July 2021, Instagram
(https://instagram.com/greglindphotography?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=) .

In this context, tendencies towards the playful with a low level of indexicality were identified. This does not imply that they are not informative; rather, it suggests that they tend towards the fantastic. These images are designed to facilitate the emergence of new meanings and encourage reflection on the works and their relationship to the contemporary era. Some of these images are even considered reflective or critical, as evidenced by the following example.

Figure 11. Linkage between the with consumer debris.

Source: Taken from *How you separate* [Photograph], by Natsumi Yamase [@yxyxyxyxyxyxyxyxyx], 2 September 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CTV8BoAjdtV/).

This image is perceived as an ironic critique of the present because it generates multiple interpretations related to contemporary art, religion and recycling. It is also recognized for its dialogical and performative potential.

The concept of fantasy is evident in numerous images disseminated on the social media platform Instagram, particularly those that employ the technique of montage in their representation of traditional works of art. Some montages serve to reinforce traditional similarities between works, while others serve to amplify conventional perspectives of the canonical work, thereby reaffirming a traditional belief in the work.

Image 10: Future of the work from appropriation.
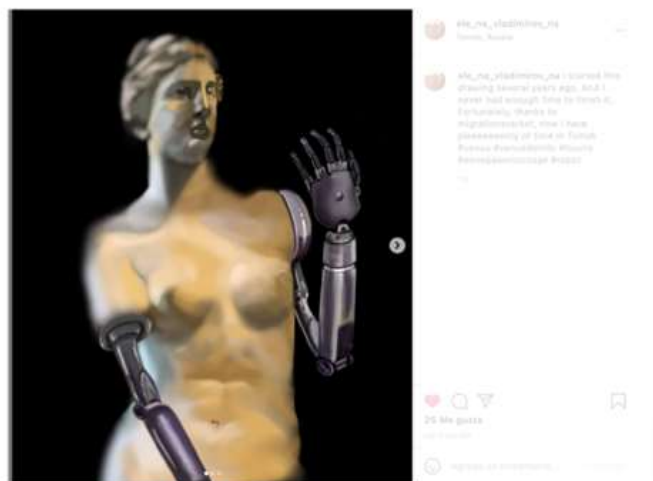
Source. Taken from *I started this drawing several years ago. And I never had enough time to finish it* [Photograph], by Елена Владимировна [@ele_na_vladimirov_na], 27 June 2021, Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CQoehLWnVEu/).

In essence, the diversity of forms of discursive appropriation of images of works of art reflects a complex web of meanings and practices that influence the perception and valuation of these works in the contemporary context. From trivialisation to playful playfulness to ironic critique, these images offer a wide range of interpretations and reflections on works of art and their relevance in contemporary culture.

5. Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the phenomenon of the mediatization of works of art in contemporary images. A methodological approach was devised with the specific objective of elucidating the transformation of meanings associated with works of art through contemporary images. These images are understood as visual reinterpretations that influence the perception and reality of the originals.

One of the most significant findings of the analysis was the diversity and complexity of the forms of appropriation observed in the images. These ranged from faithful reproductions to surrealist assemblages. In other words, the works were subjected to a wide range of transformations that reflect not only the creativity of the prosumer, but also the cultural and social dynamics at play.

In its most general sense, mediatization encompasses the productive activity of the sender and the decoding of the consuming addressee [19], as well as the shared content. In other words, the entire communicative process is one in which the web of meaning is in play. However, the proposed methodology is unable to observe the alternative meanings that the author has discarded or the effects that they had on the recipients. This is acknowledged as a limitation of the proposal. Future methodological improvements should focus on extending the procedure beyond the visual message or discourse.

It should be noted that the proposed methodology is not intended to be definitive, but rather a preliminary step open to further contributions and improvements.

However, the methodology employed in this study proved to be fundamental to the understanding of this phenomenon. The combination of grounded theory and social semiotic analysis enabled the development of a comprehensive approach that permitted the analysis of both the subjective and contextual aspects of the images. This methodological combination offered flexibility and depth in the analysis, allowing us to capture the richness and complexity of visual appropriation practices in the contemporary context.

Furthermore, several recurring themes were identified in the images analyzed, including nostalgia, social critique, and reflection on the role of art in today's society. These themes reflect profound and universal concerns that transcend the boundaries of visual appropriation practices, underscoring the significance of these images as vehicles for cultural expression and intergenerational dialogue.

In conclusion, this study has contributed to our understanding of how contemporary images appropriate and reinterpret works of art, as well as the role of these practices in the construction of meaning and cultural value. Moreover, the adaptability of the method employed suggests applicability to other research on contemporary images, thereby providing a solid framework for exploring both the practices of visual appropriation and the cultural dynamics that underpin them. Furthermore, it emphasizes the necessity of employing integrative and flexible methodological approaches to address the complexities and evolving nature of contemporary visual studies.

Finally, these findings emphasize the necessity for further research and reflection on the role of images in contemporary society, as well as the requirement for innovative methodological approaches that can account for their complexity and diversity. Similarly, the methodological design presented is demonstrated to be a valid procedure for the deconstruction of images that are becoming increasingly complex with the advent of artificial intelligence.

6. Acknowledgements

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[19] That in both cases they are prosumer agents.

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