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EUROPEANNESS – A NOSTALGIC OBJECT OF SCRUTINY AT THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

EUROPEJSKOŚĆ – NOSTALGICZNY OBIEKT ANALIZY W CZASACH PANDEMII

ABSTRACT

The idea of Europeanness and European identity rather than the national identity gains in relevance in view of the symbolic reorganization of the geographic spaces. Moreover, the national identity issues have somewhat lost importance in view of the global hazard of the COVID pandemic. The purpose of this paper is to debate the concept of Europeanness and to express an ambivalent position on this notion. Taking into consideration the most recent accomplishments of cultural theory I would like to demonstrate that the so-called European identity is a nostalgic object recalled to reminisce about the time when globalization and global threats did not exist at the scale comparable to the present. Or, the knowledge about them was patchy due to the undeveloped internet communication. Taking into consideration the explanations of Arjun Appadurai and Svetlana Boym, I will deconstruct the notion of Europeanness in view of a broad idea of nostalgia which according to Boym interprets the past as illusory and non-existent.

Keywords: Europe, Europeanness, history, culture, nostalgia, nostalgic object, Impressionism, French New Wave

ABSTRAKT

Pojęcie europejskości i tożsamości europejskiej raczej, niż narodowej zyskuje na wadze w obliczu na nowo organizującej się przestrzeni geograficznej w ostatnich dwóch latach. Problemy tożsamości narodowej, dyskusje i dywagacje na jej temat toczące się intensywnie od ponad dwudziestu lat zbladły w kontekście globalnego zagrożenia pandemiami. Celem mojej rozprawy jest analiza pojęcia „europejskości", jej historycznego i kulturowego rodowodu i prześledzenie ambiwalentnego stosunku do tego pojęcia. Posługując się dokonaniami z zakresu teorii kultury chciałabym udowodnić, że obecna europejskość jest obiektem nostalgicznym przywoływanym jako punkt odniesienia do czasu, kiedy globalizacja i zagrożenia globalne nie istniały na skale porównywalna do okresu dzisiejszego, albo wiedza o nich była szczątkowa z racji nierozwiniętej jeszcze komunikacji internetowej.

Dzisiejsze poczucie przynależności do Europy powinno być wiec analizowane biorąc pod uwagę starsze kryteria na nowo i stosując je w sposób uważny za pomocą nowych narzędzi badawczych obejmujących skomplikowane relacje polityczne, światopoglądowe i kulturowe w nowym świecie, który Marek Pawlak określa jako „świat w kawałkach."

Przywołując rozważania Arjuna Appadurai oraz Svetlany Boym, zastanowię się nad istota „europejskości" w kontekście imperialistycznej nostalgii oraz nostalgii fotelowej, które są wyobrażone i nieautentyczne. Jak zauważa Svetlana Boym, będąca źródłem nostalgii przeszłość, w takiej postaci w jakiej przyjmuje ja nostalgia, nie istnieje i nigdy nie istniała – jest wyobrażona i częściowo wyidealizowana. Na bazie takiego sformułowania należy przeformułować pojęcie „europejskości" jako kulturowa fantazje istniejącą niezależnie od rzeczywistości.

Slowa kluczowe: Europa, europejskosc, historia, kultura, nostalgia, nostalgiczny obiekt, Impresjonizm, Francuska Nowa Fala

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this essay is to outline the concept of Europeanness and present an attempt at reviewing a positive, idealistic and naïve understanding of European culture. In the belief in Europe's superiority

over other cultures, a believer forgets about hybridization of cultures, and about changes brought about by globalization which by and large erases some cultural differences between various cultural regions while infiltrating other with new cultural components. Europeanness in the pre-globalization meaning, in my opinion, remains a nostalgic matrix, a phantom melancholically rekindled at the time of mourning the old world, when cultures seemed to have been steadfastly demarcated by geographical and national borders.

The belongingness to European culture should be analyzed anew taking old criteria in a fresh way with the use of new research tools which account for a complicated political, social and cultural worldview in the today world, the one which Marek Pawlak describes as the world in pieces[1].

Certainly, such a broad topic cannot be exhaustively covered in a short essay as the one presented here. To illustrate the main theses, I will concentrate on two cultural phenomena described as quintessentially European, French Impressionism in painting and French film in 1960s.

EUROPE

Europe has generally been perceived as an area with common history, common institutions and practices and a common political discourse. Today, drawn by fear and anxiety, caused by migrations, climate change and concerns related to health, Europeans tend to revert to the nationalist agendas with their homophobic and racist undertones. As Patrick Geary, the author of the book, The Myth of Nations. The Medieval Origins of Europe (2002) sees it, "Nationalism, ethnocentrism, racism – specters long thought exorcised from the European soul – have returned with their powers enhanced by a half century of dormancy."

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[1]   M. Pawlak, *Świat w kawałkach. Globalne Migracje i Doświadczenia Transna-rodowe,*.Kultura – Historia – Globalizacja Nr 9, s. 105–114.

[Geary, s. 3]. Geary describes the state of political affairs in Germany, France and Italy and concludes that this situation is nothing new in Europe. He compares it to the period of 400–1000BC, the period of the dissolution of Roman empire and the barbarian migration which "has become the fulcrum of political discourse across much of Europe." [Geary, s. 7]. His whole book is devoted to proving the fact that "in the history of Europe, mass migrations movements have been the rule rather than exceptions. The present populations of Europe with their many traditions, and cultural and political identities, are the result of these waves of migration." [Geary, s. 10].

One important point which Geary has drawn our attention to is the fact that for a long-time historian have concentrated on their object of study from the perspective of stability and uniformity. They assumed that

> The peoples of Europe are distinct, stable, and objectively identifiable social and cultural units, and that they are distinguished by language, religion, custom, and national character, which are unambiguous and immutable. These people were supposedly formed either in some impossibly remote moment of prehistory, or else the process of ethnogenesis took place at some moment during the Middle Ages, but then ended for all time [Geary, s. 11].

After tumultuous periods of fights for territory and influence in the name of the rights of the nations, which often were in fact "imagined communities"[2], imagined by bards and writers, based on ancient myths, and works of literature which idealized the past, began the period of peace and kind of stability imposed by pacts and agreements between states after World War II. This time was defined by the fact that nations were supposed to inhabit the states artificially delineated by post-war powers regardless of their ethnic constitution. In reality, the inter-ethnic

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2   I refer to Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities (1983) which remains one of the most read books about nationalism.

conflicts permeated every sphere of social and political lives and were quickly suppressed by the rulers of the country.

Despite the percolating conflicts under the surface, this period in the history of Europe seemed to be not only ideologically stable (whatever kind of ideology decided about the lives of nationals) but also economically, giving rise to a uniform and mature economy. However, the peaceful and prosperous situation of most European states started to change around 1990s after the Fall of the Iron Curtain and the Fall of the Berlin Wall. Among the historical phenomena Geary mentions are the fall of the Soviet Union, the Fall of the Berlin Wall, ethnic tensions within the countries of the Warsaw Pact and the Balkan countries. Geary offers an explanation that after 1992 the result is "a deep crisis of identity which raises the question of how Europeans see themselves, their societies and their neighbours." [Geary, s. 3]. One important conclusion that Geary draws from his extensive historical studies on Europe is that Europeans always nostalgically searched stability in ethnic relations within their countries and demonically stuck to immortalized stability and lack of movement. "When nationalists appeal to history, their notion of history is static: They look at the moment of primary acquisition when 'their people' first arriving in the ruins of Roman Empire, established their sacred territory and their national identity." [Geary, s. 156]. But the story of Europe has been the story not of a primordial acquisition but of a continuous process. Since 1992 as proposed by Geary, the Europe of today seems to be a pulsating, quivering organism, which does not observe the phantasy of a Europe defined by borders of its countries, nationally homogeneous, classic, and supposedly culturally sophisticated in any way. Today, Europe functions mainly as a cultural archetype, a flowing set of ideas and iconographies reproduced in countless simulacra.

When thinking about Europe as a cultural archetype, researchers take into consideration a variety of approaches and points of view. In

a special edition of Journal of Cross-Culture Psychology, Matthias S. Gobel, Veronica Benet-Martinez, Batja Mesquita and Ayse K. Uskul state that Europe is a grouping of a multitude of cultures the influence of which on the overall European culture is defined by various political, historical and economical circumstances. As Gobel states, "social scientists have long been interested in the question of what constitutes European culture(s) and European identity. They have approached this question from diverse perspectives and disciplines including history, sociology and political science (e.g., Arts & Halman, 2014; Carey, 2002; Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Fligstein, Polyakova, & Sandholtz, 2012; Orchard, 2002). For example, surveys of Europeans' political and social attitudes abound (European Commission, 2018). Similarly, books that chronicle the development of Europe and of the European countries have provided important insights into this question (e.g., Bruter, 2005; Davies, 1996). Indeed, against the backdrop of European culture and European identity, research in social sciences has informed contemporary debates, from defending democracy and celebrating human rights (e.g., de Beus, 2001) to multiculturalism and immigration (e.g., Delanty, 2008; Kastoryano, 2009; Koopmans, Statham, Giugni, & Passy, 2005; Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010).

Among the characteristic features of Europeanness which Gobel mentions, some of them are the following: the individualism-collectivism framework; whiteness, Christian heritage, egalitarianism, and commitment to the welfare of others. European cultures might, due to their diversity, configure a unique form of individualism, one that differs from that found in North American cultures, for instance. In sum, Vignoles and colleagues (2018) provide a rare empirical test of what European cultural values and meanings are and advance cultural psychological theory by showing the limitations of reducing "culture" empirically to monolithic comparison between nations [Gobel 2018, s. 860].

European culture is also defined by what is perceived as not European. This is the theme of another contribution in the special edition of the Journal of Cross-Culture Psychology that focuses on the exclusionary/inclusionary nature of European national identities. Who we are is always contrasted with who we are not: the outgroups [Brewer 1999, s. 429–444]. In their contribution, Fleischmann and Phalet (2018) suggest that European identity is largely seen as White and of Christian heritage, and that all those who do not meet these criteria do not recognize themselves as part of it. Religious ancestry thus appears to be an important constituent of European identity, with the consequence that European citizens who do not share a Christian heritage are less identified with their national culture than their counterparts with Christian ancestry. Fleischmann and Phalet (2018) also find some cross-national variations in minority identification, which suggest that some national identities (e.g., British, Dutch) are more inclusive of Muslims than others (e.g., Belgian, German). The study also shows that differences in religious commitment and majority culture friendships play a major role in explaining these cross-national variations in national identification. Overall, this article supports the notion that European national identities are defined in terms of ethnic and religious ancestry, and that cultural aspects such as having a Christian heritage also matter for national belonging. In all, the first three contributions to this Special Issue suggest that European culture exists, despite many cross-national variations. At its core, European culture values a unique and decontextualized individual who is egalitarian and committed to the welfare of others.

In the most recent years of the pandemic and the political misunderstandings and uncertainties on many fronts, all the above characteristics of Europe as a proper social construct have been questioned and disputed. Less prosperous than before, insufficiently organized, discouraged by the biological threats, Europeans look at

themselves in a nostalgic manner trying to remember and highpoint the historical beauty of its existence in the past. The past is no more, the understanding of the cohesiveness between the territory and its culture no longer exists in the world of simulacra and liquid modernity (Bauman). What remains is a desire to remain in the past, undisturbed and monolithic. Often revealed or emerging in one's culture in the form of works of art, Europeanness reveals a specific aura permeating a painting, a song, a film and all the other cultural works with a kind of emotional mist difficult to explain in a rational way. In the sense of the territorial uncertainty, "invaded" by thousands of legal and illegal immigrants, the mythical, open-minded, and tolerant Europe has started to change into Fortress Europe which gave rise to extreme white-wing, anti-immigrant, and anti-Islam parties. Since Europe has been always thought of as an area with "with a common history, shared institutions and practices and, to some extent, a shared political discourse" [Gobel 2018, s. 859], this common ground has shaped a European mind and identity and has created an inclusionist, not an exclusionist discourse. This discourse includes freedom movements, humanitarian approach to humanity, new philosophical ideas, modernist art and literature. Instead, racism and homophobia are on the rise and the ancient phobias about "the other" in the midst are again on the collective radar. Consequently, the idealistic, cosmopolitan, cooperative and inclusive Europe which has built a sustainable consensus among states so far [McCormick 2013, s. 71], has turned into a struggling pulsating organism trying to negotiate multiple political, social and cultural interests related to the pandemic, to the immigration crisis and to many local independence movements of minorities in some member states.

This monolithic and nostalgic Europe characterised by a White and Christian ancestry and heritage, makes it even more difficult for representatives of other cultures and religions to accept and embrace. After all, it is against the background of these common characteristics

that minorities and immigrants negotiate their entry and adherence to European culture. [Gobel 2018, s. 861] One of the examples of acceptance of cultural Europe is an inner requisition to express admiration for European High Culture. Nostalgia has its big say in the ways this may take place.

NOSTALGIA

Nostalgia is the term which describes a feeling of loss and sadness after the loss of homeland. Initially, nostalgia was only discussed in the framework of the territory to which it was attached. The territoriality of nostalgia, the longing after a territory to which presumably one belongs, was unavoidably linked to the culture present within the borders of this territory. Works of art, rituals music and other representations both of high and low art, represented the essence of belonging and identification with a particular territory and its inhabitants. Nostalgia was initially a medical term given to the emotional illness manifested by melancholia, often associated with female hysteria, declared uncurable. Today, nostalgia has a cultural meaning and is analyzed as a global phenomenon applicable to the analysis of cultures and sociological processes.

Aleksandra Różycka in her article Współczesna Nostalgia w Obliczu Globalizacji (Kultura, Historia Globalizacja nr 16) declares that "with the transformation of nostalgia from illness, as declared in the XIXth century, into a cultural phenomenon, its character changed as well" [Różycka 2014, s. 181]. It has become a desired object admitting to the writers' sophistication and knowledge. It does not represent the feelings of longing after a homeland (Nostos) anymore but rather a feeling of sadness and longing for the past in general. Susan Stewart (quoted by A. Różycka) concludes that "contemporary nostalgia in its proper sense consists in the inaccessibility of the object of desire." [Stewart 1984, s. 145].

So, the real nostalgia consists in brooding about something completely unreal, distanced, and unreachable. The object of desire may be not only a homeland but also the homeland's culture, its songs, its rituals, its people, their mentality, and the affective construct which is a nation representing and represented by its culture. This kind of approach to the phenomenon of nostalgia adequately explains my own understanding of the phantasmatic Europe which exists in the global cultural conscience today as "the absolute past of the mythical pre-time" [Assmann 2009, s. 88]. In this sense, we can talk about "armchair nostalgia" whereby we long after a phantasmatic being which has existed in theory and has almost materialized, but which has deteriorated and disappeared only to be idealized and mourned. This kind of nostalgia, following Arjun Appadurai, is called "armchair nostalgia" [Appadurai 2005, s. 118; 2003, s. 78], whereby the people experiencing it have never physically sensed the proximity of the object of desire but have fantasized about it based on myths and legends from the past, literature, and visual culture.

Beside the notion of armchair nostalgia, Appadurai also uses the idea of "imagined nostalgia", that is the nostalgia after the loss which has never been experienced. This phenomenon applies to individuals and whole groups of people including whole societies and nations who nostalgically long after the elements that they have never experienced. The source of information about the longed after phenomena is not the real experience but rather imagined reports about these experiences in the form of literature or visual arts. As Różycka notes in her article, "The subject of such an imagined nostalgia is not the past but a phantasy, a selective and idealized variation of the object of desire. It is a specific kind of longing directed by feelings, not rationality or intellect. Because a nostalgic person is led by emotions, he/she does not pay attention to facts but rather ignores them and bends to his/her own desires." [Różycka, 2014, s. 183]. In result, a phantasmatic concoction replaces any logical thinking (Quoted by Różycka on page 183: Stewart, 1984, 23;

Boym, 2001, xiv). Nowadays, the contemporary nostalgia in the case of Europe is diluted and unclear. Is it the nostalgia after brutal and cruel history of invasions and purging of whole smaller and bigger social groups, like communities, nations or whole countries within Europe, or is it a nostalgia after an imagined cultural whole represented by what was considered high culture – European painting, sculpture, music, film and architecture?

EUROPEAN CULTURE

In the third part of this essay, I would like to deal with two examples of European visual art and debate them in the general context of globalization whereby classical art becomes hybridized, poached and quoted, deliberately treated as a canon, a set of fixed references and a matrix, and, appropriated in a postmodernist way without thought given to its original context and meaning.

European Culture has been perceived as dictating new directions and trends; it is modernist, opening new perspectives. On the other hand, it has created phantasmatic concepts of Frenchness, Britishness or Italiannes perpetuating imaginary stereotypes which have been circulating both in high and low culture ever since particular trends have emerged. It has obtained the status of a nostalgic object revered like a relic, and never questioned for its affective value.

Two examples of cultural phenomena which have been nostalgically disseminated and reformulated as the ultimate values of the nostalgic, unattainable past are the following: one is Impressionism in painting and the other The French New Wave in film. In both cases the main argument going into the description of these important movements in art is that they depict a real "Frenchness" both in content and in form. Patrick Geary has already questioned this kind of interpretation with reference to spoken language of nations in Medieval times when

he debated critically the link between nationhood and language. This
approach was encountered already in the eighteenth century when
philosophers argued that "each language expresses the character of
people who speak it" [Geary, s. 25]. However, in both cases we deal
with the art movements where nationality did not decide about the
movements' timeliness or geography. Both arose from the modernist
developments to create something completely new, tearing down the
conservative past both in painting (classicism and historical realism
in case of Impressionism) and in film (realist and classical film in
case of the French New Wave). Moreover, both movements were not
geographically limited to France. Both movements were anti-academic
and anti-bourgeois. While Impressionism has generally been thought
to have started in France, it later spread all over Europe – to Sweden,
Denmark, Germany, and even further East – to Russia and Poland.
Both movements have become independent phenomena influentially
endorsing the vaguely understood idea of a unified artworld with shared
language games and traditions [Carroll 2007, s. 141]. In this way, the
territorial distinctiveness of high art, segregated by virtue of their diverse
traditions of making and meaning loses ground due to globalization and
democratisation of art. Noel Carroll in his essay "Art and Globalization:
Then and Now" [ibidem, 132-143] does not treat this new phenomenon
critically or regretfully. In fact, he sounds quite eager to accept this
novel trend as it allows for cross-referencing, radical juxtaposition,
de-familiarization, and the de-contextualization of objects and images
from their customary milieus [ibidem, 140]. However, he does not
acknowledge the fact that in the nostalgic interpretation of high art, its
distinctiveness, national and territorial affiliation are the "lost object"
which still holds ground.

IMPRESSIONISM

Ingo Walther, editor of an impressive collection of essays about Impressionism in France and elsewhere, quotes Richard Hamann who already in 1907 "saw the distinctive qualities of Impressionist principles as deriving from a contemporary feel for life itself, from kinds of sensibility and behaviour that could be encountered as much in everyday life, philosophy and science as in art." [Walther 2018, s. 14]. The features of Impressionism, such as painting in open air, not in a studio, the painters' fascination with light and an attempt to capture its multilayered structure, love for nature as is, with all its beauty and ugliness and love for a human being caught unaware in the most unexpected moments while reading, eating, walking, or bathing were not so much European as modern rather signifying a new and exciting way of approaching what the artists saw.

As Walther points out,

> Impressionism represents the grand finale of a particular way of appropriating the world through painting or drawing. This method often termed realism, evolved in Europe in the dawn of the modern era. But Impressionism also established various features that were preconditions and characteristics of the 20th-century art. For this reason, critics have tended to see Impressionism as either an end or a beginning – or both [ibidem, 15].

Nevertheless, as Walther notes, "the history of Impressionism is not merely a French one. It is European, indeed global…. Impressionism did not derive from French preconditions and circumstances alone, nor would its rapid international spread be explicable if comparable tendencies had not already existed elsewhere." [ibidem, 16].

Today Impressionism is revered as one of the most important artistic trends in the history of art. Usually it is referred to as European and French Impressionism even though similar approaches to presenting

visible reality have appeared all over the world. Transformed and reworked in simulacra renditions, it lives its own prolific and timeless life nostalgically recalling the assumed greatness of artistic France and Europe of the end of the XIXth and the beginning of the XXth centuries.

FRENCH NEW WAVE

New Wave, French Nouvelle Vague, was the style of several highly individualistic French film directors of the late 1950s. Preeminent among New Wave directors were Louis Malle, Claude Chabrol, François Truffaut, Alain Resnais, and Jean-Luc Godard, most of whom were associated with the film magazine Cahiers du Cinéma, the publication that popularized the auteur theory in the 1950s. The theory held that certain directors so dominated their films that they were virtually the authors of the film.

Another way to interpret this movement in film is to say that French New Wave was a new way of making films by young filmmakers in 1950s, the theorists and readers of film who first published their ideas in Cahiers du Cinema and later practised them in their own productions. David A. Cook summarizes their postulates as the ones creating new aesthetics and new ways of presentation of the film plot and introducing the idea of personal authorship into the formerly multi-personal process of film creation. First, they rejected montage aesthetics in favor of mise-en-scene, the long take and composition in depth. They challenged the "tradition of quality" and produced timeless films with a novel aesthetics and a somewhat relaxed treatment of plots. Already in 1959, Francois Truffaut's Four Hundred Blows surprised audiences both in Europe and in New York winning the Best Direction Award at Cannes and the New York Film Critics award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1959. The story of an adolescent delinquent boy shot on location in Paris astonished spectators with its unsentimental lyricism

and almost documentary accuracy in the presentation of events. The same year, Alain Resnais's Hiroshima Mon Amour won New York Film Critics Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1960. This famous film concerns a love affair between a French actress working in Hiroshima and a Japanese architect, during which they both recall their memories of the past war in Asia and Europe. Finally, Jean-Luc Godard's Breathless drew the audience's attention to the most characteristic features of the New Wave style, including the ironical treatment of the plot which in this film was a parody of an American gangster film. Other features of French New Wave style which revealed themselves in this film were: narrative intransitivity, estrangement, foregrounding, aperture and unpleasure which Godard, the most intellectual, prolific and the most famous of all the representatives of New Wave, consistently applied in his other films.[3]

Films by New Wave directors were often characterized by a fresh brilliance of technique that was thought to have overshadowed their subject matter. An example occurs in Godard's Breathless (1960), in which scenes change in rapid sequence ("jump cuts") to create a jerky and disconnected effect. Although it was never clearly defined as a movement, the New Wave stimulated discussion about the cinema and helped demonstrate that films could achieve both commercial and artistic success.

This nostalgic timelessness of Breathless is rightly described by Murray Clark in his newspaper article The Coolest Film in the World, Starring the Coolest Man in the World, Is Still Impossibly Cool at 61 By Murray Clark, (Esquire dated 17/03/2021).

> Director Jean-Luc Godard's seminal film looks better than ever. Its fantasy of a mythical, semi-real France is something that fashion,

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[3]   I refer to a well-known essay by Peter Wollen, (2009) Godard and Counter Cinema: Vent D'Est in Leo Brady and Marshall Cohen (eds) Film Theory and Criticism, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 418-426.

and music, and cinema still clings to – and one that sparked the New Wave era of French filmmaking, spawning dozens of great works, and hundreds of wannabes, with its experimental techniques and acute self-awareness (Clark, Esquire).

Other directors of international stature include Jean Renoir, Jacques Tati, Jean-Pierre Melville, Alain Resnais, Eric Rohmer, Robert Bresson, and Louis Malle. They exemplified the auteur theory that a director could so control a film that his or her direction approximated authorship. Filmmakers such as Agnès Varda, Claude Chabrol, Jacques Demy, Bertrand Tavernier, and Claude Bérri, as well as Polish-born Krzysztof Kieslowski, extended these traditions to the end of the century, while directors such as Luc Besson, Patrice Leconte, Laurent Cantet, and Claire Denis carried on with them in the 21st century.

The French New Wave surpassed the accomplishments of classic cinema and avant-garde in film and had great influence on other filmmakers all over the world. Although it was widely criticized for its focus on the individual – its emphasis on the auteur and the confessional style- it captured the attention of both producers and directors of film in a practical sense, as well. It was possible to make a film with meagre means, in a way which electrified the attention of viewers, especially the young ones. Despite the focus on an individual, it communicated crucial political and social issues of France and Europe in the early 1960s and the 1970s.

CONCLUSION

Today, we nostalgically explore old movements in visual arts as both set in time and space in the past. When considered as art matrixes they must be seen as powerful vehicles of modernism which cannot be swept aside. Nevertheless, in the geopolitical world, other voices come to the fore which have little to do with the West of Europe. African,

Asian, Middle Eastern, South American, Northern, and other cultures tell different stories communicated in a different kind of narrative and aesthetics. Thus a focus on art in a globalized world leads to revising the national stories about modernism. We can only nostalgically reconsider and re-evaluate the Western Art as a set of general art references in a new and ever-changing world.

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