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WŁADYSŁAW HASIOR IN SWEDEN: REASSESSING PERIPHERAL NEO-AVANT-GARDE NETWORKS THROUGH HORIZONTAL ART HISTORY

Introduction

In recent years, a growing number of publications, research projects, academic conferences, and exhibitions have emerged with the objective of scrutinising our knowledge and understanding of the spatial, political, and economic factors that have shaped the power relations in the international post-war art world. The first decades of the twenty-first century witnessed growing scholarship within global art studies, but also, more recently, urgent calls for decolonisation – both stemming from the observed need to account for the past and present bias, marginalisation, and injustice. In the Polish context, particularly significant was the project of the late Piotr Piotrowski, who proposed a 'horizontal art history' as a practice aimed at redrawing existing maps of artistic relations to challenge the established art history and its dominant narrative of centre and periphery. Piotrowski's idea found a fertile ground in other European 'peripheries' and beyond, resonating with increasingly common calls for revising the geography of post-war art. Understandably, this task has been particularly pressing for countries that have been cut off from the West for political reasons, such as the countries of the former Eastern Bloc. But it is also important for national art histories that found themselves marginalised (misinterpreted, overlooked, or purposefully dismissed) for other reasons. In this essay, I would like to examine two episodes from the history of post-war encounters between peripheral and semi-peripheral art milieus, that is, Poland and Sweden respectively – episodes involving the exhibition of works of Władysław Hasior in the Swedish capital and its vicinity. I am interested in understanding how the categories of

centre-periphery underpinned the context for the reception of Hasior's work in Sweden, but also in how this story can be reread today. I will look at the exhibition of Hasior's work at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm in 1968 and the subsequent exhibition at the Södertälje Konsthall, followed by the commission for an open-air sculpture in Södertälje, which ultimately took shape as the *Sun Chariot* (*Rydwan słoneczny*) installed in the city space by the canal between 1972 and 1976.

Re-writing Polish Art History *Through* or *For* the Western Canon?

In East-Central Europe, one of the strategies of art marketing after 1989 was to seek (at least partial) revision of Western art histories and canons or to supplement their narratives with selected episodes from the local art history. These 'episodes' were chosen not so much for their significance for local art history, or not only for that reason, but often for their potential ability to transform or update existing chronologies or positions within the canon, particularly in terms of influence and/or precedence. To identify an artist as an important but hitherto unrecognised pioneer is one strategy;[1] to spot parallels indicating possible dialogues between artists representing diverse milieus, cultural traditions, or political contexts is another.[2] What is at stake here is not just raising the interest of the international art world, leading to an increased scholarly attention and growing market valuation. Equally important are the terms on which this happens. Will the entry of a Polish artist into the Western (and global) canon challenge or rather confirm the position of Polish art as peripheral? Can an art exhibition question the very foundations of the canon as geographically biased or does it simply 'fill the gaps,' i.e. supplement the canon?

An apt illustration of this dilemma comes with the twenty-first-century retrospective exhibitions of Władysław Hasior's work, where the curators sought for a variety of strategies to find and present new readings of his work in order to restore his much-deteriorated position in the Polish canon, but also to revive his *oeuvre* for an international audience. A retrospective exhibition of Hasior's work, organised in 2011 at the "Sokół" Małopolska Cultural Centre in Nowy Sącz as the show inaugurating the opening of this new institution, sought to both celebrate the artist born in this city, as well as revive a popular and professional interest in his work. Both the exhibition catalogue, as well as an accompanying publication of conference proceedings, contain multiple texts that both reiterate as well as challenge the myths that arose around Hasior. It seems that, at least for some historians and critics, the temptation to position Hasior as a pioneer or predecessor of Pop Art was too strong to resist and, in fact, determined the way they attempted to rehabilitate his work after the artist's death. This often came together with a repetition of the most powerful myth about the artist – that he was a singular and isolated phenomenon. For instance, Bożena Kowalska insisted that "during his short artistic journey to the West, Hasior had most probably little chance to encounter Pop Art and New Realism, which had just begun to emerge from the tradition of Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism." Moreover, he did not "require any inspiration or role models. He made his assemblages from his own initiative and fantasy."[3] With his unique vision of art he preceded "Pop Art and New Realism by at least five years."[4] Similar claims were recurrent in older critical receptions of Hasior's work and are often still accepted; even though it has been established that the artist was familiar with contemporary art and culture, while his art seems to share a lot with that of his peers both in Poland as well as beyond. Recent scholarship clearly shows that Hasior was neither a pioneer of Pop Art, nor a completely singular and idiosyncratic artist.[5]

A retrospective exhibition organised by the MOCAK Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow (February 14 to April 27, 2014), under the telling title *Władysław Hasior. A European Rauschenberg?,* apparently sought to revamp the artist's image and refashion him as an international

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pioneer as a way to challenge the Polish audience's traditional perception of Hasior as a 'local' (and perhaps slightly provincial) artist, whose work was inspired by vernacular popular culture and fully comprehensible only within the local context of the highland folklore and Catholic religiosity. A potent source for this refashioning was found in the titular reference to Robert Rauschenberg, who famously won the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale in 1964, the same year that Hasior was not allowed to represent Poland at this event.[6] Certainly, the reference to Rauschenberg in the title lends our all too familiar and perhaps for some also parochial Hasior a more international, 'cooler' air. Yet, it also positions the entire exhibition as an attempt to provide a straightforward answer to the titular question. Understandably, the viewer is prone to expect only one answer: "yes, Hasior was indeed a lot like Rauschenberg, because…." It is difficult to imagine a show organised under such title with the sole purpose of saying: "No, as a matter of fact, Hasior was nothing like Rauschenberg – the comparison would be groundless."

An introductory text in the exhibition catalogue, by Maria Anna Potocka, is titled *The European Rauschenberg*, but without the question mark. Potocka, however, does not focus on proving a point that there was, indeed, something like Pop Art in Poland and that Hasior was its champion and pioneer, or that the influence of American art reached deep within the countries behind the Iron Curtain. "Hasior and Rauschenberg did not know each other. Any similarities in the idiom and (…) aesthetic (…) noticeable in their work is quite incidental" – she writes.[7] This statement is followed by a list of differences and similarities, which could perhaps suffice as a background for a joint exhibition of Rauschenberg and Hasior, but does little to explain the narrative structure and objectives of Hasior's retrospective in a newly opened museum of contemporary art. In many ways, the curatorial decision to cast Rauschenberg in an ambiguous role of a simultaneous present and absent reference point epitomises the dilemma faced by art critics and historians when they wish to secure the position of a Polish artist within the Western canon, but at the same time they seek to emphasise the originality of his or her local vision, that is, to both update the canon, but also challenge it. To Hanna Kirchner, Hasior's life-long friend and one of the most significant critics of his work, comparisons between Hasior and Rauschenberg seemed as unwelcome as they were recurrent. In her essay, included in the MOCAK exhibition catalogue, she comments angrily: "And (…) why should Rauschenberg constitute a canon (…) for a Polish artist? Hasior was taken aback by knee-jerk comparisons with the American artist during his first individual exhibition abroad, at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm."[8]

Although, as Kirchner's comment suggests, the perception of Hasior's work through the lens of his American peer has been to some extent imposed by international audiences, it has ultimately been 'internalised' by the Polish critics, even if Rauschenberg is mentioned only as a negative reference point. Nonetheless, to use the American Pop Art pioneer as a means to better explain what Hasior's art was or was not clearly positions American art as a model – a model of art but also a model of a strong artistic identity and authority. Curiously, when, in some critical readings, Rauschenberg and American Pop Art are dismissed as 'sources' of Hasior's art (understandably so, since the chronology would not validate any direct influence), it is done so often to replace one Western reference point with another – the assemblages of Pablo Picasso, for instance.[9] Even if precedence, in terms of the key influences on Hasior's art, is given to the local vernacular art and the material culture of communist Poland, there are recurrent attempts to examine Hasior's exposure to Western art during his motorcycle journey to France, Italy, Germany and other countries that he undertook in 1959–1960. How much did he gain from his studies at the studio of Ossip Zadkine? Did he witness the emergence of Nouveau Réalisme? Did he appreciate Surrealism? Or did he dismiss contemporary art in favour of the prehistoric and tribal art he saw at the Musée d'Homme in Paris?[10] Can his art be seen as a part of the global shift towards assemblage if his first

works of this type date back to his childhood creations in the provincial town of Nowy Sącz?[11]

Whatever the answer to these questions, there is a tendency to perceive this short excursion as a significant episode in Hasior's career as an artist and an enduring impact on his art works, only to reiterate an ongoing narrative about modern Polish art – a narrative where the story begins when a young artist goes to Paris and comes back transformed by what he or she witnessed. In this story, the West always plays the same role of an older, much richer and much more experienced, cousin. This peculiar status of East-Central Europe's self-imposed inferiority has been analysed in terms of 'self-colonising,' a concept formulated by Alexander Kiossev to describe the cultures that have "succumbed to the cultural power of Europe and the West without having been invaded and turned into colonies in actual fact."[12] Consequently, their 'peripheral' position stems not so much from the West's imposed hegemony, but from their readiness to "absorb the basic values and categories of colonial Europe." In this process, where "all took place beyond colonial realities (...) social imagination had a key role to play."[13] Self-colonising cultures internalise Western categories of centre and periphery, but at the same time reject their peripheral position or seek to struggle their way to the centre: they demand recognition. Yet, as Kiossev writes, "in this desire they had already interiorised the concepts, values, and symbolic hierarchies of the colonisers."[14] Rather than be forced into the peripheral position by the colonial centre, they internalise the centre's norms and values and self-valuate through a comparison, consequently constituting this identity as always and already 'lacking,' inferior, not-quite and not-fully developed.[15] Even if rejected, these patterns of self-perception hinder the ability to formulate independent value judgements and autonomous hierarchies. As Jan Sowa writes, the ideal self of such countries is located in the West/embodied by the West. Self-colonisation is typical for countries which are too proximate to the centre to remain culturally independent, yet too remote or weak to become fully participant in the centre's culture on equal terms.[16]

Escaping the Self-colonising Condition Through Horizontal Art History

The question of how to re-write the Western canon, yet also avoid the problematic situation of doing so from the self-colonising position, is formulated from various points of view, not only a post-Communist East-Central European perspective. On the one hand, 'updating' the canon offers an illusory sense of agency or inclusion, while, in fact, as Keith Moxey insists "the point is not necessarily to attempt to set the record straight by adding or inserting local events into the framework of the Western narrative, for there is no way in which one set of events can be conceived of as equivalent to the others."[17] On the other hand, the application of Western frameworks for the discussion of art whose contexts stretch beyond its alleged relationship with Western predecessors would be pitifully reductionist.

In his final, posthumously published book, *Globalne ujęcie sztuki Europy Wschodniej* (The Global Perspective on Eastern European Art), the Polish art historian Piotr Piotrowski reiterates his postulates for a horizontal art history and proposes how artistic peripheries can be approached and researched through the lens of postcolonial theory.[18] Horizontal art history is required, he argues, since the West-centric model of understanding the dynamics of modernism after WWII pervades art historical writing up to this day; perpetuating the myths of a one-directional movement of ideas and forms from the Western art centres, Paris and New York, to the rest of the art world. Their dominant position throughout the twentieth century offers also a convenient caesura, dividing the century in neat halves, as the year 1945 initiates a process whereby modern art is gradually 'stolen' by the New World capital and the position of Paris declines.[19] In art historical categories, writes Piotrowski, the period between 1947 and 1948 "marks the beginning of the clash between two universalist artistic doctrines: socialist realism and abstract modernism, introduced (...) under two competing slogans – 'peace' and

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'freedom' respectively."[20] The problem with this narrative is that it automatically explains art made in peripheral locations, such as Eastern Europe, as already related to or under the influence of the centre. To demonstrate how this interpretive bias works, Piotrowski examines Eva Cockcroft's assessment of Polish art of the post-Stalinist era as a successful transfer of Abstract Expressionism (via Tadeusz Kantor's visit to Paris, where he had a chance to admire the work of Jackson Pollock), which completely ignores the Polish artist's general admiration for French art and particularly for the French *informel*.[21] *Meanwhile, in the* fifties, the same fascination with Paris can be observed in post-Peron Argentina.[22]

The same dilemma – was it the American Pop Art or the French Nouveau Réalisme? – seems to haunt much of the discussion of the sources of the Neo-Avant-Garde and realist art produced in 'peripheral' European states, for example in East-Central Europe or the Nordic countries. The problem with the urge to apply Western-derived terms to the discussion of art made in a different cultural context and often with a different objective has been aptly summarised by Katalin Timár in her text, *Is Your Pop Our Pop?*, as well as by Piotrowski.[23] Piotrowski suggests that there is a distinct difference in the types of "peripheral conditions," which translate into a variety of trajectories of movements originating in the West. "If Sweden tended to focus on the North American art scene, Eastern Europe was (...) more 'traditional' and viewed Paris as the eternal capital of culture with the capital 'C'. Because it was cut off from its Western part, it petrified the old, continental, imagined cultural relations, which at the same time were symbolic, and compensated for the loss of the paradise that Europe without the Iron Curtain was thought to perhaps be."[24] Timár and Piotrowski point out that the application of terms such as Pop Art to the discussion of art produced in Central Europe (e.g. Hungary) or the Baltic countries (such as Estonia or Sweden) does little to counter the centre-periphery binary optic. Yet, equally problematic might be the focus on local contexts that seek to highlight regional variants of post-war art as 'original' and 'of distinctly local air.' As seen from a postcolonial perspective, such distinctions merely work to emphasise and, ultimately, reinforce the peripheral position. Equally challenging, as Anne Ring Petersen argues in relation to the Nordic countries, is the task "to carve out a critically reflexive position for oneself in the semi-periphery of a global art world dominated by discourses distinguishing only crudely between the binary opposites of 'centres' and 'peripheries'."[25] While the semi-peripheral condition of the Nordic countries is considerably different to that of the Eastern European states, cut off from the West by the Iron Curtain, the critical model used to describe their artistic production similarly vacillates between the urge to look for Western (predominantly American) influences and highlight local variations. In effect, as Ring Petersen argues in reference to the reception of Per Kirkeby's landscape painting, "the 'production of locality' in semi-peripheral art often comprises an amalgam of 'indigenous' and 'international' elements."[26]

Hasior in Sweden

I would like to look now at two episodes from the history of the encounter between two European artistic peripheries: Poland and Sweden and consider the critical context around the staging of Władysław Hasior's works in Sweden – his solo exhibition at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm in 1968 and the site-specific sculptural group *The Sun Chariot* in Södertälje. The former will serve as an example of how the relationship between the two 'peripheral' art milieus comes as already mediated through the Western canon of contemporary art, where the West works as an intermediary or a lens for the assessment of the artist cast in the role of an Eastern European follower. The latter will work as an opportunity to propose a way out of the aporetic situation *via* the combined methods of horizontal and environmental art history.

I mentioned earlier that Hasior, confronted with the reception of his work in Sweden, on the occasion of his solo show at the Moderna Museet

in 1968, was rather shocked that his art was appreciated only inasmuch as it was seen to originate in the Polish artist's reception of Rauschenberg. According to Kirchner, "He said mockingly that he was considered a grandson of Rauschenberg, who was used as a measure of his success."[27] The fact that the two artists were born within three years of each other (Hasior in 1928, Rauschenberg in 1925) did not seem to matter. The dominant narrative of the Western canon exerts a considerable, if often self-imposed, pressure on peripheral art *milieus* to self-colonise their art history and institutions, a fact that still has multiple manifestations, despite the ongoing debate on this issue. It is thus understandable that a relatively young institution such as the Moderna Museet was, in the late sixties, prone to seek self-identification as the most avant-garde, i.e. the most West-centred of the Nordic art institutions. Interestingly, when the same museum launched its first ever show of a Swedish artist (Siri Derkert in 1960), the narrative highlighted her studies in Paris in the early twentieth century and cast her in the role of a "Swedish Picasso who had brought Cubism to Sweden" (even though she was not influenced by Picasso, nor was her art recognised in Sweden at the time).[28] Although the contacts between Sweden and the two artistic 'centres,' Paris and later New York, were complex and often involved more of a mutual exchange than a direct flow of influence on a centre-periphery axis, the choice of major partners for this exchange seems to confirm the Moderna Museet's West-centric orientation.[29]

The museum, opened in 1958, had primarily focused on the early twentieth-century avant-garde, with particular attention to French art. Its director, Pontus Hultén, organised some of the most memorable exhibitions of kinetic art (*Art in Movement*, 1961), as well as Europe's first American Pop Art exhibition (1964). Under his directorship (1958–1973), the Swedish museum gradually changed orientation towards American art. Throughout the 1960s, as Annika Öhrner summarises, shows of early 20th-century art (many of them of French artists) were displayed alongside a more contemporary programme.[30] *Movement in Art* was the first show in Sweden to include American Neo-Avant-Garde art, which was followed in 1962 by an exhibition of *4 Americans* (with Jasper Johns, Alfred Leslie, Robert Rauschenberg and Richard Stankiewicz) and a 1964 travelling show *Amerikans Popkonst*. The latter exhibition is considered very influential in terms of the subsequent development of the local Swedish variants of social realism, which had its roots in the French Nouveau Réalisme, yet veered more towards the Pop Art photorealist practice, albeit with a distinctly critical approach towards capitalist consumer culture.[31]

Did Hasior, in the late sixties, require an 'American context' for his art to be successful in Sweden? Certainly, despite his life-long interest in the specific socialist version of popular culture and in the folk traditions of the Podhale region, he was not a locally-bound artist whose art circulated exclusively within the countries of the Eastern Bloc. He was privileged in that he could travel abroad, representing Poland at international art festivals, as well as undertaking numerous commissions and participating in group and solo shows. In 1961, he became a member of the international art group Phases and exhibited with the group at their collective exhibition in Paris in 1963 (*Voues imprenables* at Galerie du Ranelagh).[32] His first presence in Sweden dates back to 1966, when his works formed part of the exhibition *100 Malningar av polska konstnärer* at the Sveagalleriet in Stockholm, followed by a travelling exhibition of Polish art in Bergen, Helsinki, and Charlottenborg the following year. Irma Kozina argues that "his Golgothas on fire, fantastic vehicles, aphorisms made of found objects were exhibited enough to influence Western artists," offering as an example the work of the Swedish artist Jörgen Hammar (born in 1935).[33] Nevertheless, the association with Rauschenberg seems understandable, particularly considering the fact that American art worked as an important reference point for assemblages and found-object works by the Swedish artist Per Olov Ultvedt, who collaborated with Hultén on numerous art projects, as well as with artists such as Jean Tinguely, Niki de Saint-Phalle, and Rauschenberg.[34] In Sweden very few artists at the time engaged in this type of artistic practice, working mainly in the medium of

painting. This is perhaps a reason why they would associate themselves with their French or American counterparts and, as a result, be critically interpreted through the lens of this association.[35]

Hasior's solo show at the Moderna Museet (9 Nov – 15 Dec, 1968), although later recalled by him with some bitterness, enjoyed a good reception and was said to have impressed the viewers with the *Burning Monument* located outside the gallery building.[36] Reviewers writing for the *Svenska Dagbladet* newspaper noticed the element of "Polishness" and "fresh folklore," and concluded that Hasior's art was strange but also very familiar, making him one of the "most interesting European artists today."[37] On display were Hasior's assemblages, sculptures, banners, and parts of monuments (a total of seventy-three exhibits are listed in the catalogue). If Hasior was unpleasantly surprised by the unwelcome 'American connection,' he must have also been very much aware of the recognition of and appreciation for the Polish folk element in his art and of the generally enthusiastic reception of his work. Since his *Burning Monument* was the most captivating for the audience and seems to have been the least 'Rauschenbergian' of his works in the exhibition, then perhaps this fact had some bearing on the artist's subsequent shows and commissions in the Nordic countries, and particularly on Hasior's choice of subject matter for the open-air sculptural group in Södertälje.

In Hasior's career, the late sixties and early seventies marked a period of intense development of large-scale sculptural projects, where the intended shape was dug in the ground and filled with concrete. The emerging forms were literally torn from the ground, hence the name Hasior gave to this technique – "rzeźby wyrwane z ziemi" (sculptures torn from the ground). He had experimented with this form since the early sixties. The source for this method came from the artist's visit to a cemetery in Aix-en-Provence, where he observed empty human-shaped forms carved in rocks. Wishing to recreate this process, in 1960, he carved a shape in the ground and filled it with concrete. Titled *St. Sebastian* (*Św. Sebastian*), the work surprised the artist with its unexpected structure and the texture of the surface, uncovered rather than created.[38] In 1969, he represented Poland at the First Biennial of Open Air Sculpture in Montevideo, where he showed *Golgotha* (*Golgota*), while the following year he showed his *Pieta* at the 35th Biennale in Venice. In early 1972, he had a joint exhibition with Jerzy Bereś at the Louisiana Museum in Denmark, where he made a public sculpture titled *The Burning Pieta* (*Płonąca Pieta*). Later that year, at the Konsthall in Södertälje in Sweden he again exhibited together with Bereś. Hasior recalled that its director, Eje Högestätt, originally asked him to make a group much like the one in Montevideo.[39] Hanna Kirchner claims that Hasior refused, proposing instead a group of horses or Pegasuses that would be shown as if running up a green hill amongst pine trees.[40] However, the preserved sketches for the work suggest that the final idea came only after the artist walked around the town and selected the site, while the horse figures came after several other ideas were considered (such as the cyclist group), as suggested by existing sketches.[41] Hasior worked on *The Sun Chariot* (*Słoneczny rydwan, Solspann*) from 1972 to 1973, the official unveiling taking place in summer 1973, with the artist completing the work later in 1976.[42]

The six horses that ultimately formed the group in Södertälje were not produced in the artist's studio in Zakopane, but on site, hence their direct relationship not just with the local culture and landscape that inspired them, but also with the soil, particularly so since the stones and the texture of the dirt in the ground, the leaves, and blades of grass left their imprint on the surface of the sculptures. The forms, whose shape was strengthened with reinforcing bars placed inside the holes in the ground before the concrete was poured, were then complemented with metal additions, such as ladders and metal pipes, which, when filled with petroleum, produced the effect of the titular flame-bearing chariot. The chariot itself was drawn with white cement on the hill, with its shape inspired by the Scandinavian Bronze Age rock painting, as was the shape of the horses.[43] This element, however, has not been preserved to this day.

I would like to suggest that this site-specificity and inspiration with local material and cultural history works to highlight the fundamental orientation of Hasior's sculptures torn from the ground, which mark his growing engagement with nature rather than culture, the primitive and primeval rather than the technologically elaborate and technology-mediated, the landscape rather than the city. While the assemblages at the Moderna Museet exhibition could be seen to balance between the material aspect of specific objects and the semantic capacity of the object as sign, much like the American Pop Art and the French New Realism, the concrete sculptures torn from the ground are most emphatically site-specific, earth-bound, and earth-dependent. In the Polish critical discourse and curatorial practice, Hasior's sculptures torn from the ground have recently been framed by another 'American connection,' namely Land Art.[44] Certainly, the practice of making new sculptural forms by subtracting rather than adding and using the earth as the main material is recurrent in numerous examples of Land Art, with Michael Heizer's classic *Double Negative* as the first association to come to mind. Yet, as with Pop Art, this comparison seems to occlude more about the specificity of Hasior's endeavour than it clarifies, which I have discussed at length elsewhere.[45] Moreover, it dangerously removes the possibility of a creative encounter between the Polish artist and the Swedish landscape and history through an interjection of an, in fact, non-existent intermediary. Is the focus on the local landscape and folk traditions a possible way out of this impasse? After all, the Swedish critics did appreciate Hasior's ability to invest his work with elements of 'fresh folklore.' Moreover, the artist designed *The Sun Chariot* as both rooted in the land's prehistory, as well as reviving the traditions of celebrating the sun. The local inhabitants engaged annually in re-lighting the fire on the horses' backs during the celebration of *Midsommar*, while Hasior organised processions and lit the fire personally during the unveiling, as well as on other occasions.[46] These activities seem to highlight the ritualistic, even ludic aspects of this work, producing a sense of joyful appreciation of the creative powers of nature. So, does the focus on the local help to set up new horizontal art geographies? The answer to this question is not simple. In her discussion of the Neo-Avant-Garde landscape-oriented art in East-Central Europe, Maja Fowkes argues that some scholarship on this topic mistakenly highlights the combination of 'avant-garde elements' and 'the tradition of folklore' allegedly present in such works.[47] And this, ultimately, further perpetuates their perception as peripheral.

My tentative suggestion would be to read Hasior's work in Södertälje from a perspective that combines the tenets of horizontal art history with those of environmental art history, which can allow us to, on the one hand, recognise the networks of artists and institutions formed often away from and independently of the dominating centre-periphery axes, and, on the other hand, analyse the local models of engagement with landscape not as a token of their peripheral status, but as a way of uncovering the traditions that at present can and often are revisited. Construed in this fashion, a horizontal environmental art history would seek not so much to fill the gaps in the Western art history or "supplement" the canon, but rather to bring to light the art historical facts that broaden our understanding of the history of our relationship with the environment. In this history, as recent ecocritical research shows, tradition and local forms of engaging with nature often played a more important role than any influence of the international avant-garde.[48] While, as Piotrowski argued, the goal of horizontal art history is to write histories that are "polyphonic, multi-dimensional, devoid of geographical hierarchies,"[49] that of ecocritical or environmental art history is to give voice to one of the many Others marginalised by the Modernist West-centric canon, namely nature. From this perspective, the history of Hasior's work in Södertälje, together with that of his visits and participation in the *Midsommer* celebrations, becomes a chapter in a yet unwritten history of the Neo-Avant-Garde networks formed in European peripheries, but, perhaps even more so, a chapter in the history of how the environment is gradually recovered as an important reference point and source of identification in the modernised, urban societies in the late twentieth century.

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Notes

[1] For instance, the work of Katarzyna Kobro has been exhibited outside Poland with the aim of securing her position as a significant pioneer of Constructivist sculpture.

[2] This strategy was clearly at work in the making of the exhibition where the work of the Polish sculptor Alina Szapocznikow was shown together with other women artists, including Louise Bourgeois and Eva Hesse. See: Agata Jakubowska, ed., *Alina Szapocznikow. Awkward Objects* (Warszawa: MSN, 2011).

3 Bożena Kowalska, "Hasior jako prekursor i twórca własnej wersji pop-artu," in *Granice sztuki współczesnej – wokół twórczości Władysława Hasiora*, edited by Marzanna Raińska (Nowy Sącz: MCK Sokół, 2011), 10.

[4] Ibidem.

[5] See: Romuald K. Bochyński, "Wczesna twórczość Hasiora a nowe tendencje w rzeźbie lat 60. XX wieku," ibidem, 11-14; Magdalena Moskalewicz, "Twórczość Władysława Hasiora w latach 60. na tle artystycznych eksperymentów neoawangardy," in *Granice sztuki współczesnej – wokół twórczości Władysława Hasiora*, ed. Marzanna Raińska (Nowy Sącz: MCK Sokół, 2011), 15–19; Julita Dembowska et al., eds., *Konferencja tatrzańska. Wokół Zakopanego i sztuki Władysława Hasiora* (Zakopane: Muzeum Tatrzańskie, 2015).

[6] See: Anna Żakiewicz, *Władysław Hasior* (Warszawa: MNW, 2005), 101.

[7] Maria Anna Potocka, "Europejski Rauschenberg/ The European Rauschenberg," in *Władysław Hasior. Europejski Rauschenberg? / The European Rauschenberg?* Edited by Józef Chrobak (Kraków: MOCAK, 2014), 9.

[8] Hanna Kirchner, "O Hasiorze – po latach / About Hasior – After Many Years," ibid. (Kraków: MOCAK), 23.

[9] See for instance: Anna Żakiewicz, "Between Tradition and the Present: on the Art of Hasior," in *Hasior. Powrót* (Nowy Sącz: MCK Sokół, 2010/2011), 46-47; *Władysław Hasior*, 19–27.

[10] See: Bożena Kowalska, "An Artist Innovator – a Folk But Universal One," in *Hasior. Powrót* (Nowy Sącz: MCK Sokół, 2010/2011), 23.

[11] Ibidem, 25.

[12] Alexander Kiossev, "The Self-Colonizing Metaphor," *Atlas of Transformation,* published electronically, accessed 28.07.2022, http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/s/self-colonization/the-self-colonizing-metaphor-alexander-kiossev.html.

[13] Ibidem.

[14] Ibidem.

[15] On the notion of lack as constitutive to the Eastern European identity formation see: Jan Sowa, *Fantomowe ciało króla. Peryferyjne zmagania z nowoczesną formą* (Kraków: Universitas, 2011), 351–430.

[16] Ibidem, 373.

[17] After Edit András, "Who's Afraid of a New Paradigm? The 'Old' Art Criticism of the East versus the 'New' Critical Theory of the West," *ArtMargins,* published electronically 20.04.2002, accessed 28.07.2022, https://artmargins.com/whos-afraid-of-a-new-paradigm-the-qoldq-art-criticism-of-the-east-versus-the-qnewq-critical-theory-of-the-west/ .

[18] Piotr Piotrowski, *Globalne ujęcie sztuki Europy Wschodniej* (Poznań: Rebis, 2016).

[19] Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War*, translated by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago-London: University of Chicago, 1983).

[20] Piotrowski, *Globalne ujęcie sztuki Europy Wschodniej,* 15.

[21] Ibidem.

[22] Ibidem, 18.

[23] Katalin Timár, "Is Your Pop Our Pop? The History of Art as Self-Colonizing Tool," *ArtMargins,* published electronically 16.03.2002, accessed 28.07.2022, https://artmargins.com/is-your-pop-our-pop-the-history-of-art-as-a-self-colonizing-tool/. See also: Piotr Piotrowski, "Why Were There No Great Pop Art Curatorial Projects in Eastern Europe in the 1960s?" *Baltic Worlds,* published electronically 19.11.2015, accessed 28.07.2022, https://balticworlds.com/why-were-there-no-great-pop-art-curatorial-projects-in-eastern-europe-in-the-1960s/?s=moderna%20museet,.

[24] "Why Were There No." For a discussion of the significance of Paris for Polish modern art see: Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, "Paris from behind the Iron Curtain," in *Paris: Capital of the Arts 1900—1968*, edited by Sarah Wilson and Eric de Chassey (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2002), 250-59.

[25] Anne Ring Petersen, "Global art history: a view from the North," *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture* 7, no. 1 (2015). https://doi.org/10.3402/jac.v7.28154.

[26] Ibidem.

[27] Kirchner, O Hasiorze – po latach," 23.

[28] Annika Öhrner, "The Moderna Museet in Stockholm – The Institution and the Avant-Garde," in *A Cultural History of the Avant-Garde in the Nordic Countries 1950–1975*, edited by Tania Ørum and Jesper Olsson (Leiden-Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2016), 117.

[29] On the complex relationship between Sweden and France see: Marta Edling, "From Margin to Margin? The Stockholm Paris Axis 1944–1953," *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History* 88, no. 1 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1080/00233609.2019.1576764.

[30] Öhrner, "The Moderna Museet in Stockholm – The Institution and the Avant-Garde," 116.

[31] Charlotte Bydler and Dan Karlholm, "Functions of Realist Art in Sweden, circa 1970. Lena Svedberg and Olle Kåks," *Baltic Worlds,* published electronically 30.01.2017, https://balticworlds.com/functions-of-realist-art-in-sweden-circa-1970/?s=sweden, accessed 28.07.2022.

[32] Marzanna Raińska, "Kalendarium," in *Hasior. Powrót* (Nowy Sącz: MCK Sokół, 2010/2011), 97.

[33] Irma Kozina, "Contexts of Władysław Hasior's Artistic Actions," ibidem, 67.

[34] On Ultvedt's collaboration with Rauschenberg see: Annika Öhrner, "Recalling Pelican: On P.O. Ultvedt, Robert Rauschenberg and Two 'Ballets'," *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History* 76 (2007): 27-39.

[35] See: Björn Fritz, "Art and Politics Since 1950," in *Swedish Art History: A Selection of Introductory Texts*, edited by Ludwig Qvarnström (Lund: Lunds Universitet, 2018), 344.

[36] Żakiewicz, *Władysław Hasior*, 115..

[37] After: ibidem, 117.

[38] Władysław Hasior, *Myśli o sztuce* (Nowy Sącz: Oficyna Wydawnicza Związku Podhalan, 1987), 42.

[39] Hasior enjoyed international acclaim at that time and the authorities of Södertälje were apparently excited to have his piece as a permanent attraction in the public space of the town. For the details of the commission see: Gunn-Britt Robertsson, "På språng mot solen," *Kulturdelen.nu,* published electronically 2.11.2010, accessed 28.07.2022, https://kulturdelen.nu/2010/hasior-hastarna/.

[40] Raińska, "Kalendarium," 97.

41 See: Robertsson, "På språng mot solen."

[42] Józef Chrobak, "Władysław Hasior. Kalendarium / Timeline," in *Władysław Hasior. Europejski Rauschenberg? / The European Rauschenberg?* edited by Józef Chrobak (Kraków: MOCAK, 2014), 238. On the details of the stages of this commission see: "Solspann by Wladyslaw Hasior," accessed 28.07.2022, https://www.sodertaljekonsthall.se/en/.

[43] Żakiewicz, *Władysław Hasior*, 163. More on Bronze Age rock carvings in: Björn Magnusson Staaf, "Prehistoric Art in Scandinavia," in *Swedish Art History: A Selection of Introductory Texts*, edited by Ludwig Qvarnström (Lund: Lunds Universitet, 2018), 24.

[44] For a discussion of Hasior's work in reference to the Land Art of Robert Smithson see: Ewa Tatar, "Lessons in Imagination and Sensitivity," *Not Fot / Władysław Hasior's Photo Notebook* Vol. 3: Ziemia. Materia. Rytm / Earth. Matter. Rhythm (2017): 73.

[45] I discuss the differences rather than similarities between Hasior and Smithson in: ……., "The Grass is Greener: Władysław Hasior in an Ecocritical Perspective," *Ikonotheka* 30 (2020): 155–71.

[46] On the performative and community-forming aspects of *Solspann*, as well as on the history of the processions organised for the unveiling of the first three horses, the final six-horse group in 1976, as well as another procession during Hasior's 1989 exhibition at Södertälje Konstahall see: Magdalena Figzał-Janikowska, "Miejskie performanse Władysława Hasiora," *Pamiętnik Teatralny* 71, no. 1 (2022): 21–26.

[47] Maja Fowkes, *The Green Bloc: Neo-Avant-Garde Art and Ecology under Socialism* (Budapest–New York: CEU, 2015), 17.

[48] For recent discussions of what would be the possible objective of an ecocritical art history see: Andrew Patrizio,

The Ecological Eye: Assembling an Ecocritical Art History (Manchester: Manchester University, 2019); Susan Boettger, "Within and Beyond the Art World: Environmentalist Criticism of Visual Art," in *Handbook of Ecocriticism and Cultural Ecology*, ed. Hubert Zapf (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 664–82; Alan C. Braddock, "From Nature to Ecology: The Emergence of Ecocritical Art History," in *A Companion to American Art*, ed. John Davis, Jennifer A Greenhill, and Jason D. LaFountain (Chichester: Wiley, 2015), 447–68; Alan C. Braddock and Christoph Irmscher, *A Keener Perception: Ecocritical Studies in American Art History* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 2009).

[49] Piotr Piotrowski, *Art and Democracy in Post-Communist Europe*, translated by Anna Brzyski (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 27.

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