



## II. THREE INVESTIGATIONS OF CREATIVITY: ART, SCIENCE AND MEDIA

### CREATIVE TRANSFORMATIONS IN VISUAL ARTS OF EARLY FRENCH MODERNISM: TREATMENT OF NUDE BODY

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*Received 22 May 2015; accepted 22 October 2015*

Resent paper is focused on the early modern culture, particularly on the topic of visual art and its confrontation with traditional, pre-modern culture and aesthetic. The author unveils how and why painters of early French modernism had rejected traditional representation of eroticism, typical for pre-modern art, especially for the art of academicism. Thus from their artworks disappeared sublimated, exalted nudity, withdrew nudes modestly hidden under mythological or religious context. In the works of impressionists and postimpressionists naked body was depicted frankly, openly, without any excuse of what was supposed to be decent. Such were the nude women of paintings of Auguste Manet and Amedeo Modigliani who present merely their femininity and sexuality, while symbolizing the liberation from moral norms and heralding sexual revolution of the 20th century. Relaxed, healthy, pink-cheeked girls in Pierre-Auguste Renoir's paintings spread subtle eroticism and the mood of joyful life. Life of Parisian cabarets and brothels come alive through naked or semi-naked female figures which on Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Edgar Degas canvases seem as if they are unaware of being watched. Nude bodies in the paintings of such French post-impressionists like Henri Matisse and Paul Gauguin were depicted in exotic, oriental ambience and referred to the philosophical background of romanticism. Paul Cézanne's nudes particularly his famous scenes with bathers disclose essential aims of this painter – to reach the essence of the very thing. Transformations of the treatment of nude body by early French modernists help to understand general context of creative changes in visual arts on the edge of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Keywords: eroticism, impressionism, modernism, post-impressionism, the nude, visual art.

## Introduction

Present paper is focused on the period of early modern culture, which could be defined in two ways – as a distant past, and as something, what still can be directly related to the present. Insight into the research of art is an actual topic of contemporary discourse, which involves aspects such as perception of the art, consumption of the culture topic of inter-corporeity, various aspects of hearing screen media and many other (Krukaušienė, Žilinskaitė-Vytiienė 2015; Mickūnas 2015a).

Modernism occurred as a resistance against traditional norms and values, as a fight against hypocrisy of bourgeois culture, helpless academism and shallow realism in literature and visual art. This cultural movement had originated as rejection of both – rationalism and empiricism, which had been dominant in philosophy of Enlightenment. With the arrival of modernism various philosophers, writers, poets and painters started to re-evaluate traditional culture, or simply rejected whole pre-modern heritage, plunged into a search of new tools of artistic expression and were seeking inspiration mainly in these fields of the past, where rationalism and realism traditionally were missing, or existed as insignificant. Hereby modernism disclosed nostalgia toward various mythological or romantic aspects of earlier culture, recovered symbols of pre-historic, primitive as well as oriental Asian and medieval cultures – they all were resurrected and inspired by modern literature and visual arts. Meanwhile, the appearance of photography also influenced transformations of modern painting – it was no longer trying to compete in realism with photography and instead turned into seeking of new forms of artistic expression, which moved it away from realism.

Painting of early modernism – impressionism and post-impressionism – mainly is connected with France. Therefore attention will be focused toward creative heritage of French impressionists, post-impressionists and other painters, active during the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th century. In the field of painting modernism appeared with French impressionists who began to uncap various weaknesses and vices of pre-modern, particularly academic art, and started public discussion about true assumptions and objectives of a future art. The art of early modernist faced rapid change therefore treatment of erotic scenes also was under process of dynamic changes. How did they apply erotic motives what caused changes in treatment of erotic was direct and indirect eroticism, as embodied in early modern painting, natural, subconscious or intentional. Using the analytical, phenomenological and comparative methods we will try to answer such and related questions. As our culture is predominated by visual approach and is defined by the term of “visual turn” (Mitchell 1994), the main attention is focused toward visual material and its interpretation.

The topics of erotic, sexuality and desire are among most popular topics in visual arts, literature, sociocultural context and even ideology. The image of nude is popular if not to say dominant and has a commonplace in Asian and Western painting and developed into autonomous, meaningful topic of visual art. In modern art the image of a nude was mainly female and represented a bohemian relationship between artist and models, who often were not only models and muses of artists, but also their mistresses and lovers (Meecham, Sheldon 2005: 109). Here we may see an obvious

difference between modern painting and former academic painting which mainly was dominated by male nude figures – in academic painting figures of male nudes were dominant, inspired by antique and classic sculpture. So what changed or did not in the representation of nude with the arrival of modernism? Male nudes in the works of classical painters were figures of the gods and athletes symbolized heroism and higher moral purposes. According to Margaret Walters, a male nude usually supposed political, religious, moral contexts, and embodied more meanings than a direct erotic one – “the male nude is typically public: he strides through the squares, guards public buildings, is worshipped in the church. He personifies communal pride or aspiration” (Walters 1978: 8). Nudes in modern painting are depicted without all these ethical, religious meanings, without transformations into mythological or heroic content – they are simply eroticized. And since then they are usually female nudes, no more male ones. The male body will come back later, after 1960s, with performances, video-installations and other forms of contemporary audiovisual art.

### Transformations in visual art and provocative nudes of early modernism

The provocative, ambiguous representation of erotic images in early modern painting depends on a twofold relation with realism, which could be seen in the works of predecessors of impressionism as well as in the colourful paintings of impressionists themselves. They could be described as both – development and rejection of realism. Realistic intentions to depict an image accurately and objectively are rejected and attention is shifted to a freed own impression of the painter and what he is perceiving, to a brave liberation of fantasy elements. Impressionists focused their attention on sensual beauty of present moment, the magic moment of here and now. That was no common, and often even was unacceptable for former art. In academism of preceding eras up to the 19th century the choice of motives was derived from antiquity mostly – gods, heroes, historical events or myths. We may see it in one of the most famous works of academism – *The Birth of Venus* (1863, Fig. 1) by Alexandre Cabanel (1823–1889).



Fig. 1. Alexandre Cabanel. *The Birth of Venus* (1863)

Therefore differently from the exalted, purified eroticism of former painting (particularly of classicism, romanticism and academism), the eroticism of impressionists is simple, casual, as if it is a natural part of everyday life. The painters dared defying the necessity to hide the nude body under mythological context, which was considered as a hedge against accusations of obscenity. Therefore nude bodies and erotic scenes unveiled without attempt to mask, retouch, simply and frankly displayed in their everyday naturalness.

One of the most interesting painters of the 19th century, Édouard Manet (1832–1883), combined traditional style of painting with some forms of artistic expression typical for impressionists. It is no wonder that precisely this French painter used to be considered as a precursor of impressionism. His early controversial works such as *The Luncheon on the Grass* (1862–1863, Fig. 2) and *Olympia* (1863, Fig. 3) served as starting points for impressionists.



Fig. 2. Édouard Manet. *The Luncheon on the Grass* (1862–1863)

Looking at Manet's scandalous *The Luncheon on the Grass* (Fig. 2) his contemporaries were shocked by the "shamelessness" of the picture and regarded it as an affront. A careless picnic scene in nature was a bold step in depicting a nude woman body without mythological or other cultural pretext. The idea of being naked in public was unacceptable for the hypocritical bourgeois society then. Naked body was tolerated only in bedroom, at a private place or in the pictures with mythological or historical scenes, as we can see, for example, in Peter Paul Rubens' (1577–1640) *The Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus* (1618). So the artist was blamed for impudence and promotion of immoral, intolerable behaviour. In the history of the treatment of nude images in Western modern culture this work is particularly significant. Shocking, provoking content did not lose its popularity in later modern and then in contemporary painting, applied art, video projections and commercial advertisements and often became the main tool to provide their popularity.

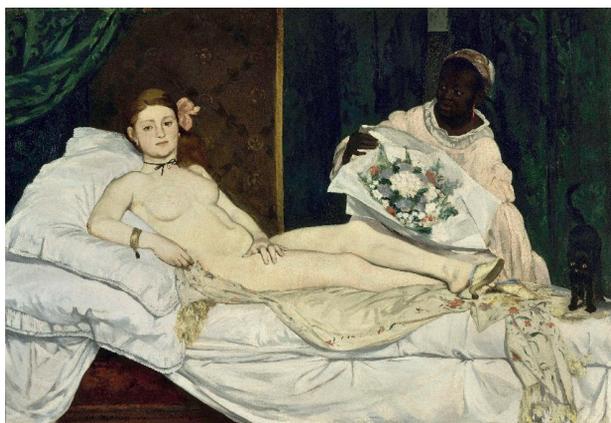


Fig. 3. Édouard Manet. *Olympia* (1863)

Another famous work of Manet, *Olympia* (Fig. 3), shows a young, nude woman. It is a modern interpretation of Giorgione's (~1477–1510) *Sleeping Venus* (1510) or Titian's (~1488–1576) *Venus of Urbino* (1538). Among *Olympia* and her prototypes there is one main difference – on Manet's canvas the mythological background is rejected. The naked woman is placed in her ordinary reality, in her daily environment. *Olympia* flirtatiously is hiding her pubic area, but the feeling of modesty is obviously absent in her behaviour. This nude, while lying on a bed, looks provocatively, self-consciously, directly in the eyes of the viewer. Such confronting gaze at the visitor of a boudoir implies the idea that she is a prostitute, a representative of demimonde, participant of a hedonistic life (Blatchford 1983). Such interpretation is also supported by the black cat comfortably settled down alongside her – in the 19th century black cat was treated as a symbol of prostitution. Exactly this demythologization, such interpretation and symbols, not the naked body itself, provoked a scandal in bourgeois society.

An interesting example of provocative painting could be found in Modigliani's (1884–1920) nudes (Figs 4–5), which are depicted without any symbols or references to mythological context, they represent mainly their own femininity. Modigliani was influenced by Renaissance and classical nudes by Italian Renaissance painters Giorgione, Titian, as well as nudes of Spanish painter Diego Velázquez (1599–1660). But in contrast to their unattainable goddess, his nudes had no secrets, they merely “offer a body that glows with incandescent sexuality” (Meyers 2014: 192). Stylization of his paintings contrast with their frank sexuality and such an ambiguity create a tension between the abstract and the real. Nude women (in case of Modigliani, they usually were professional models, not the painter's mistresses) seem to be unabashedly frank and are depicted close-up and from above. Sometimes asleep, they are facing the viewer, as does this gracefully built model in one of the artist's most famous paintings of the series. Provocation of these works mainly consists in the depiction of pubic hairs, which was not allowed at the beginning of the 20th century. Such frank, natural, unadorned sexuality provoked a scandal among conservative society and art critics.



Fig. 4. Amedeo Modigliani. *Sleeping Nude with Arms Open (Red Nude)* (1917)

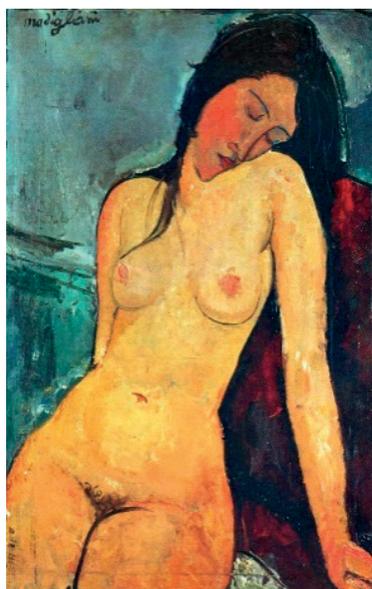


Fig. 5. Amedeo Modigliani. *Seated Nude* (1917)

Such open depiction of nudity manifesting itself faced opposition and sometime even persecutions. It was criticized by older, more traditional painters, academic and public. Both Manet and much later Modigliani faced with various reprehensions and restrictions. Manet's *The Luncheon on the Grass* (Fig. 2) was banned from exhibition, while *Olympia* (Fig. 3) was accepted because the salon did not want to be blamed of rejection the same famous author twice, but the work was hung as high as possible as a protective measure assaults by angry visitors. The Paris exhibition of Modigliani in 1917 was closed by the police on the grounds of exposing pubic hair on picture *Reclining Nude* (1919). Just to mention that prior to modernism, classic nudes were always depicted without them, on modern painting the motive appeared slowly, as the authors usually tended to hide or cover this arena (what we may see in otherwise provocative and realistic *Olympia*, Fig. 3).

When and how such resistance was being overcome? Here one may implement the changed availability of such pictures for the masses by cheap reproductions via printing. In 1900 or possibly earlier, anyone could afford a printed version hung in his bedroom (in Germain *Kunstdruck*). Popularity has always had influence on acceptance! What is selling well later or sooner is getting accepted, by the argument of making money. But it took time until images with nudes and erotic motives moved from private bedrooms into the art salons.

### Renoir and subtle eroticism of impressionists

Such painters as Renoir (1841–1919), Degas (1834–1917) and Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901) showed high interest toward female nude – their erotic naked bodies spread subtle, still direct eroticism. One of the most lyric and romantic painters of impressionism Renoir goes back to the pastoral scenes of Rococo painter Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732–1806) and into modern bourgeois reality in his depiction of nudes. Back then frivolous leisure and pleasures of Rococo high society were shown in paintings of this kind. Renoir was interested in a pure world of bodily pleasure, nudity and simple joy of life. On his canvases people are eating, drinking, carelessly chatting, resting at sensual landscape and whole atmosphere is emanating with sexuality, eroticism, relaxation and carelessness about norms of bourgeois life and social boundaries (Figs 6–10). Renoir was fascinated with the subject of the nude female body and depicted plenty of them (SlideShare.com 2008). In his late works naked women are having rest or enjoying life on a cotton-candy type of landscape. He depicted series of pretty young women in bath or while taking care of their bodies after the bath. Such works may be an effort to “restore timeless and high-minded harmony of late impressionism” (Nochlin 2006: 37). His nudes unveil influence of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867) painting, particularly of his *Grande Odalisque* (1814). However, in the place of the cool courtesan of Ingres on the canvases of Renoir we will find relaxed, healthy, pink-cheeked girls. As well as the backgrounds on his canvases would not be an exotic harem, but a rather lively nature of French countryside. Nudes of Renoir seem to be very real, fleshly. As the painter had said himself: “I never think I have finished a nude until I think I could pinch it”.



Fig. 6. Pierre-Auguste Renoir. *Three Female Bathers with a Crab* (1897)



Fig. 7. Pierre-Auguste Renoir. *The Bathers* (1918–1919)



Fig. 8. Pierre-Auguste Renoir. *Nude in a Landscape* (1883)



Fig. 9. Pierre-Auguste Renoir. *Female Nude in the Sun* (1875)



Fig. 10. Pierre-Auguste Renoir. *Nude* (1910)

### Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec: nudes in brothels in cabarets

Works of Degas provide an affectionate documentary of Parisian brothels and women of demimonde. Critics were confused by this voyeuristic series of nudes without any mythological setting. In his late works Degas mainly focused on nudes, particularly on bathing women. He painted and drew ballerinas in their dressing room, women taking care of themselves – drying their bodies after bathing, dressing, undressing, etc. (Figs 11–12). The models are posing with heads turning away or hidden in the shadow. So the viewer has a voyeuristic impression that the shown person is not aware of being watched. As if he is looking through a keyhole. “This ‘keyhole’ approach is very interesting, as by removing the male gaze from the nude, Degas enhances the

realism of the scene. In most other paintings, even in realist works, there is a hint that the models have some level of cognition of the artist, either as a pose or through a glance” (Eroti-Cart.com 2015). This rule does not work with Degas’ works. The viewer may watch the nude during a very personal moment and may have the impression of sharing these intimate moments with her. Nudes, depicted by Degas’ works look as if unaware of being watched and seem to be comfortable with themselves and their naked body during sensuous pleasures of bathing.

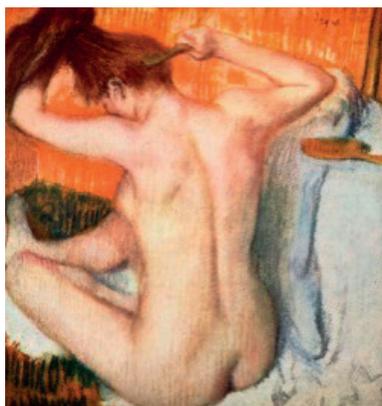


Fig. 11. Edgar Degas. *Woman Combing Her Hair* (1885)

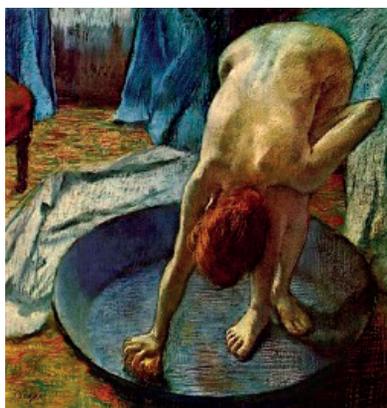


Fig. 12. Edgar Degas. *Woman in the Bathtub* (1886)

Before the modernists there have been moments of obvious voyeurism, too. For example, the work of Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825) *The Sleep of Endymion* (1791, Fig. 13) depicts a male nude being under the rays of light – the artist targeted the image of Endymion as an immaterial god who is sleeping, therefore unaware of being watched.



Fig. 13. Jacques-Louis David. *The Sleep of Endymion* (1791)

French painter Toulouse-Lautrec passionately and honestly depicted modern, decadent and hedonistic Parisian society. As Degas, he was fascinated with the world of prostitution and demimonde. Better than any other painter he epitomizes the spirit of Montmartre, the most colourful, lively, vibrant and eroticized quarter of Paris. His posters for the dance halls and theatres of Montmartre, as well as his drawings of actresses, dancers and prostitutes shows that this person and this district of Paris were closely connected together (Heller 1997).



Fig. 14. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *Woman Lying on Her Back – Lassitude* (1896)

Toulouse-Lautrec frequented Parisian brothels as a client, which inspired his series of brothel paintings. In his works one could see an obvious demystification of the eroticism of the prostitutes. His female nudes show women as objects (Fig. 14), with particular elements of perversion or degradation, caricatured in anatomically impossible poses, which may have roots in his own anatomic deformity. This painter was particularly interested in lesbian relations and was known to frequent lesbian bars, observing and depicting scenes of lesbian affection, which unlike his images of heterosexual relationships do not have the usual cynicism (Ditmore 2006: 487). Among these paintings he created an image of women (probably prostitutes) who were sleeping kissing, embracing, and enjoying each other's bodies (Fig. 15).



Fig. 15. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *In the Bed: The Kiss* (1892)

If the new presentation of nudity was already making a scandal, how then the reaction of the society was when the topic of lesbianism became openly visible in Toulouse-Lautrec's works? Suppose it must have been worse a scandal, as this topic was not really depicted before (even in *The Sleepers*, 1866) by Gustave Courbet (1819–1877) the lesbians were not shown in action, but rather by guessing of what had happened on the scene before being painted asleep). But we may not forget that a work of Toulouse-Lautrec was a bit later than these, depicted by Courbet and during that period significant progress that taken place on the path of society toward modernization.

The demystification, vulgarization of female nude body and presentation of it as if through a voyeuristic prism also is visible on several nudes as painted by Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), who, of Dutch origin, mainly was active in France. According to the contemporaries (René Secrétan), Gogh had a taste for erotic photographs and books (see Heinich 1997: 44). However, personally, he was not very active in depicting this topic – he painted several versions of a nude girl lying (Figs 16–17) and several versions of girl sitting on the bed. However, none of these nudes look particularly erotic, so nudity here is simply accepted as an ordinary fact of existence. Thus, eroticism in the works of Gogh may better be seen not through his nudes, but in every detail of his landscapes.

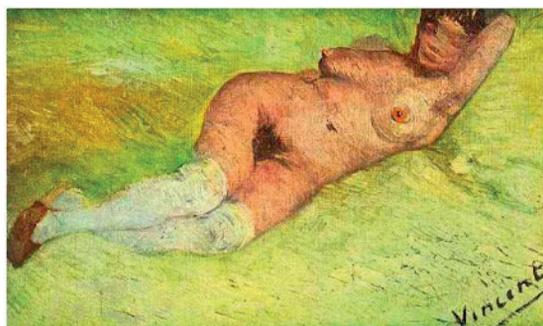


Fig. 16. Vincent van Gogh. *Nude Woman Reclining* (1887)

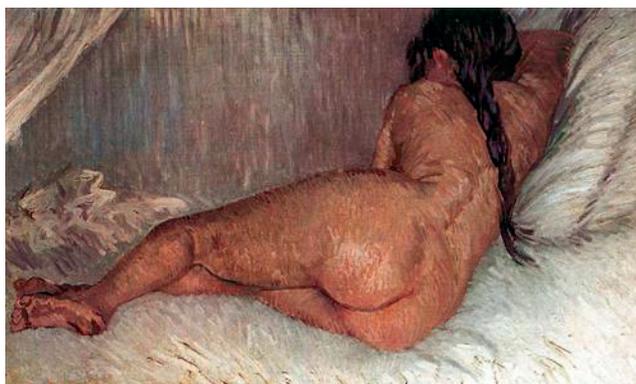


Fig. 17. Vincent van Gogh. *Nude Woman Reclining, Seen from the Back* (1887)

### Exotic motives and decorative erotic of post-impressionism (Gauguin, Cézanne)

French post-impressionist Gauguin (1848–1903) escaped European culture, which he considered as artificial and conventional. Fascinated with colourful beauty of Tahitian (French Polynesia) nature and people he moved to live to this tropical paradise. He painted a lot of naked or half naked Tahitian women (Figs 18–19). Of course in the 19th century, under Christian missionary supervision, women were supposed to appear in public properly dressed, but Gauguin anyway tended to depict them half nude. Serene, sensual, sincere Tahitian women totally fascinated him (for more about Gauguin's nudes and erotic art from the period of Tahiti see Solomon-Godeau 1992; Brooks 1992).

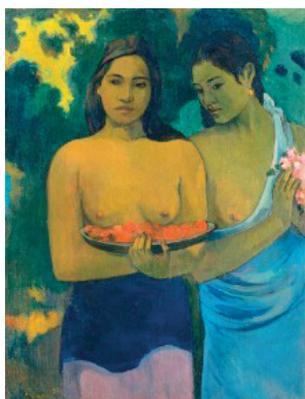


Fig. 18. Paul Gauguin. *Two Tahitian Women*  
(1899)



Fig. 19. Paul Gauguin. *The Seed of the Areoi*  
(1899)

Interesting examples of erotic artworks we may find among early works of Cézanne (1839–1906) where the painter often depicted his erotic fantasies. Thus *Afternoon in Naples with a Black Servant* (1875, Fig. 20) where a nude woman is sprawling on her nude companion who is smoking a pipe, while semi-dressed black maid enters with refreshments. According to Theodore Reff, the title alludes “to the popular notion of Italy as a place of freedom, of sensual life and gaiety” (Reff 1987). This work shows obvious influence of Eugène Delacroix’s (1798–1863) *Women of Algiers* (1832).



Fig. 20. Paul Cézanne. *Afternoon in Naples with a Black Servant* (1875)

*Afternoon in Naples with a Black Servant* (Fig. 20) was reinterpreted by our contemporary painter Lucian Freud (1922–2011) in his work *After Cézanne* (1999–2000, see National Gallery of Australia 2015 (for their comparative analysis also see Forward 2001)). It is a kind of paraphrase of Cézanne’s work and a dialogue with him. In both works three figures are depicted, we may see a bed with crumpled sheets, which stresses the feeling of tension and alienation, a strong sexual undercurrent. The works are enigmatic, with the sense of mystery about what precisely is taking place.

### Essential structure of Cézanne’s and Matisse’s nudes

Most famous Cézanne’s works with erotic motives are from the series of bathers, which this author did paint during many years<sup>1</sup>. One of the most famous Cézanne’s canvases *The Bathers* (1898–1905, Fig. 21) emanates direct eroticism and drew the attention of art critics, philosophers, etc. (eroticism of Cézanne’s *The Bathers* is also insightful and detailed analysed in D’Souza 2008). Monumental, abstract human figures are depicted from various perspectives what inserts tension into artwork. A triangle composi-

<sup>1</sup> Some of Cézanne’s works with bathers are as follows: *Bathers* (1870, 1874–1875, 1876–1877, 1879–1880, 1880, 1890–1894, 1894–1905, 1900–1905, 1906), *Four Bathers* (1877–1878), *Bather from the Back* (1877–1878), *Standing Bather Seen from Behind* (1879–1882), *Three Bathers* (1879–1882), *Bathers Outside a Tent* (1883–1885), *Bather* (1885), *Five Bathers* (1885–1887), *Women Bathing* (1900), *Seven Bathers* (1900).

tion defined by lean trees and naked bodies. It presents “immediacy of erotic drive, but it does so through the instrumentality of art, and thus it transfers to this medium the dialectical relations between desire and its object that can be perceived most clearly in Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard’s existential psychoanalysis of eroticism. More fully than in any previous pictorial or poetic text of Cézanne’s, erotic impulses can be characterized in this one as a fertile ground for the double binds so common in the painter’s emotional depth” (Medina 1995: 183). Why and how can Kierkegaard be useful here? According to Joyce Medina, “Kierkegaard discussed the realization of the sensuous erotic in three signification contexts, each contributing in its way to the essence of the motif and to its realization. These contexts were the cultural-historical ground of the realization, its medium” (Medina 1995: 136). Of particular importance here are various structure and “stages” of the existential experience itself:

“The issue of the cultural ground for the realization of the sensuous erotic contains an art-historical and personal dimension insofar as the artist contributed through his creative life to the clarification and recreation of art-historical (poetic) themes that molded and modified his personal religious, ethical, and ethic beliefs and habits. The sensuous erotic was for Kierkegaard a form of experience that involved a contribution of body and spirit and the elimination and exclusion of the former by the latter. [...] Kierkegaard’s considerations apply to the reemergence of the aesthetic-erotic personality in the romantic period; in order to make them relevant to Cézanne, they must be adapted to the specific dimensions of the recovery of spirituality by modernism. For the modernist artist, Christianity had already begun to pass over into the territory of myths occupied by previous cultural forms” (Medina 1995: 136–137).

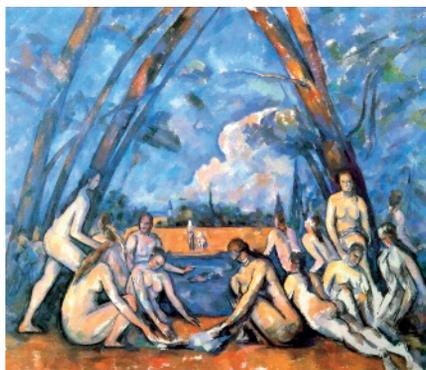


Fig. 21. Paul Cézanne. *The Bathers* (1898–1905)

Searching of essential inner structure may also be seen in some works of Matisse. He painted many works with various treatments of nudity – among others there are mentioned such of his works as *Nude (Carmelita)* (1904, see DHGate.com 2014–2015), *The coiffure* (1907), *Le Luxe I* (1907), *Le Luxe* (1907–1908), *Three Bathers* (1907). Some of his acts are alike with Pablo Picasso’s *The Young Ladies of Avignon* (1907) which is famous as the beginner of cubism, which, beside surrealism (in painting,

literature, cinema) also could be an interesting field of academic analysis from the point of view of nudity. In later works Matisse returns to more traditional style of painting – see his *Odalisque with Arms Raised* (1923). His late work *Large Reclining Nude* (1935) shows a tendency toward simplification. Interesting example may also be his sculptures – monolithic series of Backs (1908–1909, 1913, 1916, 1931), now female nudes are changing from realistic towards abstract forms (Spurling 2007).

The step toward non-representative painting also could be seen in one of the most famous works of Matisse – *Dance I* (1909) and *Dance II* (1910, see WikiArt.org 2015) – chthonic, as if being in the trance nude bodies are moving freely. No limits imposed by ethic nor aesthetic restrict their naked bodies. Monumental bodies circling on the green hill seem to be hung somewhere between earth and sky and the whole picture emanates cosmic eroticism. His erotic sketches and paintings show joy of life and sincere fascination with beauty of woman's body (see Wolf 2007).

## Conclusions

Visual art could be seen as an medium (Mickūnas 2015b) therefore in present research naked body in impressionists and postimpressionists painting also was an medium ant mediated new relation with rationalism, realism and moral values. The nude body has deep roots in the tradition of Western art, and since ancient times has been used to express ideals of male and female beauty and other human qualities. French modernists had continued to explore topic of nudity, but treated it in different way than former painters. Most of early French modern painters reject ideology of realism, certainty of Enlightenment thinking, basic aesthetic principles of earlier art, particularly art of academism and bravely searching new forms of aesthetic expression. They were provoking public and art critics by presenting naked body as it is, without any mythological, religious or historical context. Therefore, their works were perceived as indecent, vulgar and sometimes were even condemned and prohibited. Nevertheless by breaking aesthetic canons modernist painters expanded the boundaries of art and prepared the background for contemporary culture where the limits melt between art and daily life. New aesthetic canons, which French impressionists and postimpressionists entered into artistic field, show boldly creative transformations of modern culture in general and treatment of image in particular.

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## KŪRYBINĖS TRANSFORMACIJOS ANKSTYVOJO PRANCŪZŲ MODERNIZMO DAILĖJE: NUOGO KŪNO TRAKTAVIMAS

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Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjami pokyčiai, vykę ankstyvojo prancūzų modernizmo dailėje, kuri nusigrėžė nuo tradicinės estetikos kanonų ir ikimodernistinėje kultūroje vyravusių moralės normų. Autorė parodo, kaip tuometiniai dailininkai atsiskė tradicinio, akademinėje dailėje nusistovėjusio erotikos traktavimo – iš jų drobių išnyko sublimuoti, literatūriniai ar mitologiniai kontekstu pridengti, religines ir etines žinutes transliuojantys nuogi kūnai. Modernizmo menininkai nuogus kūnus ėmė tapyti atvirai, nuoširdžiai, drąsiai praplėsdami tuometinės moralės normas ir leistinumą. Būtent tokie buvo Auguste'o Manet ir Amedeo Modigliani atvaizdai, kurie simbolizuoja XX amžiaus seksualinę revoliuciją ir išsivadavimą iš tradicinės moralės apribojimų. Ankstyvojoje modernizmo estetikoje įvykusios transformacijos atsispindi ir Pierre'o-Auguste'o Renoire'o paveiksluose, kuriuose atsipalaidavusios, sveikata ir gyvenimo džiaugsmu trykštančios nuogalės įkūnija subtilų erotizmą ir nesumeluotą pasitenkinimą. Nuogos ar pusnuogės moterys iš Paryžiaus kabaretų ir viešnių Henri de Toulouse'o-Lautreco ir Edgardo Degas paveiksluose atvaizduotos taip, tarytum jos nežinotų, kad yra stebimos. Prancūzų postimpresionistų Henri Matisse'o ir Paulio Gauguino aktai, atvaizduoti egzotinėje, orientalistinėje aplinkoje, kupini nuorodų į romantikų filosofiją. Paulio Cézanne'o aktai, ypač iš *Didžiųjų maudynių* serijos, atskleidžia esminį menininko tikslą – prasiskverbti prie pačių daiktų ir atskleisti esmines jų struktūras. Ankstyvojoje prancūzų modernistų kūryboje regimi pokyčiai nuogo kūno reprezentavimą padeda suprasti bendrajame kūrybinių transformacijų, su kuriomis XIX–XX amžių sandūroje susidūrė vizualieji menai, kontekste.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: impresionizmas, modernizmas, postimpresionizmas, aktas, vizualieji menai.