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Can it be proved that art encourages altruism? A case study of Richard Mosse, 'The Enclave' and 'Incoming'.

'Suppose you saw a child drowning in a shallow pond: would you jump in and rescue her, even if you hadn't pushed her in? Even if it meant ruining your clothes?'

In this essay I will explore whether we can prove that art encourages altruism, looking critically at the assumption made by many people who study, practice and consume art that it is a beneficial activity not just to oneself but to society, despite a lack of data that demonstrates causality. *"The general value of arts and culture to society has long been assumed, while the specifics have just as long been debated. Try to imagine society without the humanising influence of the arts, and you will have to strip out most of what is pleasurable in life, as well as much that is educationally critical and socially essential"* (Arts Council, ,2014). I will use the case studies of 'The Enclave' and 'Incoming' by Irish photographer Richard Mosse, whose works in the Congo with anti-surveillance film and in Europe with thermal imaging equipment have made him one of the best known contemporary photographers. His works serve as a useful case study as they deliberately engage with issues that are current and challenging in an apparent attempt to try and effect change coupled with a deep understanding of his medium. His works have been written about frequently and he has given many interviews although the

question that seems not to have been asked is: what has been achieved or changed? The philosophical lens through which I will view this question is effective altruism, described as a philosophical and social movement that aims to apply evidence and reason to determine the most effective ways to benefit others (MacAskill, 2017) its basis can be found in the work of Australian philosopher Peter Singer.

I will necessarily define '*art*' although, the purpose of this essay is not to add to the writings we have on what constitutes '*art*' but to examine whether what is generally considered as '*art*' encourages people to think and act altruistically. I am content to use a broad and popular definition of what constitutes art, as it is the most relevant for this essay. For our definition of '*art*', I will turn to the great British public and a Yougov poll conducted in January 2017, that states that, out of the 1684 people surveyed over 50% of them considered the disciplines of Music, painting, photography, graffiti, sculpture, tattoo, poetry, literature, opera, comic books, graphic novels and movies as '*art*' (Yougov, 2017). This definition is helpful as it is quantifiable, contemporary and includes photography.

I will analyse interviews with Mosse, where he talks about his works and motivations, and relate observations from these and of contemporary events to works of sociology and art criticism to decide whether it is possible to assess if it can be proved that art encourages altruism. I will use examples of art and arts-driven events from the 1980's to 2000's that address altruism in different ways, or are at least socially engaged, and whose effects have differed. I will also reference examples of where it appears art, in this case Mosse's, hasn't encouraged people to act altruistically, as well as an example of an act in the name of an art-related ideology that claims to be altruistic but whose impact appears to be negligible if not adverse if analysed by effective altruism. I will also reference influential French sociologist Bourdieu whose critical views of sociology could be applied to art in its current state - 'Theory without empirical research is empty, empirical research without theory is blind' (Morrison et al, 2012). This could easily be applied to work such as Mosse's, the work of '*art*' being seen as the theory but lacking empirical re-search in the form of any kind of tracking of reaction to it.

Throughout this essay I will engage with questions relating to art and capitalism, humanitarianism, utilitarianism, nationalism, colonialism and latent racism as well as looking at how art is consumed, analysed and processed in modern society. In a world increasingly dominated by numbers and big data, is art keeping up and should more effort go into analysing

the impact of art in practical terms to keep it relevant. In a broader sense, the point of this essay could be considered to probe the question, what is the point of art? A question brought into sharp focus against the backdrop of continuing, tumultuous world events. Is making a pair of earrings, painting a canvas, designing a dress, or taking some photos a reasonable response to growing inequality, the refugee crisis and global warming?

The case study which I have chosen to use are works by Richard Mosse, 'The Enclave' & 'Incoming', one of which is distinctly produced to make us think in a certain way about the subjects covered. This is explicitly expressed by the artist in interview and articles, as he discusses the most recent of these works, Incoming. (Canvas,2017) This is in contrast to discussions about the first of these works, The Enclave, where he draws a line at trying to explain why he visits places like the Congo and describes his desire to challenge his medium, rather than effecting change in the situation of his subjects, as his primary motivation for his work there. 'Its hard to put your finger on why an artist makes art' (RTE,2014). I will analyse whether he has been successful in making his audience feel the way he had expressed with 'Incoming' and whether it is possible to tell if any altruistic actions have been undertaken by those who consume and in some cases, purchase the works that helps to prove that art does in fact encourage people to act altruistically. I will also contrast these works with works by other artists that demonstrate and practice altruism. I will also analyse whether the important events that took place in between the exhibitions of these two bodies of work have contributed to Mosse's creative decisions and how he discusses his work.

'Is it OK to make Art? If you express your creativity while other people go hungry, you're probably not making the world a better place'.(Southan, 2017) is the provocative title of an article by philosopher and playwright, Rhys Southan, which offers an artist's interpretation of effective altruism's view on the world. In this article Southan cites the 1972 essay by Australian moral philosopher Peter Singer titled 'Famine, Affluence, and Morality' which uses the following thought experiment, commonly known as the 'shallow pond analogy'. *'Suppose you saw a child drowning in a shallow pond: would you jump in and rescue her, even if you hadn't pushed her in? Even if it meant ruining your clothes? It would be highly controversial to say 'no' – and yet most of us manage to ignore those dying of poverty and preventable disease all over the world, though we could easily help them.'* (Singer, 1972). Southan then goes on to explain

that while a financially successful career in the arts could allow someone to contribute positively financially, most careers in art are not sufficiently successful financially to allow people to contribute in the same way, that an averagely successful career in finance may. In short, If you earn a lot of money, you can give away a lot of money.

The shallow pond analogy helps defines effective altruism's view on the world and is sophisticated in that it proves that most people consider themselves altruistic. How did you answer the question posed at the beginning of this essay? Anyone who has answered this question and then goes on to argue against Singer, can always be reminded that they are contradicting themselves if they answered "yes". This philosophical backdrop is particularly relevant to the case studies as Mosse has talked, in interview, about wanting to make the people who view his work feel uncomfortable and how the relationship with beauty and suffering puts people in an uncomfortable moral position((RTE,2014). & Canvas (2017) while the implications of effective altruism also put people in a difficult moral position. Both may be deliberate although the mechanisms used to induce these feelings differ, only the effective altruists have made it clear that their intention is to encourage altruism in others. It seems that the discomfort stems from the inescapable position the reader or viewer finds themselves in as arbitrator of life and death by virtue only of being born into a wealthy part of the world. It may also be uncomfortable for artists, many of whom its felt reject capitalism in favour of a more Marxist view,(Furness, 2016) as it implies that capitalism and the money it generates can significantly eclipse their own impact on poverty and suffering.

The use of the example of a career in finance is a key demonstrator of the philosophy of effective altruism. One of the ways in which they say people can be most useful and have the most impact is by donating money, effectively. An example given by Singer is that of supporting guide dogs in the U.S. The average cost to train a guide dog in the U.S. is \$40,000 and that same \$40,000 could, according to Singer save from between 400-2000 people who would otherwise go blind from Trachoma in the developing world.(Singer, 2013). In effect, if you choose to support the training of a guide dog, you are putting the quality of life of someone in the western world above the eyesight of a significantly larger number of people in the developing world. The point of using this example is to demonstrate the impact that an amount of money can have and to demonstrate the effective altruists' approach. William MacAskil, co-founder of the effective altruist's movement, notes that we live in a world to which our

altruistic senses are maladjusted and where money is so incredibly powerful. He offers neither a defence of nor attacks this reality.

The cold logic of the strict effective altruist's approach and the implication that choosing any other path than trying to earn and then donate the most amount of money possible is selfish, self-indulgent and ungenerous is uncomfortable and its unrealistic to think that anyone, but the most committed effective altruist would live their life this way given the capitalist society we live in. This fundamental way in which we are committed as consumers, seems to limit how much we think we can reasonably give and warps our sense of proportion and our priorities in pursuit of class and social status (Veblen 1899) but also provides the basis for the wealth creation that allows us to support ourselves and then to give comfortably to others. The idea that a career as a banker can be a far more ethical career choice than that of a musician who takes a low paying job to teach disabled children, challenges our perceptions. In the same way, Mosse looks to challenge our perceptions about the conflict in the DRC and of refugees, however, it does not provide a quantifiable impact unlike that of effective altruism.

The effective altruist society actively promotes the philosophy and how best people can embrace it in everyday life. They acknowledge that there is a difference between how we would like to act and how we actually do but that by having this ideal version of yourself helps us to set goals and aims. They encourage people to adopt a target for giving, an often cited example of this is 10% of one's annual income (Giving what we can, 2017). They are also keen to emphasise the differences between effective altruism and utilitarianism whose extremist eventualities they reject.

Southan's conclusion doesn't take into account the positive effect and sense of purpose that art gives those who practice it, with many artists citing reasons like maintaining their own mental health and adding joy to their own and others' lives, all of which are unquantifiable, but no doubt contribute positively to society. (Arts council review, 2014)

One of the most well-known examples of art encouraging altruism is Live Aid in 1985, a response to the famine that gripped Ethiopia from 1983-85 and is estimated to have claimed 400,000 – 600,000 lives. Music events in the UK, U.S., Western Europe and the Soviet Union raised an estimated £145million for victims in Ethiopia and Eritrea. (CNN, 1985) This series of events prove that art, in this case music, can encourage altruism, if it seems, people are

explicitly, deliberately and repeatedly told that people are suffering and that they can and should help, even if these people are far away. The causes of the famine, how and to whom the aid was distributed and the long-term effects have been disputed. However, what is indisputable is that art, in this case music, successfully encouraged people to act altruistically, in this case, by giving money.

An example of art that is in itself altruistic is 'Medical care for the Homeless' by Wockenkläuser, a Vienna-based collective of artists. 'Medical care for the Homeless' started in 1993 with €70,000 of commercial sponsorship that was used to buy a van and medical equipment, that was then used as a mobile clinic for homeless people who find accessing treatment under Austria's universal healthcare scheme difficult because of excessive bureaucracy. (Thompson,2012). This project itself is undoubtedly altruistic and its effects can be measured, although it is hard to measure whether it has encouraged other people to act altruistically. Also, whilst this example is altruistic, when measured up against the principles of effective altruism its impact is limited. The €70,000 used to the benefit of homeless people in Austria could arguably have been better used in the developing world.

An example of how art rejects capitalism and promotes actions that may seem at first altruistic, are the actions of Joe Corre who very publicly burnt approximately £5m worth of punk memorabilia on the Thames in 2016. Described by Corre as being a protest against punk becoming a tool for marketing and warning of climate change (Guardian,2016). In the context of effective altruism Corre's actions are bewildering. According to Givewell, that £5m could have saved the lives of 2000 people (Givewell,2017). Corre's own comments reveal a deep disdain for the idea that money is more important than the ideas that punk represented *"Some people are moaning, saying auction it. Fuck off! It's not about that. They're thinking about the money and nothing else. The artefacts represent the ideas – they're in the past and it's the ideas that are important, not the memorabilia."* It may be argued that he is thinking altruistically, in the sense that had he not burned the memorabilia he could have kept the money for himself and his devotion to punk is in some way admirable; however this is speculative at best. Further comments seem to indicate that the importance of the destination of the art, post-sale, eclipses the importance of the lives of the people that could have been saved had the items been auctioned and the money donated *'That's not to say the criticisms levelled against him weren't valid – why not sell the goods and donate the money to charity? (So they can end up*

on a banker's wall?) He responded. No thanks' (Dazed,2016) This is a direct example of how art and the ideology of art in the 20th century has failed to make people think altruistically as well as an example of how people within art reject capitalism, to the detriment of others.

It is against the philosophical backdrop of effective altruism that we will analyse our case studies, *Incoming* and *The Enclave* by Richard Mosse. Those who have seen *The Enclave* and *Incoming* may have enjoyed and have been challenged by the experience and assume that shining a light on a forgotten conflict or that intimately portraying the plight of people fleeing poverty and violence as refugees, is a good and worthwhile thing. But what percentage of people have digested these works and have done anything about it? And can we prove this? If we accept that it cannot be proved, then does this reduce the validity of the work as a critical look at conflict imagery?

Although Mosse's intentions have been mentioned previously and his choice of subject matter would hint at an attempt to encourage altruism towards his subjects, whose suffering is portrayed, we are not asking whether Mosse's work is altruistic itself, but if it is possible to tell if it has encouraged altruism in other people. As recently as November 2017 a work from *The Enclave* that was donated by Mosse raised CHF 75,000 for an NGO working in the Congo and he has donated many other works.(Mosse,2017) Although not mentioned by Mosse himself, I think there is an element of altruism in his motivation for the works and he has acted ethically and altruistically both in the production and in dealing with the reaction to his work.

The two works by Mosse, *The Enclave* and *Incoming* are photographic and film exhibitions that use past or current filming techniques that have been used for military purposes. *The Enclave*, an exhibition consisting of still images and film, uses a now discontinued film from Kodak, known as Aerochrome (infrared) that was developed in the 1940's alongside the U.S. military and was used during aerial reconnaissance as an anti-camouflage tool. The film interacts with the chlorophyll in healthy plants and turns them into shades of pink and red, leaving anything that doesn't contain chlorophyll dark, thus revealing the location of people, buildings and artillery. Mosse then uses this film to 'shine a light' on the ongoing war in the Democratic Republic of Congo that he describes as 'a forgotten conflict' in order to change the way we look at conflict in that region. Mosse has spoken of his desire to challenge the medium of documentary photography because of its inability to support him financially and it was a metaphorical link between the film he was using and the way the conflict was viewed. (RTE

2014). It is interesting to note that Bourdieu was also interested in how conflict was portrayed, being frustrated at how the French colonial wars of the mid 20th century, into which he was conscripted at age 25, were understood by the left in France.(Jenkins,1992) The fact that Bourdieu felt a similar frustration in the 1950's to that which Mosse does in the 2010's suggests that despite the considerable amount of art, some relating to conflict and conflict imagery, that has been produced in that time, not much has changed. Someone certain that art is beneficial to society may suppose that it is because not enough art has been made. Whereas an effective altruist may assert that, analysis of art and its impact, followed by reasoned decisions made from that analysis to produce more impactful art could have had an effect.

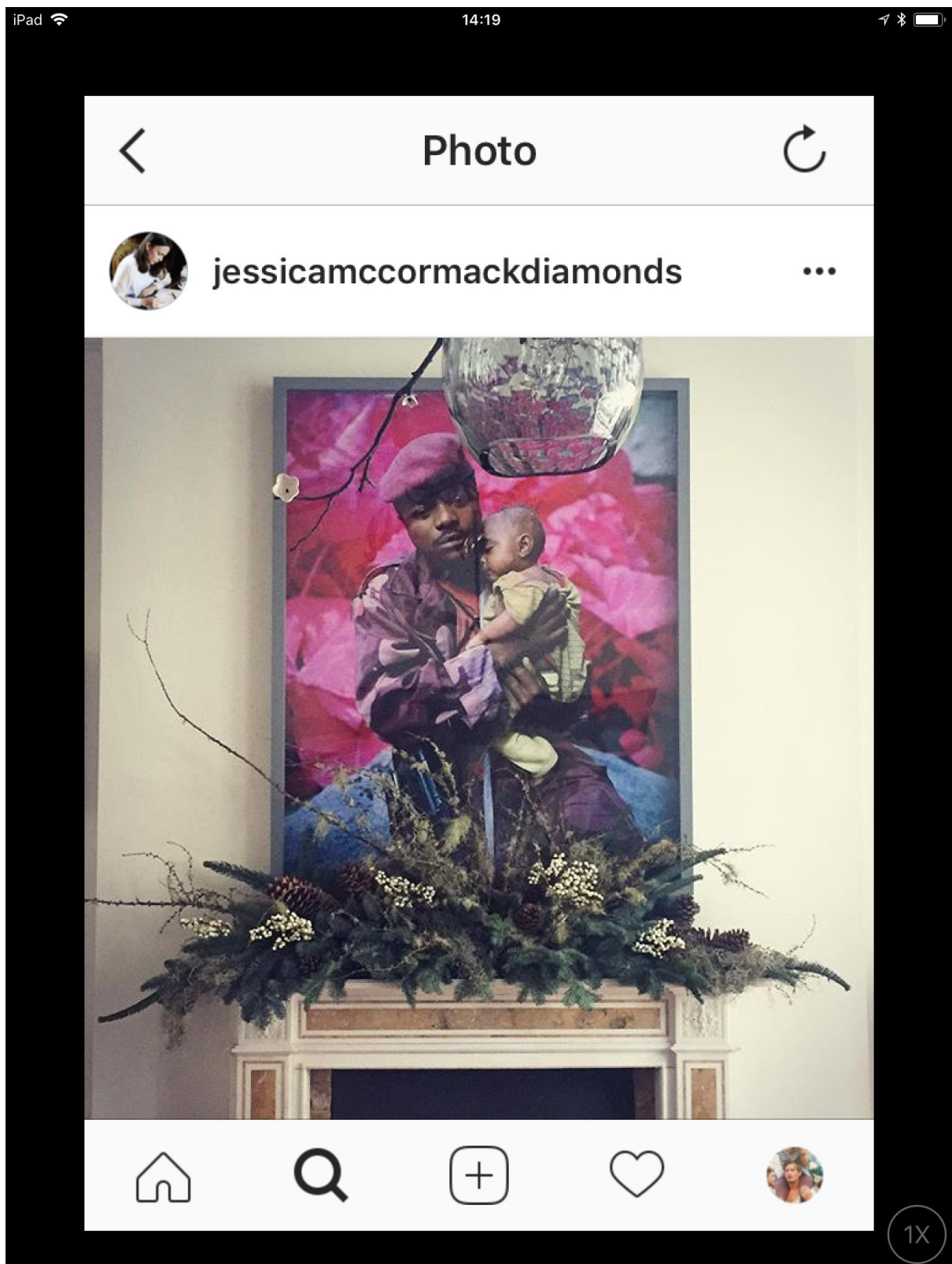
The war in the DRC has been described as Africa's world war, involving countries from all over the continent, and with a death toll estimated to be somewhere between 2.4 and 5 million (Coghlan et al,2008). The roots of the conflict lie in opposition to post-colonial dictators, spill over from the 1994 genocide in neighbouring Rwanda and other regional conflicts. Congo and Africa's world war: (Crash course world history 221, 2015), citing Reybrouck 2014 is a contemporary resource that suggests that Mosse's view, that the Congo war is often ignored in the west, is widely shared.

The camera and film used for Incoming is state of the art surveillance equipment developed and sold by a multinational arms manufacturer in the U.K. It uses heat signatures and can discern the human figure from up to 30.3km away and has been developed with surveillance and long range border protection in mind. Similarly to Aerochrome, Mosse uses the aesthetic potential of this medium alongside the metaphorical links between the medium and its subject. He uses a film developed to de-humanize refugees by reducing them to heat and energy signatures to tell their story in an attempt to re-sensitize people who view images of refugees almost daily. Mosse asserts the view that the flaw in war photography, is "it's always been very de-aestheticized, very black and white, grainy and gritty." People have become de-sensitized to the daily news of death(Canvas 2017). This view can be challenged using the example of Alan Kurdi, an image that provoked an altruistic reaction and was not aestheticized in any way. Mosse's works have undoubtedly been successful from the point of view of critical acclaim and awards, with the Enclave winning the Deutsche Borse prize in 2014 and Incoming winning the Prix Picet prize in 2017, (Mosse 2017)

To begin to analyse whether we can tell if Mosse's work has encouraged altruism, without the benefit of statistics, we can look at the audiences to which Mosse's works are pitched at and seen by. Firstly, with *Incoming*, shown at the Curve gallery at the Barbican in London, there is a sense that he is mostly preaching to the converted. There are no solid demographic statistics, or statistics for the political views of those who attended 'Incoming', however there is nothing to suggest that this audience differs from that described in the 2015 Warwick Commission report into the Future of Cultural Value, which described arts audiences as being 'an unnecessarily narrow social, economic, ethnic and educated demographic that is not fully representative of the UK's population' (Neelands et al, 2015). The description of this demographic correlates negatively with statistics and opinion polls taken of those who oppose immigration, the U.K accepting more refugees and who voted to leave the EU in the 2015 referendum or 'Brexit' (Becker et al, 2017). An analysis of the Curve Gallery's own records of the press coverage of the report does show that the exhibition got press coverage outside of London, being shown on local news bulletins across the country; however, there is no data on how many people from outside of London visited the exhibition. This is important when analysing the potential impact of the work. Whilst it is likely that there were some amongst the audience whose mind was changed it's unlikely that an exhibition about refugees would have attracted a significant proportion of people who thought negatively about refugees. In research for this essay, I have been unable to find any review which states as such. This assertion is also backed up by modern commentary about the polarisation of views and unwillingness to engage with contrarian views post Brexit. (Becker et al, 2017). For the purpose of this essay, an extended screening of *Incoming* in areas such as Dover or Sunderland would provide interesting scope for analysis. The most easily imaginable scenario is that people who are already sympathetic to refugees become motivated to take action having seen *Incoming*. There are many statistics to suggest that engagement in activism and charitable activity by people in London has increased although it is hard to isolate art as being the catalyst for that. (CAF, 2017) Although this demographic correlates positively to that described by the Warwick Commission report, suggesting that those who consume art do think and act more altruistically, it is impossible to prove causation without more data.

There are examples that seem to suggest that Mosse's work hasn't encouraged altruism and has been consumed and then re-circulated, via social media, by businesses who may be

contributing to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. An example of this is London based fine Jeweller Jessica McCormack who posted an image from The Enclave, on her Instagram account in December 2015. As a fine jeweller, McCormack uses gold and diamonds as well as precious coloured gemstones in her jewellery. While diamonds have tended to grab headlines as 'blood diamonds', four times as much gold is used in jewellery production. Gold can be mined from areas that are as mired in conflict as diamonds are, such as the eastern Democratic republic of Congo. In a 2015 report by anti-genocide group, Enough, they *state 'Insurgents and elements of government forces in the DRC control some 65% of the country's gold mines, which are the foundation for an international smuggling network worth an estimated \$400 million a year'*. Enough. (Dranginis 2014) The fragmented and opaque nature of the international gold market (Enough, 2012) makes it impossible to say whether there is gold from the Congo in her jewellery or not. However, it is highly likely and an assurance that it isn't cannot be given. Fairtrade and Fairmined gold are both assurance labels that guarantee the source and the journey of gold from mine to market, however McCormack does not source gold from either of these bodies, the only bodies of their kind. McCormack's business is not registered as a licensee for either assurance label, a pre-requisite for using this gold (Fairmined & Fairgold 2017). I think it can be reasonably assumed that anyone who has digested and grasped the full implications of this image would want to make sure they are not contributing to this conflict if it had made them think altruistically.



Jessica McCormack (2015) Instagram

An example of an image that has encouraged altruism, in the form of public protest and pressure being exerted on a government to change policy, is that of 3-year-old Syrian refugee Alan Kurdi lying face down on a beach having drowned in an attempt to reach Europe. Within a day of the image being widely circulated on social media and in national newspapers, the UK government committed to increasing the number of Syrian refugees it accepted. (although the government has since gone back on this promise, with little public outcry) This is a very relevant example to compare to Mosse's work for a number of reasons and probes the question of whether the pursuit of beauty, often considered fundamental to art, lessens the impact of a shocking image. Firstly, in discussion about his work in the Congo, Mosse talks about when he and his crew came across the site of a massacre, where one of the victims, a 3 year old boy had been speared through the nose. (RTE 2014). However, it was decided not to include footage or still shots of this in their work. Mosse explains that the images were 'too graphic' and that he sees beauty as being the 'sharpest tool in the box' when trying to seduce the viewer, who is then put into a compromising position when faced with the realisation that the beauty of what they are viewing, contrasts with the conflict and true brutality and violence of the situation. The power of this, to Mosse, is that the viewer constructs their own opinions and takes their own ethical position on how conflict imagery is constructed. It could be argued that the decision not to include graphic imagery has allowed people to be seduced *only* by the beauty in the images and remove it completely from the horrors of the war taking place there. The previously cited example of Jessica McCormack illustrates this. While it can be argued that there are challenging scenes in the film, such is the success of the series and the wide recognition of the still images in particular, there is no guarantee someone who enjoys the images has seen the film. It is possible to consume one without knowing of the other. This may be down to the modern phenomenon of sharing images instantly via social media. It takes a second or two to digest a still image where as a film takes longer. This is the flip side of the argument, that capitalism gives art meaning. In this case the commodification of art has lessened its impact and enabled people to consume it without knowing its full implications.

The view that the images of the massacre, including children, were 'too graphic' are echoed by Vice President of Getty Images, Hugh Pinney, who, when talking about the Alan Kurdi image says " *it breaks a social taboo that has been in place in the press for decades: a picture of a dead child is one of the golden rules of what you never published.*" (Laurent, 2015) It appears

that Mosse is aware of this convention and doesn't want to challenge it, despite speaking of his desire to 'break apart and challenge his medium of documentary photography' (RTE, 2014). What isn't clear is why, if Mosse is using beauty and suffering as contrasts to challenge the viewer, a graphic image would not produce a more pronounced and obvious conflict to evoke deeper feelings. It is worth noting that the Enclave was filmed and shot in 2012, 3 years before the image of Alan Kurdi was widely circulated in 2015. Had a similar image with a similar impact appeared prior to the release of the Enclave a different decision may have been reached. Although similar images from previous conflicts, for instance Nick Ut's image of Kim Phuc from the Vietnam war, (Ut, 1972) have had similar impacts and this appears not to have influenced Mosse to include the massacre images.

The issue of timing can also be applied to looking at both The Enclave and Incoming as the dates of the exhibitions straddle two important political events, Brexit and Donald Trump's election as American president. Both results were considered a surprise to many and made clear the views and feelings of those who had in past been 'ignored'. Whilst not mentioned specifically in interviews, I think it is telling that when speaking about the Enclave (Pre Brexit) Mosse speaks about wanting to make the audience think, but stops short of telling them what he wants them to think. In contrast, when speaking about Incoming (post Brexit) where he again uses similar techniques to try and put the viewer in an uncomfortable position to get them to 'think', he also speaks of wanting them to feel 'complicit'. I think this may be because of two reasons. Firstly, he may be uncomfortable that although The Enclave achieved significant success it has had little impact in terms of public opinion or action and that people haven't fully grasped the extent of the suffering, and in some cases their own complicity in what he has depicted. With this in mind, he has chosen a more contemporary and relevant subject matter as well as suggesting a way for his work to make his audience feel. Secondly, the Brexit result may have made him aware that people don't necessarily come to the compassionate conclusions that he assumed they would. The Enclave first existed in what was assumed by the dominant ideology (Wolf, 1993) to be a sympathetic and outward looking world, whereas Incoming exists in what we know now to be a more overtly hostile and protectionist one. The description of the 'dominant ideology' by Wolf with reference to Karl Marx draws similarities to the 'liberal elite, a phrase used often in post Brexit analysis, making it relevant to this example.

There is also a sense that Mosse portrays a very staged and sanitized view of the conflict with some of the images being clearly constructed. Mosse himself talks about the Rebels he filmed and their relationship with the camera. Describing how they become defensive and gestural when the lens was focused on them, however his images suggest there was a much deeper level of construction.(RTE,2014) Art historian Yvette Gresle, wrote of what she saw as soldiers 'presented in the mannered mode of fashion photography' and goes on to describe other images as grotesque and as a 'naïve juxtaposition'. (Gresle, 2014) Citing her own concerns about post colonialism, western/Africa relations and rape and she rejects that there is any critical value to Mosse's geographical subject. The issue of rape as a weapon of war has been addressed by Mosse and the link between a crime that has no normally visible physical scars and often goes unreported and the use of a film that uses a spectrum of invisible light, to photograph a conflict which receives disproportionately less coverage than others seems a valid one, although, as discussed the vagueness and anesthetization leaves scope for people to miss the point. The idea that the posturing, construction and 'mannered mode' of the images contributes to a naivety is given credence by the example given previously of Jessica McCormack. Despite the fact that in the image she posted 'Madonna and child', the subject was wearing military camouflage, and can clearly be seen carrying a weapon and ammunition whilst holding a small child in rags, the pose and colour palette seem to negate any sinister tones.

In conclusion, while art can undoubtedly encourage people to act altruistically, as evidenced by Live Aid, it seems that it must be repeatedly and directly stated as an intention, if not an indissoluble part of the art. The decision to allow the viewer to make decisions and links for themselves leaves significant scope for ambiguity, allowing for people to come to conclusions and decisions that don't appreciate the full depth of what they are consuming, as evidenced by The Enclave and the subsequent re-circulation, via social media by Jessica McCormack. Effective altruism and art, seem in many ways, incompatible but in the case of Mosse, where he tries to address the effect that distance and incomprehensibility has on one's sense of altruism, there are connections and an attempt to clarify and illuminate the issues he takes on. It's this sense of the inconsequence of distance that effective altruists see as an essential part of becoming more effectively altruistic. Mosse's decision to attempt to portray the situation in the Congo, a very dangerous and volatile place, suggests altruism, but the lack of any tangible

way to assess the impact this has had would put off any effective altruist from endorsing it as genuinely impactful. The factors that made Mosse's work a success critically, namely the colour and choice and composition or construction of shots may have contributed to its limited impact in any wider sense.

The lack of any attempt and a reluctance to quantify art and its impact means that any assertion that it can be proved that, what is generally considered as art, encourages altruism is at best an optimistic supposition. Karl Marx said 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways. The point, however, is to change it.' (Marx 1845).

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