

GODLESS OCCIDENT

A film by Felix Tissi



SYNOPSIS

EUROPE is not a place, it's an idea.

EUROPE is a woman.

And she is Greek.

Her economic successes and historical lapses led her to her moral burnout.

Searching for her identity she travels through her own continent as a fictive person and turns to God in misery.

But the old man doesn't answer. The answers are in the questions themselves and God shows himself in experiences.

A cinematic essay –
godly in a blasphemous way.



INTENTION

Nowadays, Europe and our Western values are constantly being debated. Politicians and journalists are good at it. My trade is fiction, and I try to contribute to the discourse in an artistic - subjective approach. It is appropriate for art to participate, I think, as it can do so in an unconventional way. To live up to the complexity of a whole continent, is of course to a great extent presumptuous. One can only succeed in approximation, for which an essayistic form virtually intrudes itself.



FORM

Essays allow (and need) an unconventional handwriting. The film I had in mind, would take a lyrical form, and we searched for metaphorical, often abstracted images and sounds, that could be associated with the inner state of Europe nowadays.

< Godless Occident > doesn't come from a preconceived idea, which the film had to serve. It's more that the film develops on its own terms: in pictures, sounds, words and music. In the interplay of text and image, it encourages the audience to have their own associations.



EUROPE'S RELATION WITH GOD



The essence of a culture is most evident in its conception of God. It seems to me, that this is also significant for the European society. Through separation of religion and state, it is affected by constant ambivalence and a moral state of uncertainty.

On the other hand this separation takes a key part in the European success story: science could thrive unimpeded, as could technology, economy and culture.

The moral instance is not the divine anymore, but human rationality. This makes Europe self-determined – but also fairly godless. Being self-determined means to create own values.

Is Europe now good or bad? The opposite is always as true.

P R A Y E R S

Every prayer eludes from the material world. It is a confession of our own helplessness and the insight of a greater truth. Trapped in the here and now and drunk from the belief in rationality and its triumphs, prayer assigns the human being a place. – At least that.

In this mist of deprecation and end time scenarios by climate change, resource allocation conflicts and more, maybe we will have to learn to pray again. Incantation, heart-appeasement or gratitude for one's destiny always existed and they will continue existing. – It doesn't need to be saintly.





<< Peace? Sure, but only under my reign. >>

<< I've become fearful and scared of small rubber boats. Please... please, dear God, I'm begging you, take from me the fear of rubber boats. >>

<< I'm rich. I'm that rich, I can even afford my own conscience. >>

<< I appreciate Gods, who know when to shut up. >>

<< Could it be me who will be considered the true barbarian? >>

<< The rich are fine everywhere. The poor only at my place. I'm proud of it. >>

<< You've become a type-case-God. >>

<< Democracy is more than just the dictatorship of stupidity. I have my European values. I'm with the good ones. >>

<< Not art or science, but rubbish is the real cultural heritage. >>

<< Why does the sun set and forces us into foreign beds? You could at least apologize for the full moon. >>

<< Fly, Europe, fly! >>

<< I advance towards the south and apply for asylum in the world. >>

<< But soon I'll be able to handle peace. >>

<< Our Father in heaven, forgive me my trespasses... - No, don't forgive me. Let me at last pay them! >>

CAST/CREW

Felix Tissi
Pierre Reischer
Pedro Haldemann
Joana Aderi
Natalí Gutiérrez García

script, directing, editing
camera, color grading
sound, sound design
music
Europe

Res Balzli, Fahrer & Balzli Film Sàrl
coproduktion

production
SRF (Urs Augstburger)
SRG SSR (Sven Wälti)
ARTE - La Lucarne (Sabine Lange)

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

CH 2019

71 minutes, 16:9, Color, 5.1

original version: german

subtitles: french, english

dubbed version (Arte): french

FILM MADE 2017/18 in

Switzerland: *Berne, Biel, Burgdorf*

Germany: *Berlin, Hambach*

Italy: *Naples*

France: *Lourdes, Marseille*

Spain: *Canfranc, Valencia, Benidorm, Villajoyosa, Callosa d'en Sarrià*

Ukraine: *Kiev, Prypjat*

England: *London*

Greece: *Athens*

PRODUCTION

Fahrer & Balzli Film Sàrl
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DIRECTING

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