

A study on the relationship between nostalgia and the art of Paul Gauguin

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The purpose of this thesis is to concern the relationship between identity and nostalgia as feeling pleasure toward the object which remind us something past. In order to achieve the purpose, this research take Paul Gauguin, as a case study, who was an artist in 19th century France and had searched for the way to create his own artistic technique and expression and also to building up his character, himself.

Nostalgia has been interpreted as longing for past or one's hometown which had once existed. Then the relationship between identity and nostalgia has been only concerned with one's own past experiences. Moreover nostalgia has been considered as a factor of forging the idealized never-existed past under the imperialism. On the other hand, in this research, we go back to the original concept of nostalgia and explain the process of building up ourselves with nostalgia.

Some studies have considered Gauguin's identity and nostalgia as yearning for his own past. Gauguin had blood of both French and Peru, so it is said that Gauguin was inevitable to form his character. Then his stay in Tahiti, south Polynesia, has been regard as looking back his happy childhood in Peru.

However, the formation of his character was not fatally or naturally, but because of his self-analysis in those days by painting self-portrait. Also his self-analysis has begun before going to Tahiti and especially during the stay in Brittany, France in the middle of 1880's. Brittany has been caught attention as 'a region remained ancient secrets' by bourgeois in Paris. Gauguin took up the image of ancient Brittany as other painters did, but also projected his self-image upon that image in order to attain his character. With the achievement of new expression of his art, Gauguin was able to become Gauguin himself by nostalgia.