

of defense, namely humor or wit.² In the greatest threat, in humiliation, and in view of the perpetrator's relativization of the violence, the person affected by the violence still finds the strength to say: Yes, it was the "best" treatment, the "best possible kidnapping" and adds: "I'd recommend you further if you had a business card." This is an obvious distortion of reality, yet one that the person affected by violence can control. The addition "if you had a business card" is not unimportant here — it points to the hope that there will be a future after surviving violence, a future in which the name on such a business card will no longer wield authority and power. The ironic twist in this survival strategy is not only the ability to overstate the perpetrator's words in order to outdo him rhetorically — since one already has to listen to that this was a "luxury kidnapping" or that the treatment by the Gestapo was "good" — but to transcend that statement, to bring the experience of violence, mockery, and the relativization of that violent experience under control; the wit arises through exaggeration. Yet that is not all contained in the scene. Rather, the business card — which concludes both responses to the mockery of a violent experience — stands for a kind of signature of the perpetrator, his address. It is proof of his deed and the authorship of the deed, and its mention hints that even in the moment of humiliation the victim has the perspective that there may be another time, another context in which the perpetrator's business card can testify to the injustice for which he is responsible.

The present text — as well as the volume to which it belongs — aims to work on a context, on such another time and another future. In the written part of her diploma thesis *auf zeich nen* (2015), Vilma Pflaum, who deals artistically with the processing of paedosexual and sexual violence in the Mühl "commune", writes: "Similar to the deep-sea diver who collects and brings to the surface what he finds at the bottom, I now have the raised image and word at the end of my work. What was left below has disappeared, is absent. What has been raised displaces what was left behind. [...] The depth is no longer present, it will probably resurface in other places and times." (Pflaum 2015, 2; Translation by E.S.).

This text both tries to grant the "raised", both verbally and visually, another "time and place" and thus the possibility to continue to reappear,

2 The concept of "defense mechanism" was coined by Freud. Defense mechanisms are unconscious protective strategies that shield an individual from both external and internal pressures by potentially distorting an unrelenting reality (Ostrower, 2018).

and to ensure that what has been “left below” is not forgotten. At the other time-places where survivors of paedosexual violence can speak, it should be possible to expose the business card of an Otto Mühl, to place it in the context of violence and violent experiences that concrete people living among us today have undergone. And they are also readers of what contemporary art-historical, art-theoretical, and museological discourses on Mühl say, they have to witness the appraisal of Mühl’s works by gallerists, and they have to perceive all that against the background of their own traumatization. This text has taken on the task of helping to reframe the signature, the deeds, and even the art of Mühl in a different light. A text — a book alone — cannot achieve that. But perhaps a beginning can be made.

Time and again, speaking about experiences of violence, injustice, and suffering becomes so difficult that we often very quickly label them as “unspeakable.” But are they unspeakable? Is it an inherent part of violence that it renders the affected silent? The philosopher and journalist Carolin Emcke doubts this. Reporting on the abysses of human cruelty is not only possible but necessary, she argues in her collection of essays on testimony and justice “Weil es sagbar ist. Über Zeugenschaft und Gerechtigkeit” (Emcke 2013). Emcke raises the question of what it is that violence actually destroys: the capacity to communicate or its prerequisite, namely trust in others. Sometimes, through or about the “crack in the world” that the victims feel, something like a means of communication can be woven. Then, when traumatized individuals emerge from their paralysis or speechlessness in conversation about what they have experienced and search for a language, something is possible. Andy Simanowitz writes in his contribution to this volume that “[...] we are lost for the words we were never given to speak”³ And Georgia Doll asks in her text: “What did we have to utter as children and what was kept back from us? What words were excluded from the narrative? For which realities did we lack the concepts to put them into language and images? What do our bodies carry in them today, without words nor understanding?”⁴

The often invoked argument that the history(ies) of the victims should belong in a therapeutic setting, to be attended solely by experts

3 See page 39 of this volume.

4 See page 16 of this volume.

from the health sector, has no place in the sphere of art reception⁵; and the implicit shifting of these stories into a “private” realm that this entails is rejected by Carolin Emcke, who calls for an engagement with the stories of victims of violence — either by listening or by telling them — not only for the sake of those affected but for a society in which life will be worth living for everyone in the future.

Both trauma research and psychoanalysis point to the difficulty of disentangling what happened in such an extreme situation from memory as a consequence of trauma. Violence and destruction decouple us from our experiences. Trauma scrambles and enciphers our memory. One can only approach a trauma slowly, with care, with participation, with “analytical empathy,” when the victims begin to approach the root of the pain and can start to recall the suffering they have experienced. Trauma becomes speakable precisely because someone is able to contextualize what happened in a narrative and thereby render it tellable. This is not only an intellectual challenge but also a form of ethical — and in the context of narration, of working on language — aesthetic interaction with others.

HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALISATION

The common reception of Otto Mühl’s work does not only initially understand Mühl as a protagonist of Viennese Actionism — whose main representatives, such as Rudolf Schwarzkogler, Hermann Nitsch, Günter Brus, and Otto Mühl, were primarily perceived as a group before the 1980s — but also reads him as a kind of figure of overcoming and continuity. Overcoming what, and continuity from what — this will be explained and placed in a historical context in the following. Mühl is read as a fighter for radical liberation in a crusted, conservative post-war Austrian society. Due to this reception, Viennese Actionism — and with-it Otto Mühl — is very often seen as continuous with Viennese Modernism as well as Expressionism.⁶ Not least, perhaps, because Mühl himself frequently referred positively to, among others, Oskar Kokoschka, and other artists of Viennese Modernism, in turn, appear in Mühl’s

5 See the remark by Angela Stief in the curators’ discussion, in the present volume, p. 67

6 See the text by Andy Simanowitz in this volume.

works — such as in Otto Mühl's and Terese Schulmeister's film "Back to Fucking Cambridge" (1987), in which well-known artist personalities of the contemporary period of Mühl (including Christian Ludwig Attersee, Anni Brus, Günter Brus, Maria Lassnig, Viktor Matejka, Oswald Oberhuber, Nam June Paik, Dieter Roth, Harald Szeemann, etc.)⁷, played, for example, protagonists of Viennese Modernism around the turn of the century — like Sigmund Freud, Alfred Kubin, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Egon Schiele, Arnold Schönberg, and many more. In the common art-historical and art-theoretical consideration of Otto Mühl's work, reasons are repeatedly found to understand Mühl's works as a similarly radical break from previous aesthetic traditions — as the works of Viennese Modernism broke with the aesthetic tradition that the Modernism itself had sought to overcome. In this reception narrative, Viennese Actionism appears as a consistent continuation of Viennese Modernism, a sort of "second Viennese Modernism," a renewed aesthetic overcoming of tradition — perhaps even more radical than the first Viennese Modernism ever was (Badura-Triska 2016).

The "first Viennese Modernism" emerged in and in revolt against bourgeois society in Europe at the turn of the 20th century, in the very specific cultural space of Vienna around 1900. At that time, Vienna was a world metropolis, a melting pot of the multiethnic Habsburg empire and the capital of a European great power, situated at the threshold between East and West. A singular cultural cosmos associated with countless famous names: Adolf Loos, Arthur Schnitzler, Ludwig Wittgenstein, or Sigmund Freud. World-renowned for science, art, and culture, Vienna is at the same time a city of internal contradictions, in which, in condensed form, the fault lines of European political and cultural history can be read — fault lines that will soon tear society apart, split it, and lead it to its perhaps deepest abysses. At the beginning of the new century, bourgeois society stands in its greatest bloom while simultaneously on the brink of collapse. The internal contradictions of a social order corresponding to the 19th century — which provides no answers to the emerging mass society of the 20th century — are barely held together by a strained traditionalism and an overflowing bureaucratic apparatus.

7 See: <https://www.theoaltenberg.com/film-video.html> bzw. hier <https://www.tereseschulmeister.at/film/>, last access 06.06.2023.

That famously embodied figure of the last cohesive hold of an old order is Emperor Franz Josef, who had ruled for decades and tried to shield the multiethnic state from the emerging novelties of the time — socialism, emancipation. There was already a general understanding that the figure of the emperor and his order had no future. There were warning signals and indications of an impending downfall, yet hardly anyone could imagine that there might really be any other social order than the one that constituted the present. In fact, the first gigantic catastrophe of the 20th century — the First World War — was only a few years away. From that catastrophe, the European states and the world would, within decades, descend into the deepest abyss ever witnessed in human history. Vienna is also the Vienna of Adolf Hitler, who at the beginning of the century roamed the streets as an unsuccessful painter. It is also the city of Karl Lueger, the first mayor of a large city, an avowed anti-Semite who ruled Vienna around 1900. At the same time, Vienna is the city of Theodor Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement. It is this Vienna that produced the first Viennese Modernism in not only a progressive cultural and political space but precisely also amidst an increasingly virulent anti-Semitism and a reformed national idea based on a notion of ethnic purity — an idea that ultimately aided the dreadful rise of Nazi regime of injustice. This ambivalent cultural and political situation was that in which Viennese Modernism and Expressionism emerged — a facet that is always mentioned in the museological contextualisation of works of Viennese Modernism.

From the traumatic experiences of two world wars and fascism — which in Vienna were even more virulent than in the then two parts of Germany — the common narrative of the emergence of the “second Viennese Modernism,” that of Viennese Actionism, arose as an “anarchistic,” “emancipatory,” “radical” aesthetic resistance movement, precisely as a way to break free from a narrow, oppressive Catholicism in Austria that was more confining than elsewhere in the German-speaking world. This path was — according to the common reception narrative — taken via the body as the site of “liberation.” That, it is repeatedly contextualized, was “the new” in the sense of something hitherto unprecedented for the four Viennese Actionists Günter Brus, Otto Mühl, Hermann Nitsch, and Rudolf Schwarzkogler: the explicitly bodily nature of their actions. The Viennese Actionists have become part of art and social history, long since

institutionalised in museums. The narrative that Viennese Actionism was the most significant aesthetic revolution in Austria⁸ at the end of the past century stubbornly persists.

The way in which Actionism began is often presented in reception as a continuous continuation and connection to the first Viennese Modernism — as a “second Viennese Modernism.” This connection and the resulting continuity are usually justified by the fact that both movements broke radically with the preceding aesthetic tradition to introduce something new, with this “new” always causing societal upheaval. The continuity of the narrative of an initial break is also found where works of Viennese Modernism are shown in museum contexts, with the suggestion that destruction — and a complete ending — was initially necessary to set an aesthetic new beginning.

Fundamentally, however, the idea of continuity rests mainly on the historically untenable assumption that between the “first” and “second” Viennese Modernism — with the latter meaning Actionism — there was nothing or nothing more than a kind of external misfortune that, although having haunted culture, could be shaken off without leaving any significant traces. What is meant here is the Second World War and the Shoah. Andy Simanowitz criticises this assumed continuity of a time before and a time after National Socialism in his contribution in the present volume: “as if nothing had happened in between.”⁹ Only under the condition that one acts as though nothing had occurred in between can one speak of a continuity that connects Viennese Modernism with Actionism and thereby characterizes the latter as a continuation of the former. What connects both in a far more complex way, however, is that continuity, which is not explicitly named, which is omitted: That both Viennese Modernism and Actionism linger on the margins of the Shoah’s catastrophe — before the first and after that unspeakable in-between. They form the banks of that maelstrom which we will never be able to fully comprehend, which does not mean that we can simply leave it be or let it remain as is.

Our tendency to flee from our past, like wounded animals fleeing

8 See: „Viennese Actionism was one of the most radical artistic movements of the 20th century and has lost none of its explosive relevance to this day.“ (Translation E.S.) Online: <https://www.mumok.at/de/wiener-aktionismus>, last access 30.08.23.

9 See page 43 of this volume.

their hunters, is no guarantee that we can escape it. Even if we put an end to the old, break with the old to seek the new, that very act strengthens the old as the foundation for the new. The leap into the unknown only seems successful when we can trace our steps back to the starting point, when we do not deny it, and when we are able to acknowledge the true sea of ambivalence.

Who can say of themselves: “I am the finisher”? In this statement lies the undisputed thought that destruction — a complete ending — is possible (for the subject of the statement). Absolutely. That something can truly and completely end. And what comes after the end? Is there something? If a time is conceivable — after a true and complete ending — can this be a new beginning? Is complete ending even a prerequisite for an equally total new beginning, one that has no connection whatsoever to what came before? When we read Otto Mühl’s sentence from the “Blutorgel” — “I am the finisher” — and ask ourselves what the claim might mean in the field of aesthetics: Does the subject of the statement end an aesthetic tradition? Does it end a specific way of understanding art? Does the subject of the statement make a *tabula rasa* and thereby prepare a space in which art and aesthetic production can be completely re-understood and practised in a way that carries no traces whatsoever of the context against which it turns? Certainly a reading whose tendency — that the old must always be ended in order for something new to emerge — fits into an all-too-common reception that sees the idea of a radical break, for example after the collapse of Nazi injustice, as given, as well as a time of social and aesthetic progressive currents that show no continuity with what came before. Is that so?¹⁰

Our present is marked by failed grand attempts at liberation. The philosopher Christoph Menke formulates it in his book “*Theorie der Befreiung*” as follows: “All attempts at liberation, whether political, economic, legal, ethical, cultural or artistic, have become entangled in

10 The Wiener Gruppe—comprising Achleitner, Artmann, Bayer, Rühm, and Wiener, as well as more loosely affiliated authors such as Ernst Jandl and Friederike Mayröcker—undoubtedly revolutionized literature in Austria beginning in the 1950s. Politically and culturally, however, the postwar periods following both the Second and the First World Wars were times marked as much by rupture as by renewal, affecting both aesthetic and social traditions. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that the movements of this era were not shaped exclusively by progressive forces; rather, the political and aesthetic impulses of renewal emerging during this time must themselves be subjected to critical re-evaluation.

paradoxes and contradictions; they have produced new forms and strategies of domination.” (Menke 2022: 9; Translation E.S.). To understand this dilemma, Christoph Menke proposes a change in perspective. If we are to understand this failure of grand liberation(s) — according to Menke’s thesis — we must turn to the dialectic of liberation and domination. Criticism of these liberation movements, especially those of the past century, must not be merely a criticism of the (from today’s perspective perhaps) content-wise questionable goals of liberation. For Menke, what is crucial is the form that has so far been found for radical attempts at liberation. In short: radical liberation must overcome the paradigmatic form of our current thinking about liberation itself. Based on this basic idea, Menke develops a theory of liberation that requires a re-evaluation of the conventional concepts of freedom, whether they are based in nature or society, and the development of new forms in which we as communities, as individuals, or as a society can effect liberations. The fact that freedom and domination are inextricably intertwined implies that the process of liberation is not a preliminary stage on the way to a final freedom but already its manifestation. *Freedom is a process of liberation*. However, this process only becomes liberation when it continually works on its forms: liberation processes must constantly ask anew whether and to what extent the pleasure in radical ruptures with social conventions, norms, etc., is ever more than a fleeting moment of ecstatic self-transcendence. If the claim is to set a radical transformation in motion that goes beyond short bursts, liberation processes must show that the de-subjectivising moment of radical liberation can in some way be remembered, without once again hardening into sluggish forms or sedimenting into new norms. The solution Menke proposes for this problem is a way of thinking and practising liberation that is in constant remembrance of the experiences on which it is founded. Christoph Menke writes: “To think liberation in experience means not to carry it out in the present, but to remember it.” (Menke 2022: 488; Translation E.S.) — and to do so in the face of the aporetic intertwinement of liberation and domination — in order to insist continually on questioning those forms that liberation processes adopt. Remembering and questioning — which is especially necessary because the ecstatic moments of liberation movements can congeal into

an end in themselves and into new forms of domination.¹¹ — means, as part of that process of liberation (which is already the only possible manifestation of freedom, that is, freedom is not a final state that can be reached after the process of liberation), also confronting the evident and the less legible, less visible traces of continuities in history, the change and transformation of epochs — the historical, the social, the aesthetic, etc. epochs. Remembering and questioning does not mean ending and

11 At this point, we may recall a narrative that has accompanied the history of the Mühl “commune” from the very beginning—namely, the notion that it began as an emancipatory social experiment and subsequently shifted into a totalitarian regime. This narrative was critically examined in the context of the FWF PEEK project [AR 568], which explored it through the analysis of eyewitness interviews and a close engagement with archival material from the Friedrichshof Collection. A central question that repeatedly arose in the course of this research concerned the origins of the authoritarian structures that ultimately shaped the commune’s descent into totalitarianism.

Various answers emerged in response to this question. These answers took seriously the fact that, with the founding of the “commune” in Vienna’s Praterstraße, a hierarchical asymmetry was already in place between Otto Muehl and the individuals who gathered around him—most of whom were considerably younger. Muehl’s role as a teacher or master in the field of aesthetic practices, such as painting, and his standing among the Vienna Actionists further intensified this structural imbalance.

Moreover, it is significant that Muehl did not establish the “commune” alongside artists who shared comparable biographical trajectories, levels of public attention, or cultural recognition—individuals with whom he might have been compelled to engage in negotiations regarding aesthetic questions or the form and practice of communal life. On the contrary, the founding of the commune coincided with a period in which Muehl himself was searching for a new perspective.

In *Weg aus dem Sumpf*, Muehl reflects on his state of mind at the time of founding the Praterstraße flat-share: “When I sat alone in a 120-square-meter apartment in 1970, my KF-life was over. I was 45 years old. My desire for art had completely vanished. It seemed pointless to me—sitting alone in that apartment, crafting art, planning actions. I wasn’t the kind of artist who could retreat from life, from communicating with others, in order to compensate for unfulfilled needs through art. I saw the worthlessness of art. I didn’t want to be that kind of artist. I didn’t want that narrow-gauge artist’s life. I had always made art to prove to others that there was more in me than a pitiful, unfree, socially constrained little family man.” (Mühl 1977: 179; translation E.S.)

A similar sentiment appears in the first volume of the AA Model: “[...] At the time, I only knew that, after my six-year marriage had ended and I was sitting alone in the apartment, I had to do something about my depression and my solitude. [...]” (Mühl 1976; translation E.S.) The analysis of these testimonies, accounts, and phenomena prompts us to reconsider the tipping point into totalitarianism not as a development that occurred later in the commune’s history, but rather as something structurally embedded from the very beginning. Foundational hierarchies—social, generational, and aesthetic—were already inscribed into the commune’s formation.

See also the reflections from the FWF PEEK project on the critical reassessment of the history of the Mühl “commune” [AR 568], available online: https://fh-timelines.gold-blo.cc/#:~:text=KOMMUNEN%20IN%20WIEN_PRATERSTRASSE32.PDF (last access 31.07.2023).

destroying. It means shifting, transforming, re-writing so as not to forget what has been “left below” (Pflaum 2013: 2; Translation E.S.). Or, to borrow the French philosopher Jacques Derrida’s words: “[...] and this other memory speaks.” (Derrida 1988, 23; Translation E.S.).

FORMS OF LIBERATION

The Viennese Actionists are in reception attributed a kind of deconstruction on the body. Because the body is the site where the subject is formed by authoritarian institutions of domination such as the state, the church, the army, and the family, it is precisely on the body — according to the conviction of the Actionists — that liberation can be practiced.¹² Based on Christoph Menke’s diagnosis that the grand liberation movements — even those of the late 20th century — are failures, and because they have failed due to their own forgetfulness and radical neglect of remembering — and, we could add following Freud, due to a lack of critical self-questioning of those forms¹³, — the following will examine three concrete formal incarnations of such failed “liberation.” The first follows the identification of the artist figure with that of the criminal and, eventually, the elevation of the criminal to a “Christ figure” and the figure of the anarchist. This identification is found both in Viennese Modernism and in Actionism in the work of Otto Mühl. In the second interrogation of a form of liberation, those forms assumed by the sexual revolution will also be questioned. Finally, the third interrogation is devoted to the production history of the “Aschebilder”/“ash images,” which were created in the 1980s in the Mühl “commune” in Burgenland from confiscated and then burned diaries, records, and contemporary testimonies of the commune members.

12 In the concretely lived life: in the suicidal, deadly defenestration of Rudolf Schwarzkogler; in the criminally sexualized violence within Mühl’s “commune”; and in the myth-saturated and blood-drenched „Orgien Mysterien Theatre“ of Hermann Nitsch. Günter Brus, by contrast, was the only one to refrain from destructive gestures directed at others.

13 See: Laplanche/Pontalis 1973 and: Freud 1999a: u.a. 135f.

1. THE ARTIST AS CRIMINAL

In his prose piece “Der weiße Tiertöter” — published in 1916 — Oskar Kokoschka, the representative of the first Viennese Modernism (to whom Otto Mühl, in the film “Back to Fucking Cambridge” as well as elsewhere, assigned an important role as one of his predecessors), describes sexual violence against women as “grausame Liebe” (“cruel love”). Red blood and the knife are the motifs that run like a red thread throughout Kokoschka’s early pictorial and literary work; for example, his early poem “Die Träumenden Knaben” from 1908 begins with the lines: “red fish/ fish red/ // I kill you with the three-edged knife// tear you in two with my fingers/ // so that the silent circling may come to an end” (Translation E.S.) “rot fischlein/ fischlein rot/ // stech dich mit dem dreischneidigen messer tot// rei dich mit meinen fingern entzwei/ // da dem stummen kreisen ein ende sei.”¹⁴

In Kokoschka’s work the fish is usually connected with the awakening of sexual drives, which “the boy” in the quoted text tries to repress or kill with the knife. While in 1908 Kokoschka only mentions the sexual murder verbally, the murder of a woman is first depicted unambiguously in a drawing from 1910. The drawing appeared on 14 July 1910 alongside Kokoschka’s greatest drama “Mrder, Hoffnung der Frauen” in the weekly magazine “Der Sturm” in Berlin. The action takes place in ancient times.¹⁵ The content of the text is only graspable in broad outlines. A man, accompanied by sheep and warriors, encounters a woman and her companions. From the very beginning of the piece, the protagonist’s cruelty is mentioned. It is said that he could crush a mare with his thighs. This is followed by a phase of rapprochement between the man and the woman, which finally erupts into open violence. As a sign of his taking possession of the woman, the man brands her with a hot iron. The woman resists, injuring the man with a knife and having him locked up in a cage. However, she cannot stand the sight of the corpse–pale captive; she presses her body against the bars to unite with the man. Through the bodily contact, a kind of blood and energy transfusion takes place

14 Cited in: Meyer 2013: 144.

15 See: Der brennende Dornbusch und Mrder Hoffnung der Frauen. In: Der jngste Tag Band 41. Leipzig: Kurt Wolff Publishing. Online: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/46231>, last access 10.07.2023.

from the female to the male body. Strengthened by the woman's blood, the man breaks out of the cage's bars and kills the woman. Starting from the title and the content of this piece, the question arises why the man, as a murderer, should be the hope of the woman/ women. This paradox can only be explained by Otto Weininger's treatise "Geschlecht und Charakter" (1903)¹⁶, published in Vienna. In it, Weininger advocates the sexual abstinence of the man to overcome the eternal struggle between the sexes. According to Weininger, the man must free himself from the sexual, i.e. he must free himself from femininity. He must put an end to sexuality. Through the murder of the woman in Kokoschka's piece, such a killing of sexual drives is symbolized. The murderer frees the woman from her alleged unbridled drives, elevates her into a higher intellectual sphere, and thus becomes her only hope of salvation. However, it costs her her life.

Bernd W. Rieger situates the appearance of the drama and the more than talkative — by Kokoschka himself designed — poster for the piece as follows: "[...] Kokoschka [...] presents himself with a form of self-staging, with the shaved head of a criminal, of someone humiliated by society [...] for the performance of his drama *Murderer, Hope of Women* in the Garden Theatre on the grounds of the art show, the Viennese public is shocked." (Rieger 2018: 123/124; translation E.S.)

A bald, tattooed man places his foot on the body of the woman while his hand brutally forces her head to the ground. With his other hand, he brandishes the pointed knife. On the poster we see that the floor is already covered with numerous pools of blood, and the murderer has already stabbed several times. In the background, a half-starved dog leans greedily over a pool of blood. A comparison of the bald murderer with a self-portrait of Kokoschka and a photograph of the artist with a closely shaven head from the same period attests to the young artist's identification with the murderer understood as a societal rebel. In support of this is also the monogram "o.k." on the arm of the murderer depicted on the poster. Rieger states: "Kokoschka, who feels like a 'criminal'

16 It is no coincidence that, after reading „Geschlecht und Charakter“ (Sex and Character), Sigmund Freud noted in a footnote to his text „Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy“: “Weininger, that highly gifted and sexually disturbed young philosopher who ended his life by suicide after publishing his curious book *Sex and Character*, filled one much-discussed chapter with equal hostility and identical slanders against both the Jew and the woman.” (Freud 1999b: 271; translation E.S.)

because of the press releases and public criticism of his announcement poster *Pietà*, has his head shaved bald as a 'marked man'." (Rieger 2018: 123/124; translation E.S.) Thus, the murderer is now also connected with the Christ figure — through a promise of hope and salvation. Rieger describes Kokoschka's identification with the criminal and murderer as redeemer as follows: "In doing so, he is sending a signal, like Christ, who, like a criminal, is mocked and ridiculed by society with the two robbers and hung on the cross, that he is not a perpetrator but a victim and that the message inherent in the image is misunderstood by Viennese society." (Rieger 2018: 308; translation E.S.) On the basis of the peculiar figure of Christ — who, in the midst of criminals, was misrecognized as a redeemer and executed like a criminal — Kokoschka is able to carry out a reversal of perpetrator and victim.

Sexual crimes around 1900 began to find entry into art and literature. The most famous serial killer of that time was Jack the Ripper, who was repeatedly described in the press as a "Savage." This description goes back to theses by well-known criminologists of the time who wanted to see in the figure of the so-called "lust murderer" an atavistic relapse into pre-civilizational times, and therefore chose this designation — which today, in the context of de- and postcolonial as well as feminist criticism, we consider highly problematic. Nonetheless, Kokoschka even applies the superlative "Oberwildling" ("the most savage"; Translation E.S.): "In Vienna, he was reviled as the 'savage man' [...] the talented painter, after stylizing himself as a criminal [...]" (Rieger 2018: 151; translation E.S.)

What is the attractiveness of the sexual criminal? How is it possible that murderers become figures of identification for young progressive artists of the time? How is it that even during the "second Viennese Modernism" — of Actionism — the figure of the criminal is likewise idealized as "anarchist" and again as "Jesus Christus" as well as an aesthetic and socially transformative figure?

For example, if we follow Erich Mühsam's famous definition of what anarchism is, then "Anarchy, [...] without rule, without authority, without state, [...]" — thus the condition aimed for by anarchists is "[...] state of social order, namely the freedom of each individual through general freedom." (Mühsam 1932; translation E.S.) Anarchism is therefore fundamentally opposed to domination from the outset. The word anarchism derives from the ancient Greek ἀναρχία (an-archia) meaning

“without domination,” and denotes a political philosophy that rejects domination of people by people and any form of hierarchy as a form of the suppression of freedom. Anarchist thought also turns against instruments of domination with which people can dominate one another. This includes repressive state apparatuses. Anarchist theory opposes the assumption of an initial, fundamental *arché* underlying any order. However, anarchist criticism and anarchist resistance is not directed against vulnerable individuals or groups — for example, women, children, foreigners, Jews, etc. — who in patriarchal, white, strongly nation-state-oriented societies are still made into minority “others”¹⁷ insofar as they are always devalued in comparison to a hegemonic group and are subjected to multiple discriminations on the levels of race, class, and gender. Anarchist resistance does not imagine femicides, because women are not seen as embodying a threatening sexuality; anarchist resistance does not imagine paedosexual violence nor does it apply it.¹⁸

In Otto Mühl’s memoirs “Aus dem Gefängnis. 1991-1997” [“From Prison. 1991-1997”] we find passages that speak of identification with the criminal and glorify the criminal as an anarchist. For example, Mühl writes: “There was already sexuality in the activism, [...] anarchy, against the politicians, against the news, against television, against the poets, against everything! (laughs)” (Mühl 1997, 212; translation E.S.) In a conversation on 22 January 1997 in the Mittersteig detention centre, Mühl says: “I said, I’m an anarchist, like Jesus Christ.” (Mühl 1997: 227; translation E.S.) Here the parallel to Oskar Kokoschka’s identification with Jesus Christus becomes apparent, which Mühl repeats here for himself. In judging a former commune member, who had once been a “small criminal” and is now rich, Mühl develops a positive image of the criminal: “It would’ve been better if he had stayed a criminal — it’s more honest.” (Mühl 1997: 216; translation E.S.) Mühl describes art itself as an “attack”: “Art itself is an attack — it fights against the old worldview we were raised in. That has to be given up. That has to be attacked.” (Mühl 1997: 225; translation E.S.) And it is not meant to remain only as an attack; rather, this — just as in the early manifesto-like statement from the “Blutorgel” “I am the finisher”

17 On the concept of othering, see, among others, Said (2009) and Spivak (2010).

18 In cases where individual anarchists exhibit psychopathological traits or commit crimes, such instances would, in light of the deeply rooted radical critique of domination that defines anarchism, stand in fundamental contradiction to the core principles of anarchist thought.

(Mühl 1962) — presses for an end, for destruction: “All of that needs to be thrown out. [...] The world needs a total purge. These worldviews from the Middle Ages and Antiquity are still lurking around — it’s terrible.” (Mühl 1997: 226; translation E.S.) Mühl’s “theory” of liberation as “total purge,” as “anarchy against everything,” as “attack” calls for violence and annihilation. In the “Blutorgel” it already says: “You’ve gotta fuse things together with fire — bind them, mix them, mix them again, link them, rape them, violate them, beat them...” (Mühl 1962; translation E.S.) And further: “The soft M. happens on the surface: total abuse until it’s mush.” (Mühl 1962; translation E.S.) At this point it becomes apparent, among other things, why Christoph Menke places remembering — and addendum: working through, with Sigmund Freud — at the centre of those forms adopted by liberation movements. Remembering and working through does not seem to be Mühl’s thing; rather, he writes:

“even when i look back at my own personal development, i can't for the life of me explain why or how i turned into what i am, but i can damn well say i feel good when i feel like i'm swimming in the evolutionary drift.” (Mühl 1997: 239/240; translation E.S.) Note that this sentence appears at a time when Mühl is serving a seven-year prison sentence for “offenses against moral decency, sexual acts with minors up to and including rape, violations of narcotics laws, and witness tampering.”¹⁹ He feels good — this perpetrator feels good — if he does not have to confront his singular personal culpability but can dissolve into what he describes as “evolutionary drift.”

In his text “Das Intrem” he formulates: “Any smooth surface provokes me — I feel the urge to mess it up with intense, filthy life. I crawl all over it on all fours, hurling dirt in every direction. I keep going until the surface is completely used up.” (quoted after: Klocker 2019: 27; translation E.S.)

In this way, according to Mühl, “intrements” are created instead of art objects, which gives rise to the justified question of whether Otto Mühl understood himself solely as an artist and whether the works were indeed solely art objects — or whether they became and were made so (and he thereby became an artist) only because the discourse made them

19 See, amongst others: Arno Frank: Zum Tode Otto Muehls: Die Enthemmung der Kunst. 27. Mai 2013. Online: <https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/kritischer-nachruf-auf-den-aktionskuenstler-otto-muehl-a-902152.html>, last access 13.05.2023.

so. And in that frightening simultaneity, which only perversion can bring about, something can be entirely one thing — a work of art — and at the same time entirely something else. Perversion²⁰ knows no fractions or intermingling of various strands. It does not think in terms of the complex nor in dualistic opposition. It thinks in simultaneity: the possibility of allowing truth and falsehood, the pure one and the pure other to coexist side by side without excluding each other. This simultaneity makes it so overwhelmingly difficult to respond to. From this position one can lie and at the same time the subject of the statement is aware of the lie, even as it is firmly convinced that it is telling the truth. Both worlds coexist in a cold construction that must not be attacked, because it causes that which exists simultaneously to converge like the ribs of a self-supporting vault. In the realm of the psyche, it is the “I” that is being supported. If one were to shake one of the ribs, the “I” would shake. Therefore, this construction must use all its strength to sustain itself. There is no room for the other as other. Mühl writes: “I don’t make artworks — I make instruments. People are meant to choke on them.” (quoted after: Klocker 2019: 27)

Traces of such a simultaneity of artwork and intrement — in the diction of Mühl — can also be found in the following passage, which is to be read in a close reading. It is found in “Aus dem Gefängnis. 1991-1997”. Here Mühl fantasises about what he would have staged, brought onto the stage, had he been allowed into the Burgtheater.

The following quoted passages²¹ and the accompanying close reading deal with violence against women and paedosexual violence. They are printed in a smaller font size and are accompanied by this note so that all readers may freely decide whether or not to engage with these passages:

“Well, if they had let me into the Burgtheater, I would’ve shown everything that exists in this world.”

Everything that exists in the world. Here Mühl, as a theatre director, claims himself as the subject who can recognize, assemble, and stage everything that exists. Who can represent everything that exists?

“A father who rapes children. In the end, he even becomes a prison director. Or a judge. Outside, he’s all nice and proper. But he’s a Nazi, a murderer. He does it all

20 Cf. Laplace/Pontalis 1973, 377-381.

21 See Mühl 1997: 140/141.

— there's not a single mental illness or perversion in this world he skips."

Everything that exists in the world now emerges as a cosmos of paedosexuality. A publicly respectable father rapes his children. Moreover, he is a person who can dominate others: He has power over his family, but also over prisoners as a prison director; as a judge, he can sentence others. At this point, the term "perversion" is used by Mühl himself.

"The kids are great too, they fuck each other, total chaos in the family. And to the outside world, they look perfectly decent."

The victims of the paedosexual assaults committed by the father in Mühl's fantasised "play" — the children — are in the following sentence even made accomplices: the abused children also abuse one another.

"That would make a theatre play."

The subjunctive II "would" is interesting here. Usually the subjunctive II expresses a wish, advice, polite requests, or a supposition. Moreover, in this case the speaker brings in the possibility into doubt or sees obstacles to its realisation. With the subjunctive II one expresses a supposition and harbours doubts. To what do the doubts refer? Whether the play would ever "be" at all? Or whether it would become a play at all and not, rather, a deed with a perpetrator? Since Otto Mühl is already in prison for what he has "done" in this "play" involving paedosexual abuse, that doubt is entirely justified.

"No one would leave with dry eyes. Someone comes on stage and says: Elvira? Yeah, I just gave her the tit. Yeah, I wanna cum on her. Then he walks over to the baby stroller, she's rocking the child: 'lullaby, lullaby'. He jerks off: 'That was damn good again.'"

Someone asks and searches for Elvira. The answer is that Elvira has just been breastfed. The reaction is that the male person wants to ejaculate on "her".

From the grammar of the sentence, it can only be the infant named Elvira.

"She: You filthy fucking pig."

A nameless "you" reacts to the scene. A further indication that "Elvira" is the baby.

"He: Shut your fucking mouth or I'll shit right in your face. Then he hits her, ties her up, and actually shits in her face."

The woman must not speak. Violence is inflicted. Freedom is taken away. The woman has excrement defiled onto her face.

"She: But you know what? Somehow I enjoyed it. Somehow it... it just felt real... almost like sex. Only it wasn't a dick in my mouth — it was a turd."

The act of getting faeces in one's face or mouth is compared with a heterosexual sexual act. It was "almost like" that. But still, something else. Only almost.

"That would be a play! I'll never do it though — I don't wanna end up in prison."

Mühl adds this while he is in prison, for what he indeed “has done”: paedosexual abuse. Truth and falsehood stand side by side. Both are present. They do not contradict. They support the “I” that once was Otto Mühl.

If we dissolve it as “pure fiction,” it is merely a rib of the vault, for it is not pure fiction — in real life he was indeed convicted for these offences. If we read it merely as a description of his actions, we forget that he made art with it. Both stand inextricably side by side. Cold, unequivocal. Supporting the “I”.

2. ANTIFASCISM?

From today’s perspective we view National Socialism and the 1950s that followed the regime and the Second World War mostly with the knowledge that this historical period was followed by a time of great social and aesthetic liberation movements and revolutions, as was also the time of the so-called sexual revolution. This perspective is also responsible for the idea that National Socialism itself was a system marked by sexual repression — and was, together with the conservative 1950s, a reactionary answer to the sexually permissive era of the Weimar Republic in the 1920s. The common narrative goes that sexual conservatism continued in adapted form from the preceding fascist period into the 1950s. In contrast, the 68er movement is seen as a counter-reaction and liberation from the preceding era of fascism as well as the conservative 1950s.

Historian Dagmar Herzog proposes a different perspective on the epochs and their movements of the 20th century by asking whether the sexually conservative culture after the Second World War can indeed be understood as a direct continuation of supposedly repressive fascist sexual norms, ultimately showing that the prudish 1950s can be understood as a response to the National Socialist unleashing of pleasure and sexuality within the framework of racial ideology.²² Herzog’s thesis brings out that National Socialism was not defined solely by the suppression of desire. Although homosexuals and so-called “racially mixed” communities and partnerships were specifically persecuted, at the same time a sexuality was explicitly promoted that entirely served the Führer, the people, and

22 Indeed, during the National Socialist period, there were instances of simplified divorce laws and the promotion of premarital and extramarital heterosexual relationships, both for reproductive purposes and for personal pleasure. (Herzog 2005: 23).

the fatherland.²³ The “sexual liberation” of National Socialism was thus a privilege of the Aryan race, in contrast to the sexual liberation of the 1920s, which was seen as “morally corrupt.”

The now predominantly held notion that National Socialism was sexually repressive took shape increasingly in the 1960s and has its roots in the theses of the student movement. In view of this notion, the idea of thinking and practising liberation through sexuality is quite plausible. Furthermore, this movement was driven by the conviction that the Shoah was a perverse consequence of the assumed sexual repression under National Socialism, as Dagmar Herzog elaborates:

“The radical sexual politics of the student and extra-parliamentary left were, in large part, shaped by the assumption that the Third Reich was underpinned by a repressive sexual order, and that the Holocaust emerged as a pathological expression of this libidinal suppression.” (Herzog 2005: 191; translation E.S.)

This view was also significantly influenced by Wilhelm Reich, who maintained that sadism and the capacity for sexual orgasm exclude each other and that “cruel character traits appear in cases of chronic sexual frustration.” (cited in Herzog 2005: 195; translation E.S.).

The traditional notion of the supposedly repressed sexual subject in National Socialism and the continuation of this repression in the 1950s can be seen less as a historical analysis that developed from a post-war perspective than as a reflexively emerging interpretation that served a specific function. It was precisely those moral conceptions of the 1950s — which developed precisely in differentiation from National Socialism — that gave all those who had lived through and survived the Nazi era without being persecuted by the unjust regime (i.e. the perpetrators and accomplices) the opportunity to deal with, or to circumvent, feelings of guilt and shame and to distance themselves from the atrocities. The Protestant churches of Germany and the Catholic churches of Germany and Austria played a decisive institutional role in this and significantly promoted the newly installed conservative sexual morality of the 1950s.

23 See: Herzog 2005: 11, 37; translation E.S. Organizations such as the League of German Girls (BDM) and the Hitler Youth also encouraged young people to engage in sexual activity. As the literary scholar Victor Klemperer noted in his renowned diaries, by the late 1930s, hospitals were filled with 15-year-old BDM girls who were either pregnant or infected with gonorrhea.

This approach enabled the perpetrators/accomplices to come to terms with any emerging feelings of guilt and to present themselves as victims rather than supporters of the Nazi regime. The suddenly growing significance of the churches in the post-war period served a relieving function: People were allowed — and indeed expected — to perceive themselves as fundamentally culpable subjects and, thanks to the church's offerings, to atone; yet they did not have to confront the concrete crimes or their specific involvement.

Dagmar Herzog concludes from a psychoanalytic-historical perspective that both the sexual conservatism of the 1950s and the sexual liberation of the 68er movement served as strategies to deal with the complex historical legacy of the Nazi era in a way that did not require confronting one's own entanglement and co-responsibility but rather allowed for distancing. People who enjoyed sex during the Nazi era would sooner or later have to live with the unbearable thought — or would have to — that they experienced orgasms while the systematic mass murder in the concentration camps and at the sites of mass shootings was taking place. This guilt could be regulated by suppressing sexuality. Herzog writes:

“A central effect of the so-called ‘normalization project’ of the 1950s was the erasure of National Socialism’s sex-positive dimensions from collective memory. Acknowledging — even privately or within the family — that one may have derived pleasure from life under the Third Reich was irreconcilable with the dominant postwar mnemonic strategy employed by many Germans to negotiate guilt, whether internally internalized or externally ascribed: the self-positioning as victims of National Socialism rather than as its accomplices or beneficiaries. This displacement of complicity through narratives of victimhood functioned as a crucial mechanism in the post-fascist management of subjectivity and historical responsibility.” (Herzog 2005: 130; translation E.S.)

This view is also shared by the sociologist and psychoanalyst Reimut Reiche, who himself actively participated in the student revolution and eventually began to question the forms it adopted. Reiche asks whether sexualisation was a way of coming to terms with the unprocessed Nazi past and also notes that there can be an overdetermined sexualisation of “unbearable affects of grief, anger, and guilt” that may also have influenced the 1968 movement. As an example of such an overdetermined form of

the sexual revolution, Reiche cites the famous photo of Kommune 1, on which we see eight naked people standing with their heads against the wall and their hands raised. Reimut Reiche writes:

“[...] I would argue that the sexual overcoming of the past — which, as we know, must not pass — could hardly be rendered more starkly. The photographic scene was deliberately intended to mimic and expose a police raid conducted by the Criminal Investigation Department (K I). And yet these men and women stand there as though caught in an aesthetically staged, unconscious identification with the victims of their parents’ generation — while simultaneously mocking those very victims through the pre-scripted reading imposed on the image as one of sexual liberation.

The commune even used this image as a frontispiece for its own self-representations — its propaganda, so to speak — of sexual emancipation, promiscuity debates, and calls for mass orgies, etc. It was meant from the outset to be received as a document of sexualization, but in fact, it is a mass execution. I would like to meet the German who does not think of Plötzensee when confronted with this image — not to mention other names.”²⁴

Reimut Reiche sees the 1968er generation’s engagement with their perpetrator-parents as unconsciously ambivalent: On the one hand there is identification with the parents’ victims, yet they remain unconsciously identified with the parents: “‘Sexuality makes (you) free’ fits this image as well as ‘Arbeit macht frei’ (translated: ‘Work makes you free’)” does at Auschwitz. (Reiche quoted in Herzog 2005: 220; translation E.S.)

3. "ES GIBT DA ASCHE. ES BRANNTEN DIE BÜCHER"

At the end of the 1980s, diaries were burned at the Friedrichshof in the Austrian Burgenland. The partly artistically designed and partly inscribed with questioning, critical thoughts and painful memories records of commune members (both children and adults) of the cult-like organized Mühl “commune” were confiscated and burned on the orders of Otto Mühl without the knowledge or consent of the commune members.

24 Cf.: <http://www.infopartisan.net/archive/1968/29709.html>, last access 30.08.2023. Plötzensee was a Nazi-era prison in which numerous executions — primarily of political prisoners — were carried out (Translation E.S.).

The aim was possibly to destroy incriminating evidence in connection with the impending criminal proceedings against Mühl. In front of all those at the Friedrichshof who wanted to witness it, from the ashes of the burned diaries Mühl's "ash images" emerged. In a conversation in the Mittersteig detention centre on 12 February 1997, Mühl is asked: "Did you make the ash images at the end of the commune?" and he answers: "Not by accident. The ashes — that was the erasure, the burial of the commune. But I didn't do it consciously. It already started in El Cabrito, when I began lashing out like a madman. And here too — the wedding with Claudia. When was that? '85 or '86. That was already the beginning of the end. But I didn't know it back then." (Mühl 1997: 229/230; translation E.S.) Mühl had the artistic and the critical notes of the commune members burnt and made "art" out of the ashes. That burning is associated with obliteration, ending, annihilation and making something disappear — or even a kind of burial, as he claims to have not known anything about it. The history of the creation of the ash images is rarely made explicit in exhibition contexts. For example, one of these ash images was shown in 2004 in the exhibition "Otto Muehl. Leben / Kunst / Werk. Aktion Utopie Malerei 1960-2004" at the MAK in Vienna. Neither a room text nor any passage in the exhibition catalogue pointed out to viewers the origin of the ash from which the image was made. What seems interesting in this context, especially against the background of Actionism's characteristic emphasis on bodies and the substances from which art is made through material actions — a point repeatedly emphasised in the reception of Actionism and Mühl's work — is that the material of ash finds little or no attention in the art-historical and art-theoretical classification of this series of images by Mühl. On the one hand, this is due to a political and historical situation — a history of ash in the more recent and older cultural history of the Western world (let us recall the various book burnings in Western history, the burnings of people accused of witchcraft, and let us not forget the systematic mass murder of more than 6 million Jews and the mass incineration of bodies in the ovens of the extermination camps) — which is incomprehensible and, from the perspective of the specifically material-focused history of Actionism, also is not. After all, Mühl himself knew it when, on the question "Did Actionism have anything directly to do with politics?" he answered: "No, not at all." (Mühl 1997: 71; translation E.S.) Reception

and exhibition practice repeat this by showing, in line with Mühl's own self-portrayal, works of the Actionist that are declared apolitical, while at the same time labelling a self-proclaimed apolitical Actionism as political. Both come to stand side by side. They support each other. Without apparent contradiction. Support what? The narrative of an "I" that remains powerful and cannot do without a single rib of the vault. Apparently not even posthumously.

THE CATASTROPHE CONTINUES IF IT IS NOT REMEMBERED

A SD evening at the Friedrichshof in 1984. A boy is "brought into the middle" and is supposed to sing or play the harmonica before all the commune members. The boy refuses, whereupon Mühl threatens him, grabs his face, and tries to "form" a laugh with the corners of the boy's mouth — which fails. Such a human body resists, as perhaps does any material in which something is to be inscribed. However, when the boy begins to play, only to repeatedly break down in tears, Mühl douses him with water. This scene was artistically researched in the FWF PEEK project as part of the symposium "Art Reception — Strategies for Future Exhibitions." Together with the group MATHILDA we juxtaposed it with a scene from the "action" "Kardinal" (1967). The scene shows a young person whose head and face are first bound by Mühl, only to be worked on later with various liquids, greasy substances, and dust. In a slightly modified form, this work is also shown in the exhibition "ON STAGE. ALL THE ART WORLD'S A STAGE" at mumok 2023.²⁵

The scene with the boy, who resists Mühl's commands and attempts at modelling during the SD evening, goes even further. Andy Simanowitz points in his text to the story of a systematic and deliberate omission of the part of the SD-evening that follows the described chastening scene. Also, in the context of the project "Art as Pretext" by the group MATHILDA, mumok refused to integrate this part into the work or to show these subsequent passages as a separate work by MATHILDA. The following dialogue immediately follows the scene; the present text prints only one section, as the passages can be found in full transcription in Andy Simanowitz's text in this volume:

25 See: <https://www.mumok.at/de/stage>, last access 30.08.2023.

MÜHL: I know, it looks very bad, even vicious. You must have thought of the concentration camp. It seemed to me like a concentration camp. He's really playing a Jew in a concentration camp.

Mühl imitates whining. Approving shouts and clapping from the audience.

MÜHL: I felt like an SS man myself, that's what he made me into. You have that in you too, this Anne Frank. They all have this mentality, these damn fucking Jews! That is really something very bad, to carry such a horror into the children for decades. You were not in the concentration camp yourself. Only from talking she has heard it. This fucking paranoia of the Jews. I myself was in danger of death. But I never talk about it. Although sometimes I cry into my pillow.

Light laughter from the audience.

MÜHL: That's what you've done there! Yes, look. What do you say to that?

A.: Yes, it's bad. I am bad.

Here the continuity is revealed in which the “social experiment” of the Aktionsanalytische Organisation (AAO), the Mühl “commune”, which embodied one of the failed liberation movements of the 20th century through liberation via “art”, “sexuality”, and “therapy”, is in fact a continuation of profoundly totalitarian and profoundly anti-Semitic ideology. Down to the detail that violence against children — the abuse by the later convicted paedosexual offender Mühl — is attributed to all Jews. This must be remembered; this shaping of a continuity disguised as liberation must be worked through. Every museum, every cultural institution that exhibits Mühl and does not contextualize this continuity of totalitarianism is actively working against coming to terms with it.

The core idea that Adorno developed from his early reflections to his “Aesthetic Theory” is condensed in “Minima Moralia” as follows: “No work of art, within the organisation of society, can escape its involvement in culture, but there is none, if it is more than mere handicraft, which does not make culture a dismissive gesture: that of having become a work of art. Art is as inimical to 'art' as are artists.” (Adorno 2005: 214) That is, no artwork can extricate itself from its belonging to culture. Yet every artwork that goes beyond mere artistic craftsmanship also makes a

rejecting gesture toward culture; and it carries within it the knowledge of having been or being made an artwork. Artworks are both points of convergence of society and its opposites. They function as fields of conflicting forces that are aware, within themselves, of the dialectic between rejection and appropriation. Art that does not recognize its inherent connection with the prevailing cultural context of a time or space falls into naïve self-denial and becomes narcissistic. Conversely, that art which completely conforms to existing norms and can be absorbed by culture without resistance finds itself in a similar situation. Only when art engages with the dialectic of belonging and rejection can it form itself as a field of critical capacity directed both inward and outward and constantly question its own formal formation. This dynamic shapes it as a space in which remembering and working through become possible, in which complex discontinuities emerge from the “that which has been laid down below,” in which the other memory can speak. We must expect such questioning of art not only from philosophers but also from the institutions that safeguard and exhibit it.

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