



## Personal Statement from Eric Schmid

The efficacy of political gestures is tied to an underlying deontological ethical system ("In moral philosophy, deontological ethics or deontology (from Greek: δέον, 'obligation, duty' + λόγος, 'study') is the normative ethical theory that the morality of an action should be based on whether that action itself is right or wrong under a series of rules, rather than based on the consequences of the action.")

The efficacy of the maxim that one should protest a disciplinary system of power is tied to the audience of such a norm-based collective sociality. The signaling of a "no fly over" zone in artist circles, is illiterate to the situation as Alex Boland pointed out. To take this even further, this has more to do with the rule-based sociality of its intended audience, as opposed to the actual consequences of such signaling--i.e. shoot down Russian planes and cause a domino effect into nuclear war.

Similarly, the actions of a globalist international organization such as the UN is predicated on the rules of international law, but the efficacy of a proceeding in the General Assembly is undermined by the fact that Russia has veto power in the Security Council and is a member of the Human Rights Council.

Protesting war far away, for example, in the United States has the intention of creating awareness and solidifying solidarity with the Ukrainian people but again is predicated on a deontological framework for conducting ethics and its efficacy is predicated on the superiority of one local system of ethics (the liberal neo-lib rule-governed collective sociality) over the efficacy on a global system of enacting sanctions, freezing assets, and enacting measures through central banking.

The Ukrainian Resistance for example enacts another rule-based deontological framework, which mandates that all 18-60 years olds fight in the war. This deontological framework interfaces with the imperialist interests of the West, which do not want to escalate into a World War. By Zelenskyy's actions of creating a rallying cry to the West and the West's historically systematic deferral of nuclear war through deterrence (i.e the Cold War), the West is measuring the risk of direct NATO military intervention and instead supplying military aid to the Ukrainian government, in the face of Putin's threat to attack both Finland and Sweden should they join NATO, as well as attacking the US (see the Russian State Media statement on Russian nuclear submarines and how the US is connected at the hip to Russia). By isolating the conflict to Ukraine, the globalist norm-based system enacts a violence to the Ukrainian people precipitated by Russia's aggression, which is carefully measured in computing the risk management of comparing the rule-based ethical framework of the ostensibly "local" (Ukraine vs Russia) to the ostensibly "global" (NATO vs. Russia).

My problem with this risk management is its misconstruction of the mathematical "local" and "global". The hopes of Leibniz's Mathesis Universalis should be predicated on the fact that mathematics is autonomous from society and is the most generalized framework for interpreting objects, given the universalism of the mathematical language, which does not discriminate between nationalities. The math itself is not tied to socio-political machination in its manifestation of self-evident truths. If we were to adopt the metaphysical system that I argue for in my *Prolegomenon to a Treatise* (published by Bauer Verlag). we would necessarily deflate all ontologies, which have a transcendent backbone (predicated on a priori faktums, which split the Real). This move to deflate metaphysics (and their buried politics) allows us the freedom to be properly universal as agents in a collective sociality, and to not engage in war over identitarian predicates (nationality for example). Marie Curie's program was for example to educate the youth, instead of engaging in war.

The work of art is, moreover, founded upon 4 levels of access. The 4 levels are the following, ascending from particular and most specific, to the most abstract and therefore general/universal.

1) The work of art qua the work of art. Art qua art. The specificity of the work of art in its form and content.

2) The contextual narratives, be they biographical or social, which determine the (non)-meaning of the work of art. For example, see the Kippenberger works Dialogue with the Youth. Or the Peter exhibition, which Krebber produced for Kippenberger. Or the Heavy Burschi (Heavy Guy) series, which Carpenter produced for Kippenberger. Isabelle Graw explains this contextual/biographical/social information in relation to Kippenberger:

"The liberties taken by "Kippi" occasionally result in politically incorrect works, some of which can be found in the exhibition. For example, the pair of columns – one black, one white – titled Love Affair without Racism (1989), the name suggesting a non-racist romantic attachment. Should the anthropomorphic columns tell us that the reflexive reduction of a person to their skin color is racist, or is the work itself responsible for a racist reflex of this kind? Images like Bitte Brigitte spinn nicht rum! (Please Brigitte, Don't Spin Out!, 1981–82), on the other hand, recall the sexist humor of the 1980s: a friend (named Brigitte) is declared to be a hysteric who has to be discouraged from "spinning out." In the early 1980s, Kippenberger was not alone in using this kind of old man humor. In the German art world of that era, the lessons of the women's movement were flatly ignored and the agenda was to either devalue the production of women or ignore it altogether. Kippenberger was associated with a group of male artists – Albert Oehlen, Werner Büttner, Georg Herold, Günther Förg – without the exclusiveness of this male group having been addressed as a problem. This would change in the early 1990s with the emergence of so-called context art and greater reception of feminist and postcolonial theories. And this increased sensitivity to mechanisms of exclusion in the art world was not something that escaped Kippenberger's attention. He became interested in the work of his Conceptual colleagues, such as Louise Lawler and Andrea Fraser. Methods like research and Institutional Critique began to take up more space in his work. Examining the context from which the work emerges is also helpful when it comes to explaining a painting such as Heil Hitler ihr Fetischisten (Heil Hitler You Fetishists, 1984), which hangs somewhat hidden away in a corner of the exhibition. With its depiction of a bandaged arm that, despite injury, is reflexively stretched out in a Hitler salute, this painting is directed against the continued latent existence of Nazism's legacy in West Germany. It also mocks those collectors and gallery owners in the art world who loved male artists largely for their transgressive behavior, driving them to violate taboos. Today, when AfD deputies with völkisch beliefs are sat in the Bundestag and right-wing radical ideas are becoming socially acceptable in middle-class society, work of this kind would lack the thrust it originally had. It must be feared that it would today again be praised for breaching taboos, namely those of political correctness. And this praise would be offered by those who genuinely believe that free speech is under threat. In fact, the inverse is true, as can be seen from the recent increase in taboo-breaking racist, sexist, and anti-Semitic pronouncements."

3) The liquidity of cultural capital. Information as asset. The market as a form of extrinsic validation of the artist. Being a globe-trotting artist, who has mobility and can enact a social fluidity with regards to their work or even more cynically, brand. Carpenter describes it as follows:

"Critics are not really paid at all. But perhaps even because of that they are potentially rich: information itself is also institutional power and wealth. The commodity is now information. The critic might just be the embodiment of power, being as she is able to accept or reject more lucrative positions, for example a curator for a private gallery such as Gregor Muir at Hauser and Wirth in London. On the one hand they could increase their cultural capital for later redemption precisely by rejecting a cheesy pay-day, on the other hand immediately taking a salary not incomparable with that of a successful artist, and with greater prestige, perks and security. Also, the emergence of the consultant could be a significantly lucrative career path for the art critic or frustrated academic. As JJ Charlesworth recently point out: "In the new artworld, there's money in being the gatekeeper and selector, and with so many spectators looking

in, anxious to know what you know, and artists clamouring to be picked up, the person who selects is the one who dictates visibility."(9) Far from the conference's tendency to assert that criticism has been marginalised, I maintain it is more powerful than ever before in an economy based on knowledge. Even, perhaps even especially, when the cultural capital it accrues is not immediately cashed in. In the art industry we know now, cultural capital is much closer to stored money than what Bourdieu proposed. And perhaps one could go so far as to say that the art market per se, in sense of selling pictures, is no longer what is at stake, though money and Capital are. The critic chooses when or when not to cash in: "Time represents the basic resource for connecting the actors who control access to money".(10) And as Rosa Luxemburg pointed out, creating the surplus value needed for capitalist reproduction is based on past as well as current labour - someone else's labour, control of time being a key issue here.(11)"

4) The mathematical category of the artwork. I owe this formulation to Tim Pierson. The multitude of interpretative functors which "read" the object (artwork) in the category. And the fibration enacting a universal/global methodology to create transits between the *true* local and the *true* global. For example: "A stack, being a particular type of pseudofunctor, can also be described as a particular sort of fibration. This was the original application for which Grothendieck introduced the notion." For more on this, refer to Zalamea's essay *Multilayered Sites and Dynamic Logics for Transits between Art and Mathematics*.

-Eric Schmid 02/28/2022