

Conference Paper

Dynamic Similarity: Outsider Art and Avant-garde

Anna Suvorova

Perm National Research University, Russia

Abstract

The article analyzes the emergence of the discourse of outsider art. The author reveals the connection between the discourse of outsider art and the field of avant-garde culture. The formation of outsider art was conditioned by the crisis of the rationalistic paradigm and the intention to revive European culture, which had lost its vitality, with the Dionysian principle of the art of primitives and the mentally ill. The surfaces of emergence and the authorities of delimitation of outsider art were initially marginal in relation to the field of art. Instead of traditional authorities of delimitation in art – art critics, museums, art historians, and collectors – the discourse of outsider art was formed by psychiatrists, philosophers, and avant-garde artists. The article focuses on the formation logic of the outsider art discourse and the specifics of the legitimization of this phenomenon. The change in the traditional way of legitimizing this art phenomenon was largely due, on the one hand, to the transformation of the philosophy of culture and, on the other, to the emergence of the idea of Dionysian values, the irrational in culture with the appearance of the concepts of the unconscious and the designation of its meaning in the context of personality and culture. All the above mentioned made the field of psychiatry valuable in the context of artistic culture, while psychiatrists became new authorities of delimitation in art and culture. These processes of the crisis of the European rationalistic paradigm were clearly reflected in avant-garde art; the Cubists, Expressionists, Primitivists, and Surrealists started to incorporate these strange phenomena into their artworks, thereby simultaneously assimilating them and giving them new characteristics. Thus, the article focuses on the process that was reverse in relation to the processes described earlier. Not marginal phenomena, such as naive art, primitive cultures, and the creativity of the mentally ill, influenced the field of "high art", but what had been a rightful, legitimate and rational field of European culture discursively changed and became ready to include marginalia.

Keywords: outsider art, art brut, avant-garde, discourse, discourse analysis, Cesare Lombroso, Hanz Prinzhorn, Hilma af Clint, Pavel Karpov, André Breton, Jean Dubuffet.

Corresponding Author:
 Anna Suvorova
 suvorova_anna@mail.ru

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The emergence of interest in some phenomena of culture has a discursive character. We understand that the phenomena of outsider art existed before the beginning of the 20th century when it started to develop as a separate and legitimizing itself phenomenon of artistic culture. The existence of the creativity of the mentally ill before the early 20th century was described in some scientific and fiction literature. For example, such text forms as legends and lamentations of holy fools, etc. were described in fiction of the 18th-19th centuries. With reference to the field of fine arts, the description of the artwork of the mentally ill is also found in Cesare Lombroso's fundamental work "Genius and Insanity". Lombroso made a great historical review of references and studies related to the connections between the phenomena of genius and insanity, from Aristotle and Democritus, who had said that he didn't consider a person in his right mind to be a true poet, to Felix Plater, a Swiss doctor and natural scientist and other scientists of the 19th century.

But properly graphic forms of outsider art were made public when they began to arouse keen interest and outsider art came in sight of artists, collectors, and researchers. In other words, the process of including this pictorial product (let us use this vague term here) in the field of art as such took place in the early 20th century. Earlier, these pictorial forms were not articulated as art in this way. The simplest example is the stories from Cesare Lombroso's book, which was mentioned above. The art of the mentally ill became visible when some reputable authorities of delimitation started to designate these objects, to call them art, to include them in the field of art.

Let us turn to the theory and methodology of discourse, basing on the writings of Michel Foucault. According to his "Archaeology of Knowledge", the formation of objects, and in this case the object of discourse is the art of the mentally ill, occurs by means of three rules of formation. These are (1) the surface of the emergence of objects, (2) the authority of delimitation, and (3) the specification grid. If we apply this theoretical scheme to the object of study, the surface on which the art of the mentally ill appears is the philosophy and psychiatry and, a little later, avant-garde art (which were then normative authorities) and after that museums and art researchers (during the formation period of the concept of art brut). The authorities of delimitation, which designate the art of the mentally ill as an object, are medicine (psychiatry) and the avant-garde (its theoretical texts). The specification grids of outsider art are the systems on the basis of which the discourse objects of the art of the mentally ill were formed and grouped – creativity, history of individuals, pathology, consciousness and the unconscious (the last pair of concepts unites the art of the mentally ill with naive

and primitive art as objects remote from European rationalism and included in the field of art). If we follow Foucault's theory of discourse, outsider art is characterized not by the presence of a privileged object, but by ways of forming.

In the case of outsider art, the discourse turns out (there is an involuntary tautology) marginal. Already beginning with the formation of the emergence surfaces of the discourse, it starts developing on a field alien to art itself. This fact of its appearance – beyond the context of art practices in general, as it was in the context of modern art, for example, with the phenomena of Romanticism or Realism, already distinguishes outsider art from the previous layer of artistic culture and makes it related to the phenomena of avant-garde art. It is the avant-garde (and later the postmodern trends) that arises with the participation of qualitatively different fields – everyday life, technology, and science.

The authorities of delimitation of outsider art were also marginal and new in relation to the field of art. At first, the authorities of delimitation were not subjects traditionally authoritative for the art field in the 18th and 19th centuries. Traditionally, connoisseurs of art, collectors, and art critics were "talking subjects" for art, the bearers of power discourse. In this regard, outsider art had an exceptional, marginalized character in the field of contemporary and earlier phenomena. At the first stage, the process of forming the discourse involved doctors who were associated with the field of mental illness. This authority of delimitation, strange for the phenomena of art – medicine, namely psychiatry, becomes such due to the enormous cultural influence of the discourse of Freudian theory and the concepts of the unconscious. The power of this discourse may be explained through the "fatigue" of European civilization with the primacy of the rational and the crisis of the rationalistic paradigm that has been described in many philosophical texts (the most influential of them was the text of Friedrich Nietzsche "The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music", to which we will turn later).

Another important authority of delimitation for the art of the mentally ill is avant-garde art. The transformation of the body of traditional art and the destruction of the canon of classical aesthetics stimulated including in the "big narrative" of art marginal and therefore not previously seen phenomena: naive and primitive art, and the creativity of the mentally ill. In the "big narrative", we can easily name the biggest names and phenomena: Matisse, Picasso, Dali, Dada, Surrealism, Fauvism, and Primitivism which used "marginalia" in their art and thereby assimilated and legitimated marginal influences. But it is important to note that the changes did not come from "marginal" artists to professionals, but vice versa. And it is precisely the "perusal" of these peripheral

"narratives" by European culture that was conditioned by the crisis of the objective and classical paradigm of art, the intention to abandon Eurocentrism in artistic culture.

An important authority of delimitation for the discourse of outsider art, although may be not the most obvious, became philosophy. It was the first to reflect on the crisis of the rationalism of European civilization and "the Decline of the West". But the notable for culture books by Friedrich Nietzsche and Oswald Spengler were followed by philosophers, who reflected on the strangeness of an individual's personality and his infernality – this can be seen in the philosophy of existentialism.

Thus, the discourse of the art of the mentally ill (that was called outsider art and art brut) was formed as a compensation for the need for instilling marginalia, and rejected the unconditional primacy of rationality, which in turn is associated with a change in the whole worldview of European civilization. In describing the formation of the discourse, let us to a greater extent focus on the fields of art, philosophy, and psychiatry, which are the most reputable authorities in shaping the discourse of outsider art.

The field of philosophy became the space in which the body of modern culture was reflected and simultaneously constructed. These changes in the field of philosophical knowledge legitimized the art of marginalia and made the creativity of the mentally ill a relevant phenomenon in European art.

The key philosopher who prepared the inclusion of marginal practices in art was Friedrich Nietzsche. He delineated the disease of European culture, connected with the predominance of the rational over the Dionysian. It is important that in Nietzsche's work "The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music" we can see the "antidote to the meaninglessness of reality", a departure from reality – exactly what the Surrealists will look for in the art of the mentally ill. Harmony, order, and calm artistry – everything that is associated with rational classical art was criticized and refused by the artists of the first modernism. The Dionysian, characterized by Nietzsche through intoxication, oblivion, chaos, the ecstatic dissolution of identity in the mass, was manifested in the interest in the primitive cultures and creativity of the fringes, such as the art of urban naive or the art of the mentally ill, which began to be incorporated in the art field in the early 20th century.

The existential philosophers Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre and others had a significant impact on the transformation of the boundaries of human personality, the description of its freedoms and existence.

Actually, the basic concept of personality in the philosophy of existentialism is based on the idea that it is impossible to cognize the existence of man through objective examination because science cannot comprehend its true being (existence) (this idea

continues the crisis of the rational concept). The man was understood in existentialism as a creature that sacrifices his life to his destiny – in this we can see an indirect reference to the texts of earlier philosophers and contemporary psychiatrists who described the connection between genius and insanity.

Analyzing more specifically the philosophy of existentialism and its influence on the formation of the discourse of outsider art, let us turn to the works of Martin Heidegger. "The true existence" (Dasein) of Heidegger is a person's comprehension of his historical finitude and freedom. It is achievable only "in the face of death" in so-called border situations. A person breaks out of inauthentic existence, feeling "existential fear". Is not insanity a matter of being "on the brink" of human existence? We can see the development of this analysis of man in critical states, "on the edge" as a situation of the true existence of man, in the writings of the next generation of existentialists – Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre.

The philosophy of Sartre logically builds a continuum of the special value of an individual. According to Sartre, an individual "totalizes" material circumstances and relations with other people and creates history by himself – to the same extent as it creates him. Objective economic and social structures act as an alienated superstructure over the internal individual elements of the "project". Sartre insisted that dialectic emanates from the individual because this implies its fundamental cognizability, "transparency" and "rationality". This movement from individuality, the legitimation of an individual, makes possible further discourse of outsider art.

In the philosophy of existentialism, we also find texts that directly shape and legitimize the discourse of outsider art and in which there are direct references to the concepts of art, created by a mentally ill person. Thus, in 1925 appeared the book by Karl Jaspers "Strindberg and Van Gogh: An Attempt of a Pathographic Analysis with Reference to Parallel Cases of Swedenborg and Hölderlin". The date of the appearance of this book matched with the period when the density of texts forming the discourse of the art of the mentally ill was very high. In this text, Karl Jaspers investigated the boundary between pathology and creativity. As one of the objects of study he chose Vincent Van Gogh (actually, the "boom" of interest in the personality of this artist, as well as other "strange" artists, too, was "the emergence surface" of the outsider art discourse). It is Van Gogh – with his complex personal history and pathology described by biographers – that became a new canon of creative personality. The "strangeness" of an artist on the verge of mental pathology and beyond it was a positive (if not mandatory) feature.

The articulation of philosophy in shaping the discourse of outsider art turns out to be close to the concepts of "left art". Moreover, it is important to note that the "surfaces of emergence" of outsider art appeared in the artistic field several decades before this phenomenon was made public in the late 19th century.

In the field of art, the processes took place which were prepared by the general ideological shift of the late 19th century and partly described in philosophical reflection. These processes were to a certain extent radical: in the 1860s-1870s, we see the loosening and destruction of the canon of academic art, the corpus of which was based on the sum of rules. This going beyond the canonical field of art was manifested in the concepts of Impressionism (and also its gradual recognition), the search for new languages and newer semantic foundations of European civilization in Post-impressionism, Art Nouveau and other trends of the late 19th century.

But even more significant for shaping the surfaces of emergence of outsider art was Symbolism with its cult of visionariness, belief in another reality, creation of pictures-visions of other worlds. The spirit of visionariness, based on the spontaneous depiction of an altered state of consciousness, religious, meditative contemplation, trance, was typical of the ideas of symbolist art and the tendencies close to it (however, visionariness and the concept of mediumship – with raising ghosts and the enormous popularity of mediums) was popular in the late 19th – early 20th centuries.

As the most vivid and symptomatic example of such visionary art, let us mention the Swedish artist Hilma af Clint, who was a member of the group-community "Five" (De Fem), consisting of like-minded women who shared her faith in contacts with the so-called "Spiritual Teachers", which often took place through spiritualistic sessions. From 1896 till 1906, they met every Friday, read and studied the New Testament, conducted meditations and spiritualistic sessions, and then accurately wrote down the received "messages". Hilma wrote that she had received a message from a spiritual being, in which it was told that she would create medium paintings. At the end of 1906, following the instructions of her "Spiritual Teachers", she created the first series of abstract works. Actually, the appearance of this practice and, moreover, its legitimation, anticipate the emergence of the phenomenon of outsider art. These trends of visionary art, but already based on a slightly different basis, will be further continued in Surrealism.

In addition to Symbolism and visionariness of the turn of the 20th century, another trend of new art, shaping the "surface of emergence" of outsider art, was the phenomena of art that cultivated interest in primitive civilizations and codes of non-European culture. Europeans' appeal to other, non-European civilizations, and through this to

primitive cultures, was largely "warmed up" by the historicism of the 19th century, which together with the epoch of historical discoveries stimulated the discovery not of the past, but of "the other" – be it the culture of the East, primitive tribes, Russian folk art, etc.

Actually, the latter two phenomena were among the most relevant texts, interpreted by avant-garde artists and inspiring them. Interest in the primitive is quite naturally manifested in the French "left" artists – the Post-Impressionists, Fauvists, Cubists, and, later, Surrealists. For instance, both the colonial policy of the French Empire and the high level of art development formed the phenomenon of Paul Gauguin's Tahitian period. His art, on the one hand, was a product of the Europeans' reflection on the search for new, non-assimilated cultures; on the other hand, it legitimized "savagery" in the context of European art.

This turn to primitive or "savage art" (this trend later continued to appear in the texts of artists and critics) was followed by the beginning of the 20th century. The formation of the idea of Cubism was based on the fascination with another, different from the European, circle of art images and paradigm of thinking. Picasso sought to see the world outside of the traditions of "high culture". He referred to the forms of African primitive sculpture, other artifacts of primitive cultures, children's drawings. In 1907 Pablo Picasso attended the exhibition at the Trocadero Museum of Ethnography, which, as he later confessed, revealed to him the true meaning of painting. "These masks were more than just sculpture. Negroes are intercessors, spellcasters. Against everything, against the unknown, hostile spirits. I understood: I am also against everything. Everything unknown is the enemy. I understood why the Negroes needed a sculpture. All idols performed the same function. They were weapons. To help people become independent so that people do not submit to spirits. If we shape the spirits, we become independent. Spirits, the subconscious, emotions – it is all one. I understood why I am an artist. "Les Femmes d'Alger" probably appeared on that very day. This was my first experience of exorcism..." ([6], 37). In addition to paying homage to the primitive, here, albeit in a foreign-language form, we can see the reference to the idea of visionariness, which, as was noted, is one of the most important ideas for the formation of the outsider art discourse at the early period.

For understanding the origin of these processes, it is important to consider that the colonial history of France and the high level of development of science, primarily anthropology, affected these processes. It is enough to recall the numerous colonial exhibitions that marked the opening of the National Museum of African and Oceanian Art; the powerful anthropological school, whose works – those by Carl Levi-Strauss and

Lucien Levy-Bruhl – are still relevant today. Moreover, looking ahead, we can speak about the direct influence of anthropology on the emergence of art brut. In particular, Carl Levi-Strauss for some time maintained correspondence with Jean Debuffet [13].

The epoch of the avant-garde, Futurism, abstract art, Surrealism continues this line of immersion in marginalia. The texts of artists declared the rejection of the rules and schools of European art and praised the art of the savage. It is curious that the avant-garde manifestos also declared the same irrational behavior, which before was deviant and tabooed. For example, one of the key figures in the theory and practice of avant-garde art, the ideologue of Futurism, Phillip Tomaso Marinetti already in the first Manifesto of Futurism called for the destruction of the old civilization.

Already in the 1910s, the art of the mentally ill was included in this circle of tempting marginalia. Thus, the 1910s were the phase that completed the stage of the formation of "surfaces of emergence", and the direct inclusion of the art of the mentally ill in the artistic context began. In 1910, the artist Max Ernst attended courses of psychiatry, took great interest in the patients' works and decides to publish a book about the peculiarities of patients' expression. Max Ernst initially received philosophical education; from all subjects of the university course he was most interested in psychiatry, and his acquaintance with the theory of Freud leads the artist to psychiatric hospitals, where he became interested in the art of the mentally ill. It is Max Ernst that later would become one of the key figures of Surrealism, would develop the central for Surrealism notion of automatism and introduce the new techniques: collage, frottage, grafting and oscillation into artistic practice.

At the same time, on the initiative of V. Kandinsky, the group of artists "Blue Horseman" exhibited four works of the mentally ill in Germany. And in 1912, the artist Paul Klee argued the need to recognize the value of works of the mentally ill and children, as well as primitive art used in his creative work.

One of the most significant turning points in the formation of the discourse of outsider art was Surrealism, its theory and practice, including alogism, absurdity, automatic writing, rejection of the rational, and turning to the unconscious. In 1919, Andre Breton began the experiments of automatic writing, inspired by the exhibition of "new trends" in German art in Cologne, where, along with the works of avant-garde artists (and Breton himself), the works of mentally ill and self-taught artists, children's drawings and artifacts of primitive art were presented [1].

Actually, the concepts of Dada and Surrealism were oriented towards the assimilation of the experience of mentally ill persons. This can be seen in their texts, not only

as an appeal to abandon the primacy of logic and the triumph of absurdity, but also in a direct appeal to the "art of the insane".

The text "Magnetic Fields" of 1919 was written by the future Surrealists Philippe Supo and Andre Breton and was based on the idea of abandoning logic. In 1924, the magazine "La Révolution surréaliste" published the Surrealist Manifesto, which spoke in support of the "art of the insane". As Breton wrote: "Beloved imagination, what I most like in you is your unsparing quality. There remains madness, "the madness that one locks up," as it has aptly been described. That madness or another.... We all know, in fact, that the insane owe their incarceration to a tiny number of legally reprehensible acts and that, were it not for these acts their freedom (or what we see as their freedom) would not be threatened. I am willing to admit that they are, to some degree, victims of their imagination, in that it induces them not to pay attention to certain rules – outside of which the species feels threatened – which we are all supposed to know and respect. But their profound indifference to the way in which we judge them, and even to the various punishments meted out to them, allows us to suppose that they derive a great deal of comfort and consolation from their imagination, that they enjoy their madness sufficiently to endure the thought that its validity does not extend beyond themselves. And, indeed, hallucinations, illusions, etc., are not a source of trifling pleasure" (Breton 1924).

At the same time, in addition to theoretical texts and manifestos, the meaning of the process of creating a work was evolving in the practice of art itself: here we can mention the ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp, the performances of Hugo Ball, the automatic writing of the Surrealists, etc. All this was in its way a hymn to these illogical practices and structures of thinking, which were cultivated by the artists themselves, but they were also a natural part of the creative work of mentally ill persons and their works.

In that line – from the interest in primitive cultures in the late 19th century to the texts and practices of the Surrealists, the "official birth" of art brut took place after World War II with the participation of the Surrealist Jean Dubuffet. This step seemed quite logical for Dubuffet; he continued the search for a different vision started by the avant-garde.

The transformations that occurred in the study of the human psyche also seem to be important. Of course, the publication of several fundamental works of Sigmund Freud – "The Interpretation of Dreams", "Civilization and Its Discontents", etc., in fact, opened the new facet of interpreting the madman, not as an object that needs correction by

culture, but as a subject, every stratum of the personality of which has value and cannot be subjected to punishment or repression.

However, for understanding the processes of including new phenomena in culture and art, it is important to note that the actual articulation of the themes of art and insanity, genius and a madman began several decades before Freud. For example, the famous (though in many ways erring) Italian psychiatrist Cesare Lombroso in 1864 published the book "Genius and Insanity", which was subsequently published in other languages.

As such an "early wave" of interest in the art of the mentally ill, we can mention the book of Marcel Reja, published in 1907 "L'art chez les fous". Marcel Reja analyzed the types of such art: infantile, ornamental and symbolic, and noted a certain similarity with the works of children and primitives (Cardinal 1972).

During the 1910s, Freud's discoveries began to be gradually assimilated and interpreted, both in relation to the mentally ill and to artists. For example, in 1910 Sigmund Freud, investigating the sources of inspiration of Leonardo da Vinci, replaces the divine intervention by the instinctive one, which was later attributed to Michelangelo [1].

Moreover, in 1911, the term "schizophrenia" appeared, introduced by the Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler; the definitions of "insanity", etc. disappeared from the psychiatric lexicon. Of course, in the field of reflection of psychiatrists there were not only the art and genius of the past but also modern culture. At the same time, P. Vavulin in the book "Madness, Its Meaning and Value" warned about the danger of the general pathologization of history, culture, and enthusiasm by expanding the competence of psychiatry. In 1912, Dr. Henri Marcel Frey in "Reflections on Art and Mentally Ill" analyzed the similarity of the works of the Fauvists, Expressionists, Cubists and works of the mentally ill.

In the 1910s-1920s, the psychiatric community began to collect pictures of the mentally ill and formed special conditions for their creativity. In 1913, at the International Medical Congress at the Royal Hospital in London, Sir George Savan organized the public exhibition of "psychotic art" [1]. A similar exhibition was organized in 1921 in Frankfurt, Germany [1]. In 1913, Carl Gustav Jung and his patients engaged in drawing, regarding these studies as a need, akin to the instinct of self-affirmation (and laying the prospects for art therapy). In 1915, the Museum of Art of the Mental Clinic Bel-Air (Switzerland) was opened [1].

As noted by Roger Cardinal, a significant role in the emergence of outsider art was played by the book "Wahn und Erkenntnis" (1918) by Paul Schiller, in which the author drew parallels between the art of the mentally ill and abstraction, especially

the abstractionist theories developed by Kandinsky. Paul Schilder mentioned that both sorts of art were correspondent with a spiritual meaning behind sense-impression, and in envisaging painting as the depiction of ideas. But Schilder's implication was "that if both the art of the insane and that of the nascent expressionist movement were 'mad', they were both equally worthy of attention as art" (Cardinal 1972, 16).

All these processes put down the foundation for the study of the creativity of the mentally ill, and psychiatrists became the authors of first studies. In 1921, the chief physician and director of the Valdau clinic, V. Morgenthaler published the monograph "The Mentally Ill as an Artist" ("Ein Geisteskranker als Künstler"), dedicated to Adolf Wölfli. The formal structure of art could be seen to emerge from the chaos of a major psychic disturbance. Morgenthaler developed these as being formed by restraints gained in the effort to attain psychic stability through art creation – art reflecting, or at least reflecting, spices of self-therapy (Cardinal 1972).

In 1922, the book "The Art of the Insane" ("Bildnerie der Geisteskranken") by doctor and collector Hans Prinzhorn was published in Berlin. The book was based on the study of the collection of mentally ill patients from the psychiatric clinic of the University of Heidelberg. The book was unusually fundamental and was based on a collection containing more than 5,000 works of about 450 artists. It is important to note that the research was based on objects created by people who did not have artistic experience and who were indisputably mad. Most of the works were created by schizophrenics, while the drawings of other mentally ill patients made up only a quarter of the collection. Prinzhorn tried not to use the concept of "art", as applied to these objects. His favorite term was "Gestaltung" – "Layout". Prinzhorn wrote that the key subconscious element of the creativity of the mentally ill was the pressure of culture. The book includes the remark about the expressive urge, seen as a mysterious self-preoccupied drive towards psychic expression; the urge to play (Spieltrieb), the decorative urge (Schmucktrieb), and the mimetic urge (Nachahmungstrieb), seen as the progressively more sophisticated manifestation of the central tendency. All this, together with the admiration for schizophrenic fascination, a personal symbolism and the tendency towards the symmetry or rhythmical form, led to some specific aesthetics [14].

In the conclusion of the book, Prinzhorn wrote that the demarcation line between the art of the mentally ill and the "cultural" art is determined only by the consecration of the conservative society. In general, as more recent researchers write, the whole book leaves a feeling of extraordinary respect for the art of people whose works were first presented to the general public (Cardinal 1972). In 1926, he also published the

book "The Art of Prisoners" ("Bildneri der Gefangenen"), which shown the formation of the field of "marginalia".

In the early 1920s, the art of the mentally ill was also studied in Soviet Russia. One of the important researchers was Pavel Karpov, who started his studies while he was the doctor of the famous Russian symbolist artist Mikhail Vrubel. Karpov had been collecting the works of the mentally ill since 1911, planning to create a museum on the basis of his collection (the fate of the collection is not known now). In the period from 1923 to 1932, Karpov was a full member of RAKhN (GAKhN) and the chairman of the Commission for the Study of Pathological Creativity. Among the works of Karpov there are the book "Creativity of the Insane" (1926), "Everyday Emotional Creativity in Old Russian Art" (1928), "The Creativity of Prisoners" (1929) [1]. A curious point of this early formation in the Soviet art culture of the mentally ill was the reference to the exhibition of the art of the mentally ill in the famous "Moscow Diary" by Walter Benjamin. The exhibition took place in the Polytechnic Museum.

The formation of outsider art was conditioned by the crisis of the rationalistic paradigm and the intention to revive European culture, which had lost its vitality, with the Dionysian principle of the art of primitives and the mentally ill. The surfaces of emergence and the authorities of delimitation of outsider art were initially marginal in relation to the field of art. Instead of traditional authorities of art delimitation – art critics, museums, art historians, and collectors – the discourse of outsider art was formed by psychiatrists, philosophers, and the most radical artists. The article focuses on the formation logic of the outsider art discourse and the specifics of the legitimization of this phenomenon. The author notes that the change of the traditional way of the legitimation of this art phenomenon was largely due, on the one hand, to the transformation of the philosophy of culture and, on the other, to the emergence of the idea of Dionysian values, the irrational in culture with the appearance of the concepts of the unconscious and the designation of its meaning in the context of personality and culture. The latter made the field of psychiatry valuable, while psychiatrists became new authorities of delimitation in culture and art. These processes of the crisis of the European rationalist paradigm were clearly reflected by avant-garde art, whose artists – the Cubists, Expressionists, Primitivists, and Surrealists – began to incorporate these strange phenomena in their works, thereby simultaneously assimilating them and giving them new characteristics. Thus, the article focuses on the process that was reverse in relation to the processes described earlier. Not marginalia – naive art, primitive cultures, and the creativity of

the mentally ill influenced the field of "high art", but the legitimate and rational field of European culture discursively changed and became ready to include marginalia.

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