

**“ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” UNIVERSITY OF IAȘI
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SCIENCES**

**Doctoral Thesis
ART AS A WAY OF RECOVERING IDENTITY
- Summary -**

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Key-words

art, alienation, radical alterity, moderate alterity, human identity, identity recovery, individualism, intentionality, existentialism, phenomenology, personalism, persona, interface of the Self, biologic, grotesque, carnivalesque, art festivity, dianoetic, menippean satire, social subversion, artistic transgression, tattoo, body modification, mythography, kryptia, efebria, gorgoneion, appearance rethoric, autonomy interpretative, simulation, post-modernism.

Introduction

In this doctoral thesis entitled *Art as a Way of Recovering Identity* we proposed to highlight one important function of art, to recover human identity. The need of the paper comes to our understanding of art as active and necessary participant, even if not sufficient, to the way human being perceives itself and interact with the environment from a physical, biological and psychosocial perspective. The approach is not equivalent to defining art, but to revealing an aspect that might participate later to broaden the theoretical framework necessary for a coherent definition.

Difficulties of contemporary definition attempts, both in terms of *art* and *identity* as concepts, constituted the plot for questioning within meaning areas covered by these terms, our goal being to permeabilize the limits of these concepts in order to easily highlight the determining relationship that is established between them.

We understand the artistic phenomenon as being continuously on-going and difficult to define, especially since the defining limitations would remove the conditions of the artistic creativity. Therefore we aimed to demonstrate the shifting focus in art theory from essentialism to functionalism and the incoherence of some of the new defining attempts. We considered *identity* as resulting from the relationship between the numerical and the qualitative dimension in the human being, which can be lost through definitional tension to one of these dimensions and recovered by noting the values of the continue sweeping dynamics between the physical and the psychological self, between the individual understood as natural substantiality and the person as artificial

relational interface.

Our work has revealed some of the theories that allow such an understanding of the concepts under consideration and some of the practical artistic ways in which human beings build up their identity. We realized this approach over five chapters preceded by an introduction and followed by conclusions, using a bibliography from different areas of human understanding that provided us with the material we needed to build a dynamic argumentation and open to further improvement.

The method we used is tributary to the term *dianoetic*, defined by Jean Jaques Wunenburger in *Philosophy of images* as “a mixed use of rationalized concepts and images allowing us to find a stable order of the empirical.”¹ In our case, the rationalized images are interpretations, descriptions and analyses of artistic manifestations but also human behaviours, participating in highlighting the importance of past aspects usually in subsidiary of the used concepts, and the “stable order of the empirical” corresponds to the personalized understanding of each one who reads this paper, it being important for making flexible the critical model of reality thus created, flexibility being a necessary condition for any system to survive and, even more, for the thinking systems.

Besides the term “dianoetic”, we added “menippean satire”, not because our research would be ironic, but to bring a necessary critic to a “false and threatening orthodoxy” and that it does it using “at least two languages, genres, tones or different cultural or historical periods” as expressed Howard Weinbrot² when defining the aforementioned literary genre. We didn’t call our method menippean satire out of respect for the illustrious representatives of the genre, Lucian, Varro, François Rabelais and, closer, Lewis Carroll, James Joyce and Marshall McLuhan, although we used some of their creations as a model and example in the argument. This includes both description and interpretation, the appeal to logic and to

1 Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Philosophy of images*, translated by Muguraş Constantinescu, revised edition and afterword by Sorin Alexandrescu, Editura Polirom, 2004, p. 272-73.

2 Howard Weinbrot, *Menippean Satire reconsidered: from antiquity to the Eighteenth century*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2005, p. xi,

authority as distinct ways, but convergent in their intention to unveil the artistic phenomenon of concept garments that transforms it from a space of freedom in a docile instrument in favour of some more or less concealed ideologies.

To avoid that our thesis turn into such an ideology we noted only those findings that contribute to the creation of a fertile silt of meanings, both guarantor of artistic creativity and the perpetuation of life, the result of our research is an assumed poststructuralist form of that “I know that I know nothing” implicit in *Socrates’ Apology*.

In the first chapter – **Art: between essentialism and functionalism**, we briefly addressed important conceptions in contemporary art theory and philosophy in order to reveal the reality polarization known by the term *art* between essentialism and functionalism.

Morris Weitz’s anti-essentialism demonstrates the linguistic turn, of Wittgensteinian origin, of the aesthetics, highlighting the role of *family resemblances* in the construction of meaning of some terms and demonstrating the futility of the attempts to define art. Refusing the definitions that do not distinguish between description and evaluation, Weitz considers that there is no definition to provide the necessary and sufficient condition for something to be art. Turning the question *what is art?*, in *what kind of concept is “art”?*, concludes that “art” is an open concept whose closure would cancel in advance the conditions of artistic creativity. The role of aesthetic theory is, according to Weitz, that of putting together “seriously made recommendations”³ to address in some way, certain features of art.

Nelson Goodman considers that the focus should be on *what is* a work of art rather than on *when is* an artefact a work of art. This happens when the symbolical function is an aesthetic one and, to be so, one of the following symptoms must be present: syntactical density, semantic density, relative saturation, exemplification⁴ and multiple and complex⁵ reference. Goodman considers that images

3 *Ibidem*, p. 35, “seriously made recommendations”.

4 Nelson Goodman, *Languages of art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Second Edition, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1976.

5 Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*, Indianapolis: Hackett

contribute to the formation of the worlds in the same manner as linguistic labels, the works of art reorganizing the world provided by ordinary experience by exemplifying shapes, colours, by expressing what they do not, literally, possess.

Returning to the question *what is art?*, with an original defining attempt, Roger Pouivet seems to be an exponent of a neo-essentialism in aesthetics. His definition would be superior to the previously existing ones in that it would meet three existence conditions for any definition: intelligibility, neutrality and universality. It is a “functional and substantial” definition calling work of art “an artefact substance whose aesthetic functionality determines its specific nature”. Pouivet borrows the idea of aesthetical functionality from Goodman and proposes it as the “specific nature” of an art work substance. We demonstrated that Pouivet’s statement violates the condition of intelligibility postulated by the author; it cannot be thus considered a definition. Phrases like *artefact substance* or *specific functionality* have an undetermined character and is not “immediately comprehensible”, thus requiring a larger theoretical perspective to be understood, which the author refuses it to the definition of art he looks for. In the absence of art theory to determine their meaning, corresponding to Pouivet’s statement are everyday objects such as sunglasses, audio headphones or any article of clothing. His statement can be however considered a necessary stage in the post-postmodernist process of reconsideration of the importance of artwork ontology.

In the second part of the chapter we have updated a series of assumptions latent in our thesis, the one of *art as life* and the one of *art as representation*. The first assumptions was valued comparing Richard Shusterman’s *pragmatic aesthetics* with James K. Feibleman’s positivist attempt to assume an aesthetic ideal of life, and the latter turning to the concept of *object-person* present in the anthropological theory of art stated by Alfred Gell as in the theoretical contributions of Nathalia Heinich. Feibleman reveals the importance of the human being situated outside the boundaries of everyday life for a possible correction of it, and Shusterman stresses the importance of senses in establishing the criteria of analysis of a

Publishing Company, 1978.

satisfactory existence. The somatic aesthetics proposed by Shusterman implies the existence of a self that cannot be circumvented, placing the author at odds with Richard Rorty who denies the existence of such a self; he opted for the variant of an autopoiesis to fully reconstruct the human being. Our position supports the importance of maintaining the *illusion of total novelty* as a determinant of conscious learning, it being necessary for social cohesion and to perpetuate the forms of society. In addition, if at a conceptual level the novelty can be challenged, mental forms perpetuating in time, originality can be found in the practical demonstrations, technological innovation offering the place for the affirmation of novelty for the work of art.

The concept of *object-person*, theorised independently of one another, by Nathalie Heinich and Alfred Gell in anthropological approaches to art, has the important role of rescinding the identity relationship between human being and person. These researchers analyse the way in which the artefacts get involved in social structures, whether familiar to us, or pertaining to “primitive” populations, demonstrating that objects meet in these structures, in various ways, functions usually reserved to human beings. Their contribution is welcome for the perspective they offer on the work of art as a representation, distinct from the sense of formal similarity accessible to senses, traditionally given to the concept of mimesis. This intermediation function accomplished by the works of art is exemplified by Nathalie Heinich by analysing the *person regime* containing both the works of art and the relics and fetishes. Opposite to the “tautology regime” described by Didi-Huberman and which manifests through reification, this regime is a “regime of faith” and is characterized by “assessing specific meanings or powers” to the work of art. Alfred Gell talks about a similar phenomenon when proposing *abduction* as a logical operation by which the artefacts exercise their agency on human being. He explains this phenomenon in relation to the ancient theory of Titus Lucretius Carus about flying simulacra, considering the images as being webs that peel of the surface of the objects and reach the eye. The theory falls toward a broader vision that offers the sight a dual nature, the passive sight exemplified earlier being the counterbalance of the idea of active sight, exemplified by Plato in *Timaeus*. Borrowing

Gell's terminology we analysed the *Shroud of Turin* example offered by Heinich to demonstrate how an artefact can go through all three stages of person regime (relic, fetish and artwork) abducting the intentionality of the people interacting with it. The demonstration proposes the artwork as a place of accomplishment of the symbolic function by aesthetic reunion of the participants' intentions, providing a coherent example for Pouivet's statement in which the aesthetical functioning gives the artefact substance specific nature.

The second chapter – Identity: between the individual and the person builds a theoretical route of the human thought movement between the meanings of the concept of identity, taking as a pretext the relative opposition between the terms *individual* and *person*. The main purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that identity is a relation between these two dimensions of human being, the terms above can be recovered only through intermediate positioning rather than absolute value, although tensions at each extreme can be highlighted. The second purpose is to highlight the oscillation of the human being between individual and person, in its efforts to assert its identity, using examples from the visual arts, providing a possible coherent historical trajectory of thought and sensitivity.

The first goal was achieved by the addition of important representatives of different schools of thought, out of the desire to highlight, on the one hand, the weaknesses of these systems, and, on the other hand, the points we considered to be well supported.

Jean Piaget's perspective, according to which human knowledge is but a perfected form of a biological mechanism of regulating energy exchanges with the environment and avoiding entropy demonstrates the position according to which the identity premises is the biological body. Valuable because it helps to explain the concept of identity with that of *homeorhesis* – meaning balance in development – this is poor by denying, within this homeorhesis, the important role of the representational intelligence state he sees much lower and not laterally, as we consider it, to the logical-mathematical abstraction. Piaget's view declines the religious belief or artistic creativity the important role in the formation of the human being's self-image and the effective interaction with the environment. Our point of view claims the pre-eminence of the *bio-logics* to

biology, the logic of life perpetuation giving an increased importance to the representational intelligence, be it religious or artistic, even when rigorous mathematical logic invalidates it.

Substance dualism asserted by René Descartes considers the soul to be the premises of the identity, but, as demonstrated Baruh de Spinoza and, in the twentieth century, Gilbert Ryle or Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the soul cannot be regarded as having a detectable substance clearly distinct from the biological body, Descartes's system allowing further ironic development like "the Ghost in the Machine". His position offers the personalist alternative to the individualism based on scientific atheism but his mechanistic view of the body is influenced by the spirit of his age. Merleau-Ponty's considerations about phenomenal body effectively mediate between the physical and the psychological body.

Jean Paul Sartre was concerned to demonstrate the fact of our existence in the world, considering the human body as an object among objects governed by laws that are accessible to consciousness without arising from it. Maurice Merleau-Ponty considers body subjectivity as moving ahead of reason and consciousness in the knowledge of the surrounding world by showing the position of maximum clarity of perception, the pre-objective body laws manifesting themselves as a movement organizing the world through spontaneous evaluations. Both authors challenge the Cartesian body approach, choosing to talk about the body in the first person, but Sartre considers objective knowledge of the surrounding world as possible by the abstracting and universalizing capability of rational thought, closer to the position taken by Piaget, Merleau-Ponty emphasizing instead on the active participation of the body in the act of perception, which is equivalent to scoring the significance of the level of sensor-motor adjustments. The views of the two thinkers have been integrated into our research by understanding the body as being determined to some extent both in the act of perception, as well as any of its actions performed by the objects around, understood in their instrumental relations, by virtue of some objective laws, but whose objectivity cannot be understood as it is but through the reflective abstraction of the thought. In absence of this capacity of abstraction, however, we will not have the ability to circumvent this determinism, it manifesting with maximum

efficiency, and therefore the objects of which the surrounding environment is made up, including works of art, understood in their physical, material and unsymbolic dimension, are partially responsible for our way of being in the world. Self manifests itself subjectively through its very body size, trying to adjust its position in relation to the surrounding objects under a series of pre-objective rules that establish the maximum clarity of perception and the highest effectiveness of the action. These pre-objective rules operate within our body, in the sense of that goal that we call bio-logic, its presence being, according to Aristotle, possible even without any form of deliberation, consciousness or intelligence. Synthesis of the two initial points can be made only by critics from the bio-logic position of the self that must exceed any objective or subjective state of existence into an area of existence conditioning more favourable to *telos* of life preservation, both for the individual and for the species. In other words, whenever the objectivity of the instrumental environment we find ourselves in assumes, at the level of anticipating specifically for cognitive adjustments, a possible termination or deterioration of the (life) organization function, the bodily self has to turn to a more complete adequacy of action at the bio-logic telos, even if this is the equivalent of the projection of not paying attention to whose subjective construction of perception, an image to be immediately abandoned when its consequences are contrary to the fundamental purpose.

Considering, following the above, that identity is established as self-image, we used the Jungian concept of *persona* to highlight how this picture arises and to propose a new name for it: *interface*. The self is not accessible but as a picture, but an image we consider different from that in which we are presented the environment. We named interface the meeting space between these two images, accepting the fact that, in its establishment, the space assigned by the individual is larger than the one given away by the environment, given the different action effectiveness of the two causal sets. The person, in the etymological sense of mask worn by the individual, is an image made up largely of the effects recorded as a result of its actions. Withdrawal of its own individuality to perpetuate this image can counteract the human being's bio-logic purpose, endangering its existence, as the mito-graphic exercise on Heracles's death episode

aimed to reveal. Individuation is therefore an important process for the recovery of identity, as emerges both from Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology and Kazimierz Dabrowski's positive disintegration theory. The latter, I brought it to your attention given the emphasis it lays on the beneficent importance of denying the social structures in building self-identity despite negative appearances accompanying the phenomenon. The special interest of this researcher for the artists' psycho-social category suits our thesis, justifying the possibility that the option for autonomy and personal freedom, expressed in artistic creation, might serve as a model for similar attempts.

The second purpose of this chapter was to illustrate the identity route between individual and person in interaction with the environment by taking examples of artistic practice. Perceived as an expansion, this route used as the first milestone body markings, for medical therapeutic purpose, of a mummified prehistoric individual, then compared to tattoos with therapeutic meaning of a fifth century BC Scythian chieftain, the latter coexisting with other whose symbolic and aesthetic importance cannot be denied. As second landmarks, sculptures of two distinct phases of Hellenistic art, *Dying Gaul*, *Gaul and his Wife* and *Gigantomachia* on the Altar of Zeus from Pergamum, were also considered through the interpretation made by William Fleming in *Arts and Ideas*. It highlights stylistic evidence revealing the shift of the interest from the human as an individual, with aesthetic features and specific, to the human as part of an universe governed by uncontrollable forces, the bas-relief contributing to establish the Greek temple as a space for identity projections, the one that brings together around the entire area of social constraints justifying their existence by establishing the correspondence with the cosmogonic size of the myth. A contemporary form of the temple, the museum is an institution that Marcel Duchamp questions intervening in the symbolic order through the ready-made site which changes the perception of the individual about self and environment through a change of relationship that eventually brings up cultural conditioning of perception. The virtual environment of the internet is the area of existence of human being's avatars, totally detached from the material world, it constitutes the most appropriate space for the artistic questioning the authenticity of

the artwork in the age of mechanical reproduction, as it can be understood from Michael Mandiberg's work, *AfterSherrieLevine.com*, but also for questioning the intermediaries participating in the composition of our identity image, including mundane items of clothing, not to be neglected, as evidenced by the same artist in his computer art project, *Shop Mandiberg*.

In the third chapter – Grotesque: aesthetic or existential category?, we considered grotesque as the category able to answer equally to human existence and its aesthetic classifications. Considering irrelevant the delimitation between the fundamental and secondary aesthetic categories we proposed grotesque as the basis of the existence categories, it is not encumbered by the need for category purity and clarity that the thinking claims for categories such as beautiful and sublime. Grotesque, we consider, is the symbolical sum between material reality and the intention intersecting in the constituting acts of their different subjective versions. Within the work of art it results as an author economical meeting with the public, from the intersection of need of some different types of beautiful: beautiful as fitting and beautiful in itself. In human existence, it involves the integration of technological determinism in shaping the reality which, even when reduced to the mechanical actions of debris over the existential space, it is the result of human intentionality, with symbolic connotations that cannot be circumvented. A brief subjective history of grotesque highlights the possibility of coherent discourse ordering of various artefactual events that could pass as arbitrarily grouped under the umbrella of the term, along with the possibility that these artefacts might play an important role in building the identity of those who created them. Comparing the specific relating of the literary theorists Marshall McLuhan and Mikhail Bakhtin to François Rabelais's work we showed how the grotesque of the biological body, as shown in the triviality of the ambivalence: generation-degeneration of sexuality and excretion becomes a benchmark for criticizing social, political and religious organization, according, to some extent, to the specific environmental influence of printing communication. Searching autonomy, be it the human being faced with social constraints, or the artwork faced with contingent intentions, is what brings together in understanding Bakhtin and Gadamer's visions of celebration. Comparative analysis of the

concepts of *carnavalesque* for Mikhail Bakhtin and *art celebration* for Hans Georg Gadamer enables the understanding of the grotesque as neutral dimension of coexistence of various human intentions, and the work of art as a perpetually renewed reality of the meaning resulted from bringing together its various historically recoverable situations. Exemplifying our position with a short interpretation of the work *Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci we have accredited the conclusion that every work of art is the place of existence of a grotesque symbolism not because it refers to a finite reality, be it mental image or physical object, depicting it with an also finite image, completed, but because it allows bringing together many more images, mental or materialized, more than letting to see the moment immediately after the initial production by the artist. The existence of the continuous work of art and its meaning is amplified by each new appointment of the receiver with that object. It is updated, moved into a perpetual present, and this continuous present of the work is not given by the refusal of its history, but by the refusal of its stratification in perspective, by its bringing into mosaic simultaneity, by meeting in one grotesque image of all hypostasis that the object has been through.

The fourth chapter – Alienation: theory and representation is made up of three parts. First we established our particular relation towards the positioning of the alienation concept in philosophy, the brief description of the phenomenon of alienation supporting the idea that otherness is necessarily a trainer of the Self. Adopting the assumption that the reaction to the radical otherness of death largely determines social, political and religious differentiation of human beings, we have pointed out that the moderated forms of otherness, corresponding to the biological alteration or geo-political alienation, are factors of maintaining the cohesion of social structures.

In the second part we discussed the possibility of using mythology as a method to study the feeling of alienation. We justified this option by joining structuralist and anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss's vision about shamanism as a way of psychological improvement superior to psychoanalysis, the variant supported by the poststructuralist sociologist Jean Baudrillard, proposing the anthropological study on the art of the present as an alternative to

aesthetics, disregarding at the same time the psychoanalytic method because it operates a replacement of the “psychic principle of reality” with the “psychoanalytic principle of reality”.

The third part of the chapter contains a mito-graphic exercise of description and interpretation of psycho-social implications for representations of Medusa, a particular instance of a representational reason with a prolonged temporal existence and wide geographical spreading taking the form of parallelisms. Appealing to Jean Pierre Vernant’s writings, Stephen Wilk and Alfred Gell, we showed that the popularity of this representation is due to the symbolic reference to the phenomenon of radical otherness of death, the power to act on the human psyche being used for various purposes, from religious to military, respectively the artefact gaining ameliorative meanings and connotations precisely because of its ability to induce panic. The apotropaic value of the artefact is related to the mythological context associating Medusa with turning into stone and death, but in the case of parallelisms that we can detect through comparative study of myths, it is present in the aesthetic immanence of the object, causing the opponent’s captivation of attention, which is not always a supernatural one. Gorgoneion’s action capacity on the viewer’s psyche was speculated at the level of social and military interaction during the formation of classical Greece, an institutionalised form of body aesthetics can be detected by analysing the rituals of the times but also the behavioural prescriptions for the military and social category of Ephebia.

In **the fifth chapter – Forms of alienations in contemporary artistic manifestations**, we showed how historical precedents can be used to study the current behaviours of human beings for which appearance rhetoric, though often unconscious and driven by uncritical relation to models provided by the media, is of great importance in building identity. Starting from the idea of art as action, understood as critique of the institutional constraints, whose important exponent by artistic avant-garde manifestations was Marcel Duchamp, we approached the space of body modifications dividing the aesthetic engagement in this field between artistic transgression and social subversion. Particular cases of artists such as Hermann Nitsch and Orlan provide the necessary framework to demonstrate aesthetic transgression space, between the

psychological transformation landmarks of the participants to art-action with Dionysian mystical meanings and physiological transformation by means of plastic surgery of the artist's body, who interrogates himself as the object of the constraining action of the conventional social environment. In what concerns social subversion by visual appearance we considered that it occupies an action space delimited by two contrary positions: simulation and dissimulation. The historical precedent of military subversion offered by the Spartan Kryptia and the Athenian correspondent of Ephebia, demonstrate how the institutionalization of social, political and military disintegration contributes to subsequent, full and conscious acceptance of integration in structures whose necessity is initially rejected. Relating to the ancient concept of *metis*, described in detail by Marcel Detienne and Jean Pierre Vernant, enables the understanding of subversion as a fundamental form of self-protection, therefore of preserving the identity by disguising it. Aesthetic poignancy of different appearances sometimes accredits the idea of absence of a fundamental self, of a profound structure of the human being, a strategy that has no function other than defending by concealing it, once visible it becomes vulnerable.

Speculative analysis of the symbolic sources of the physical and mediatory pack of an energy drink demonstrates a subversive strategy of economic structures to ensure, under the guise of entertainment and rejection of social norms, the consumers' consistent participation. The symbolic message present in the aesthetical construction of the package transforms the nutritional function of the content in support for the action of socio-economic enrolling, whose circumvention it should have supported.

Under the pretext of exemplifying a particular case of the concept of *pathetic fallacy* stated by Jonathan Ruskin in *Modern Painters* we showed how personal image does not belong to the person who assumes it as identity, resulting from complex social interaction whose goals can counteract the biological individual who uses it as a self-interface. The case of a quote from *Visita a Picasso* by Giovanni Papini which, after more than half a century, is still unfairly attributed to the Spanish artist demonstrates how human beings use the image of others, indifferent to its authenticity, to obtain social and economic benefits. We highlighted this fact by

comparing the image of Picasso provided by Papini with the example of art agency offered by Alfred Gell to illustrate the concept of *distributed person*. Malangan Idols, sculpted and painted especially for the celebration of a funeral rite, are brought to life and then killed symbolically by buying the right to remember what they symbolize, being irrelevant as material objects and counting only as *internalized image*. They demonstrate that personal image of human individuals is the result of such an artistic creation, but it is not limited to their own intervention, but it is mainly the result of the intervention of the other members of society who shape it and transform it to their own advantage. In the same way, the image of Picasso created by Papini is used in contemporary journalism to justify the controversial possession of some of his works.

In the latter part of this chapter we discussed about the ritual of the art criticism and the artist's interpreting autonomy referring tattoo, a peripheral form of artistic creativity hoping for official recognition. Although justified as an attempt to augment the symbolic importance of that body modification act, the desire for recognition of tattoo in the art world undermines the autonomy of those who appeal to it as a form of affirmation of personal identity, the profound individual involvement of the person subjecting his body to such an intervention not being able to be authentically included in any valid curatorial project. The significance that the painful act of skin burning brings with itself is accessible to the greatest extent to the possessor of that tattoo, not being able to be recovered by external interpretations. The body of the tattooed one, both as material part and as psychological evidence, in an invisible part of the artefact out of which only the design is offered to interpretation. The analysed sample is to demonstrate the importance of intrinsic intentionality of the author of an artwork that cannot be denied by any interpretation.

We have reserved the space destined to **conclusions** to discredit a possible univocal understanding of our approach. Considering that the univocity of discourse can turn philosophy into ideology, any discursive form, linear or of understanding of reality, with high aggressive potential, we tried, using the definition of dialectics given by Mikhail Bakhtin, bringing it to the form of the dialogue. In fact, the characters involved in this dialogue are brought together by our intention and not by a natural chrono-topical

positioning, the relevance of their joining together being given by the *family resemblances* between the concepts and the ideas they support. We didn't aim to reach a maximum objectivity, this being a goal of the sciences, but the expression of our own opinions endorsed by mediating voices from different fields of knowledge, these authorities playing the roles we entrusted in a theatrical representation that makes the natural and necessary connection between art and philosophy.

Research in neuroscience tend to split the action of the two cerebral hemispheres in *propositional* knowledge, specific to the left hemisphere, and *appositional* knowledge, specific to the right hemisphere of the human brain. The prepositional mode can be characterised as *linear, detailed, successive, controlled, intellectual, dominant, or mundane*, whereas the appositional one can be considered by opposition *artistic, symbolic, simultaneous, emotional, intuitive, creative, docile, or spiritualized*. We chose to consider the mode of action of art as being appositional, that is a non-positive one, but that cannot be translated into negative. It allows the human being to act towards its own becoming, but the action is performed through a lateral movement that does not cause a defensive withdrawal of others.

The role of our research was intended to be that to highlight the importance of the manner of interaction with the environment that art makes available to the human being, but without discrediting the positions that offer the reason a privileged place. Putting these positions in dialogue, although sometimes at a level exceeding the characters' expressed intentions, we sought to demonstrate that they are contrary only as form and not as purpose. Thus, our work becomes as much a *representation* as far as philosophy, sharing the same regime with the works of art whose meaning is communicated mainly by sensory appearance. Reconsidering different forms in which the relationship mastery-slavery was understood, it does not involve a transformation of art in philosophy, but the understanding that art is a powerful form of affirmation of identity, precisely because it is and has always been a weak form of philosophy. This weakness of art should not be understood as inferiority, but rather as a passive activity. Offering sensory appreciation, artistic image captures the receptor's attention neutralising the aggressiveness of intentionality

that motivates it and merging it into the communion of a privileged space that enables the human being to reconsider its own strategy of asserting oneself.

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