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**ART AS SOCIAL ACTIVITY:
THE AVATARS OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE ON
CONTEMPORARY ART**

PH.D. THESIS

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KEY WORDS

aesthetic discourse, aesthetics –philosophical –sociological, art history, art institutions, art market, art worlds, artist, artistic field, autonomy of art, avant-garde, contemporary art –international –in Romania, discourses on art –internalist –externalist, exhibition, modernity, modern art, museum of art, philosophy of art, postmodern, social activity, sociology of art, transgression, utopia.

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ABSTRACT

Our work deals with contemporary art in terms of types of discourse about it. Our hypothesis is that, due to its multifaceted nature, the contemporary art requires a plural and horizontal approach. Thus, to the analysis of contemporary artistic practices and their philosophical foundations we add the sociological approach to art, namely the study of the institutional/organizational level of contemporary art, highlighting the interdependence of artistic practices and institutions. This perspective brings about pertinently the use of conceptual and methodological arsenal of the sociology of art, along with philosophical analysis, in investigating contemporary art. We identified three avatars of contemporary aesthetics – ontological, political and analytical – which indicate how the aesthetic-philosophical discourse has been related so far to the arts, as well as to its entire tradition. Yet the philosophical discourse itself is to be adapted to this new object, contemporary art.

INTRODUCTION.

The introductory part of this paper lays down the context, the problems and the position of our approach in relation to two types of approaches to contemporary art, the philosophical and sociological, as well as its main assumptions. The *context* is that of the “power of the image” in the postmodern culture, where the visual arts have a prominent position: they are perfectly folded on the mass media and have become synonymous with artistic creation itself. Cinema, architecture, fine arts, decorative arts and design, along with audio-visual media, are means of producing images that have become part of everyday life. However, among the visual arts, there stands a *hybrid species of art*, which is, on the one hand, painting, sculpture, drawing or photograph, while on the other hand, it can be film, architecture, design, media image or even theatre.

This species of hybrid art is, on the one hand, the heir of the “fine arts” as far as painting, sculpture and drawing are part of its arsenal of medium of expression, although nowadays it is not always beautiful. On the other hand, it is the successor of modern art, but something seems to irreducibly distinguish them. Although challenges to the art, such as those launched by the historical avant-gardes, continue to exist and even intensify in our times, a number of differences can be detected that justify the distinction between contemporary and modern art. Oriented toward appropriating ever new materials as well as processes and forms of expression from other branches of creation – such as the performing arts –, interested in the latest results in sciences and new techniques and technologies, paying attention to everyday objects, to public space and the environment, addressing topics ranging from those relating to human general issues or the creative process itself and those aimed at socio-political realities, characterized by an air of freedom that allows, on the one hand, the use of all styles available, without the worry of a hierarchy, and on the other hand, to arrogate the right to provoke, to shock or even to bore, this species of hybrid art has been labelled *contemporary art*.

It is true that the term “contemporary art” is not unequivocal, considering its powerful temporal nature, which gives the impression that the entire current visual production in the line of fine and decorative arts come under this appellation. According to the vision shared by most theorists who have addressed this area, not all the works of fine and decorative arts fall in the contemporary art. The problem is that the line between what is called “contemporary art” and another art indebted to the tradition of fine and decorative arts is far from clear.

This issue is the starting point of our approach. What is contemporary art? What is its relationship to the tradition of fine art and modern art? How is it different from other art that

claimed the same tradition? What are the mechanisms by which one work receives the label of “contemporary”, i.e. how is it ratified the cultural value of a contemporary art work? What kind of aesthetic experience can it offer as long as its hybrid nature radically transforms our relationship to the artworks, projects and actions that are claiming the status of contemporary art? What are the procedures underlying the economic value – often exorbitant – of the contemporary artworks? On what rationale is to be founded the public funding for an art that not only rejects beauty, but also claims the right to defy certain categories of the audience or to criticize the institution that has funded it?

Here are a series of interrogations that were the basis of diverse researches in recent decades, coming from both the traditional disciplines of art – philosophical aesthetics, art history and art criticism – and the area of social sciences – anthropology, sociology, economics or political science. The social sciences’ interest in contemporary art indicates that this can be addressed from many perspectives. In terms of Vera Zolberg’s *Constructing the Sociology of the Arts* (1990), the *internalist* viewpoint of aesthetics and art history – oriented toward the triad artist-artwork-aesthetic experience – is now rejoined by the *externalist* vision who understands contemporary art as a social activity like any other.

Clearly, art has always been part of human social activities. What should, however, be noted is that, especially since the Renaissance, art was given a privileged status in relation to other activities, the historical and philosophical discourses on art – formalized as disciplines in the eighteenth century – contributing decisively to build this vision. The mutation operated by the externalist discourse in relation to the internalist one has to be understood from this perspective: sociology, for instance, deals with art as an ordinary social activity, treating its higher investment in terms of social representation. However, this does not imply that philosophical aesthetics and art history were not at all interested in the social dimension of art. On the contrary, since the nineteenth century both philosophers and historians have investigated the relationship between art and society, the sociology of art being, in fact, the descendant of such an approach.

Addressing contemporary art in terms of social activity is also justified in terms of its current mode of organization. As in other fields, contemporary art has a very complex institutional structure that takes place on two systemic axis: the non-profit pole comprising museums and alternative spaces and the profit-oriented pole, i.e. the art market with its commercial galleries and auction houses. This type of institutional organization is unprecedented, both because of its essentially international nature and of the interest of most national states to support contemporary creation. Another argument in favour of the

externalist perspective on art is the way the artists themselves refer to their activity for more than two decades: the artist considers himself/herself a professional like any other that has to be subject to the same rigor as an entrepreneur, for example.

How is our approach positioning itself in relation to the two types of approaches to contemporary art? Clearly, the perspective that we rally to is the philosophical aesthetics and, more broadly, the humanist discourse on art. However, we believe that given the complexity of the object of analysis, the conceptual and methodological instruments of the sociology of art are extremely important. Thus, the first hypothesis of our paper is that the realities of contemporary art require an approach that combines the conceptual constellation and theories of humanistic discourse with the results of the sociological approach to art. In other words, as observed by Heinich Nathalie in *La sociologie de l'art* (2001), the analysis of contemporary artistic practices and their philosophical foundations should be joined by “the investigation of the regularities that govern the proliferation of actions, objects, actors, institutions and representations that compose the collective existence of the phenomena subsumed under the name of art.” In other words, what we argue is that the changes in the art world in the last decades do not allow a vertical approach of the artworks and contemporary art practices (the vertical approach meaning that the internalist approach – searching for the “essence” of art – would be superior to the externalist one, concerned with contingency). The protean and eclectic realities of contemporary art reject the disjunction between the two approaches, claiming for a plural and horizontal perspective.

CHAPTER 1. CONTEMPORARY ART: PRACTICES, INSTITUTIONS, EXHIBITIONS.

Once made this assumption, our first objective is to put light on the multifaceted nature of contemporary art. Accordingly, the first chapter of our work is devoted to the analysis of contemporary art in terms of three aspects: practices, institutions and exhibitions. A first stage of our approach is the scrutiny of the transition from modern to contemporary art. Unlike a series of visions according to which a border cannot be clearly drawn between the two (Jimenez: 2005) or, more radically, the operation of demarcation between modern art and contemporary art would be impossible (Zaharia: 2002), we argue that establishing a demarcation between the two is possible provided that this passage may be equated with a process carried out on several fronts. From our point of view, the continuation of the process of de-traditionalization of artistic practices, initiated by the historical avant-gardes – a process that consisted, on the one hand, in the de-elitization and de-militarization of vanguardism and,

on the other hand, in the de-materialization of the artwork – is closely linked to the emergence of new art institutions – museums, on the one hand, and commercial galleries, on the other hand – which, despite the growing involvement of national states, organized themselves, starting with the seventh decade of the last century, into an international system (Moulin: 1991). In other words, the transition from modern art to contemporary art can be more clearly explained if the analysis focused on the differences between the avant-garde artistic practices and those associated with the emerging artistic movements during the 70's is joined by the analysis of the institutional system that was gradually implemented after the Second World War. The role of newly established institutions was a decisive one: the very articulation of a new conception of art is made possible by this new institutional system whose main characteristic is its international dimension: contemporary art is essentially an international art. Already by this demonstration it is more clearly outlined the type of alliance between the philosophical and sociological approaches: to the conceptual analysis of contemporary artistic practices we add the investigation of institutions seen as ways of structuring the collective artistic activity.

As for the time frames of this process, if it is impossible to accurately marked its beginning, our view is that the terminus of the process of transition from modern to contemporary art can be clearly determined. It is the exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form: Works, Concepts, Processes, Situations, Information*, organized by the curator Harald Szeemann at the Bern Kunsthalle in 1969. Our major argument in this regard is the fact that the de-aesthetization (Rosenberg: 1972) and de-materialization (Lippard: 1973) of the artwork as a result of extreme experiments during the '60s lead to the establishment of the exhibition as a *privileged vehicle* of contemporary art, as only the exhibition is able to capture the procedural nature of the new artistic practices. Beyond its major role in the museum consecration of 60s' avant-gardes, the exhibition in Bern singles out in relation to other exhibitions organized in the same period by initiating a process of radical transformation of the status of the curator. Since the *When Attitudes Become Form* exhibition, his/her role is no longer limited to a simple interface position between the artist and the institution hosting the exhibition of the latter: the curator is now primarily an author (Heinich, Pollack: 1996).

Accordingly, our choice to investigate the developments in contemporary art between 1970 and 2000 from the angle of the most important exhibitions of the period in question is linked to this new feature of the exhibition. The review of the major developments in contemporary art, considered both from the point of view of the artistic practices and from the

point of view of the institutional organization, aims to highlight the new self-consciousness of the artist and of the contemporary art world installed around 1990.

In the second part of the chapter, we change the angle of approach by examining the relationship between contemporary art and what is conventionally called the general public. The purpose of the investigation of the series of rejections of contemporary art is to highlight its problematic nature as regards both its reception by an unwary public as well as the justification of its public financing. Observing that since 2000, the rejections of contemporary artistic practices are much less vehement than in the past, we make the assumption that contemporary art should be entered into a new regime of production and reception: a new production regime as one may notice a remission of its character once highly transgressive and subversive; a new mode of perception because, on the one hand, the public has learned the “rule of the game” (Cauquelin: 1996) while, on the other hand, contemporary art has been fully integrated into mass culture (Michaud: 1997, Jimenez: 2005).

CHAPTER 2. THE CRISIS OF THE DISCOURSE ON CONTEMPORARY ART.

The second chapter of the thesis deals, in its first part, with a typology of issues at the core of the discourse on contemporary art. Firstly, we identify a gap between a discourse built on a modern conceptual armature and a research object that challenges that discourse. Consequently, our attention turns to the positioning of the humanist discourse on art in general and of the philosophical aesthetics in particular. How have philosophers responded to this challenge? A promising solution seems to be the approach formulated by the analytical aesthetics that, unlike conventionally called continental aesthetics, does not consider itself to be the heir of philosophical idealism and romanticism by refusing the ideological and political investment of modern art operated by the historical avant-gardes. Thus, the founding questioning “what is art?” is replaced by the question “when is art?”. However, the complexity of the issue of the value of contemporary art understood in a typological sense – *cutting-edge* – seems to exceed the philosopher’s competence, as long as the process of labelling an artwork as “contemporary” is an attribution of the actors and a result of the procedures specific to the contemporary art world which are to be more easily identified by the sociological approach. From our point of view, what is at stake here is not that the aesthetic approach is no longer relevant but the fact that the traditional role of the philosopher in relation to contemporary art must be profoundly revised. Through this argumentative structure we highlight once again the need for joining the philosophical and sociological perspectives: philosophical approach oriented toward the analysis of conceptual issues is to be

joined by the sociological analysis of operating modes (Michaud: 2003). In the second part of the chapter “The Crisis of the Discourse on Contemporary Art” we propose an examination of the historical context in which the modern discourse on art appeared. The purpose of this investigation is to highlight its theoretical foundations as well as on its conditionalities in terms of disciplinary developments. First we show that the formation of modern discourse is characterized by continuous differentiation and specialization of art history in relation to philosophical aesthetics whose discursive supremacy gradually erodes by the end of the nineteenth century, particularly because of its propensity to a purely conceptual approach to art, most often integrated and subservient to philosophical systems of much larger stakes. Another issue highlighted here refers to the relationship of aesthetics and art history to the sociological thinking. What we show is that, despite the recognition of art’s heteronomy – i.e. its dependence on certain social processes – both aesthetics and art history tend to grub up an autonomous field for it. From this perspective we demonstrate that the two traditional disciplines of art, beyond their differences, are characterized by what is called the “internalist” approach of art that runs counter to the “externalist” perspective upon art generated by the sociological thinking and then by sociology itself as formalized discipline (Zolberg: 1990).

CHAPTER 3. THE DISCOURSE OF CONTEMPORARY AESTHETICS.

In the third chapter we approach the current forms of the contemporary aesthetic discourse. What is the current status of philosophical aesthetics? How does it relate to an object that cannot be folded on its theoretical assumptions formulated throughout the centuries past? Moreover, if philosophy itself as a mode of knowledge is put into question from the perspective of the postmodern thinking and of a post-industrial society that requires immediate operational results, which is today the validity of the aesthetic approach? This set of interrogations gave rise to a number of theoretical proposals ranging from the declaration of the “loss of speed” or even the “disappearance” of aesthetics to a reactionary retreat on the discipline fundamentals in conjunction with a radical rejection of the recent contributions indebted to other disciplinary areas. Between these extremes, most of the proposals coming from aestheticians and philosophers have either endorsed a conceptual reformulation of the theoretical arsenal of the modern discourse on art or consisted in a radical mutation of the ways of problem-solving, as in analytical aesthetics.

Our contribution in terms of systematisation of these proposals consists in the identification of three avatars of contemporary aesthetics: ontological, political and analytical – depending on the type of relation maintained with the tradition of philosophical aesthetics

and on the types of responses to the challenges of contemporary art. The analysis of the approaches of four French philosophers – Marc Sherringham, Jean-Marie Schaeffer, Luc Ferry and Yves Michaud – published in the context of the debates on the crisis of contemporary art in France, is meant to illustrate the three types of current positioning of aesthetics: the withdrawal toward its traditional core, i.e. the assertion of aesthetics' dependence on ontology; the approach of art and aesthetics from a political perspective; the evacuation of metaphysical or political conditionalities of the artistic and aesthetic spheres combined with the orientation toward an analytic philosophy approach, either in the form of an analysis of the language used to describe art or in the form of a research of the aesthetic experience indebted to the recent results from various disciplines such as biology or anthropology.

As for Marc Sherringham's approach in *Introduction à la philosophie esthétique* (1992), we consider that it takes credit for its ability to respond to the "crisis" of legitimacy of aesthetics by addressing it in terms of paradigm and anomaly. This merit, however, is offset by the limits imposed by the author himself through identifying the engine of the paradigmatic changes with the turmoils that have marked the development of the Western thinking upon being, thus affirming the aesthetics' dependence on ontology. Accordingly, we state that the author's approach is symptomatic for the first avatar, i.e. the withdrawal of aesthetics toward its traditional core.

Regarding Jean-Marie Schaeffer's approach, first we show that, unlike Sherringham who argues against the revitalization of critical paradigm, the author of *L'art de l'âge moderne* (1992) strongly advocates for the legitimacy of the renewed interest in Kantian aesthetics. The German thinker's approach constitutes for Schaeffer an early critique of what he calls *speculative theory of Art*: the sacralization of art, its understanding as ecstatic knowledge by the romanticism, respectively. The French philosopher's critical enterprise in relation to the *speculative theory of Art* is based on the identification of a series of consequences – flawed from his point of view – on the current discourse on contemporary art, on the artistic practices themselves, as well as on our relationship with art. The demystification of the speculative theory of Art operated by Schaeffer as well as his foreshadowing of a new kind of analysis of the aesthetic conduct constitute for us the theoretical ground for designating the French philosopher's approach as representative for the analytical avatar.

As regards Luc Ferry's endeavour in *Homo Aestheticus* (1990), we show that the author's approaching of the history of aesthetics in terms of a history of subjectivity is not directly motivated by the intention of recasting the discipline. Ferry's first intention is actually

the edification of a socio-political theory of the contemporary individualism. Nevertheless, the French philosopher's proposals are highly useful both in terms of a disciplinary review and in terms of explaining contemporary art. Understanding contemporary individualism as "withdrawal from the world" helps decrypting contemporary art as a construction of a subjective, idiosyncratic world that bears no reference to a common world, previous to the art experience.

Together with Ferry's theoretical proposal, Yves Michaud's attempt is representative for the political avatar, i.e. the understanding of art and aesthetics from a political perspective. Our argument for this classification lies in the fact that the author of *La Crise de l'art contemporain* (1997) shows that the so-called "crisis of contemporary art" is related to a representation of art that is part of the political project of the modernity itself. But, like the idea of the democratic citizenship, art with capital "A" is, in fact, a utopia. What we retain as essential in Michaud's approach is its close link to the sociological theory of social representations: here is an example of a promising conjunction between an art sociology theoretical assumption and a philosophical analysis.

The returning at the end of Chapter 3 to a new stage of Jean-Marie Schaeffer's approach – the one held in *Adieu à l'esthétique* (2000) – aims to highlight the radicalization of the author's theoretical options. The demystification of the sacralization process operated by the Romanticists is now replaced by the rejection of the aesthetic doctrine, i.e. the rejection of any kind of philosophical enterprise that subsumes the aesthetic and artistic spheres to its needs of completeness. The radical challenging of the whole aesthetic tradition is oriented by Schaeffer towards proposing a new kind of aesthetic approach that ceases to be a legitimizing means for the artistic production and that seeks only to analyze the aesthetic conduct from a naturalistic perspective.

CHAPTER 4. A COMPLEMENTARY DISCOURSE: THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO CONTEMPORARY ART.

In the course of the fourth chapter we examine the sociological approach to art understood as an alternative discourse in relation to the traditional aesthetics and as complementary one in relation to the contemporary aesthetic discourse. Firstly we investigate the differentiation of the sociology of art in relation to the philosophical aesthetics and art history. Reviewing the stages of this differentiation is meant to highlight the mutations operated by the sociology of art, both in terms of theoretical assumptions and of methodological arsenal put in place. In this regard, we show that approaching "art as society"

(Heinich: 2001) as well as the use of methodological tools such as statistical measurements, empirical observation and qualitative methods (such as the interview) produce a very useful type of knowledge regarding contemporary art. Based on this background, we propose an analysis of four of the most important sociological theories of the recent decades: *the theory of the relative autonomy of the artistic field* of Pierre Bourdieu (“The Two Markets of Symbolic Goods”: 1971), *the theory of the contemporary art system* formulated by Raymonde Moulin (*L'artiste, l'Institution et le marché*: 1992), *the art worlds theory* developed by Howard Becker, (*Art Worlds*: 1982) and *theory of social representations* by Heinich Nathalie (*Être artiste. Les transformations du statut des peintres et des sculpteurs*: 1996).

The relevance of the theory of the relative autonomy of the artistic field consists in the fact that it inaugurates the approach of the artwork value in terms of social construction, thus surmounting the risk of falling into psychologism of the philosophical discourse that has explained the relativism of values in relation to a single standpoint, that of the subject. From Bourdieu’s perspective, the artwork takes the form of a dual structure – cultural and economic – the report of the two being constituted by opposition and homology. By highlighting the constructed nature of the artwork value, the French sociologist demystifies the mechanism of value “transsubstantialization” and that of artwork “ontologization” as incorrect. Another innovative feature of Bourdieu’s approach is that the author no longer addresses the issue of the autonomy of the artistic field in terms of the opposition to market mechanisms but in terms of the struggle for domination – whose corollary would be the dialectics of distinction – both within the field itself as well as between the different social classes, in this case between the intellectuals (writers, artists, etc..) as holders of symbolic capital, and the dominant class, possessing political and economic capital. Our final observation with respect to the theory of artistic field autonomy is that, despite the essential contribution made by Bourdieu to the edification of the art sociology, the issues of domination and distinction, especially considering the decline of the role of the arts in building a cultural capital as well as the hybridization of the cultural practices observed in our current society which shifted from being *a class* society to *a mass* one, need to be deeply revised.

By analyzing the theory of the contemporary art system formulated by Raymonde Moulin, we stress the interdependence of the art market, represented by the gallery and collector, and the international network of arts institutions, museums and alternative spaces, represented by the curator. But beyond the structural homology of the two axes of the art system, the logic on which the two are grounded remains different, as the market functions according to the competition law, while the international network of artistic institutions

functions in the logic of imitation. Our conclusion is that the main merit of this approach is its exemplary capacity to provide a means of orientation in the contemporary art world, as well as a deep understanding of its structures and procedures.

As for the art worlds theory developed by Howard Becker, we first highlight the major innovation operated by the American sociologist in relationship to Bourdieu's approach: the abandonment of building up typologies and hierarchies in favour of the orientation towards an analysis of the ways through which the art world actors, in terms of the agreement or confrontation, invent categories and classifications – in particular what is or is not art – whose values and meanings can change gradually or dramatically depending on the changes in the cooperation network that produces them. For the American sociologist, the social world of art is defined as a network of actors that cooperate in order to achieve specific activities ranging from routine activities, formally organized and strictly repetitive, to unstable activities, subject to rapid change. The merit of such an approach consists in extending the analysis to all categories of actors involved in producing art as well as in highlighting their interdependence.

If Becker investigates the issue of the artist in terms of types of relationships maintained by individuals with a given art world – integrated professional, maverick, naive artist and folk artist – Nathalie Heinich changes the angle of approach, analyzing the status of the artist from the perspective of the social representations associated with the word artist. Specific for the approach of the French sociologist is that, unlike those undertaken by Bourdieu or Becker, it breaks with the critical tradition of the art sociology that was aimed at denouncing all mystifications regarding the artistic phenomenon, from those endorsed by the artists themselves to those shared by the general public. From Heinich's perspective, the sociologist's task is to clear out the reasons for which the art world actors, on the one hand, and the general public, on the other hand, use certain representations, especially when these representations are less relevant to their subject. Consequently, the worth of the French sociologist's analysis is precisely its coalesce of historical facts with the scrutiny of social representations that demonstrates the participation of both dimensions – the real one as well as the symbolic one – in building the social status of the artist.

CHAPTER 5. CONTEMPORARY ART IN ROMANIA: A NEW APPROACH.

The last chapter proposes an investigation of contemporary art in post-communist Romania in terms of an approach that joins the philosophical analysis with the theoretical and methodological proposals of the art sociology. Our hypothesis is that the tension and

fragmentation of the Romanian contemporary art world are rooted in the institutional shifts and institution-building processes of the 90's. Subsequently, we focus on the reconfiguration of the contemporary art system after 1989, addressing its impact on artistic practice, as well as its reception by the art professionals. What we point out is that the Romanian contemporary art world of the late 90s was not a functional one, both because of its inadequate institutional development and of its lack of common conventions, namely the transition from a centralized and unequivocal system to a democratic and pluralistic one destroyed the old set of conventions, making the cooperation within the contemporary art world in Romania almost impossible.

The entire argumentative structure developed during the five chapters is aimed at examining the validity of our first hypothesis, namely that the protean and eclectic realities of contemporary art challenge the disjunction between the internalist approach and the externalist one, calling instead for a plural and horizontal perspective. As regards the current status of the humanistic discourse on art in general and that of the philosophical aesthetics in particular, what we reveal is that, once clarified the relation with the set of theoretical assumptions inherited from the modern discourse on art, on the one hand, and with the approaches to art indebted to other disciplinary areas, on the other hand, philosophical aesthetics would be able to articulate a new structure and a new profile fit to play a decisive role in understanding the protean and eclectic realities of today's arts, as well as in understanding the types of experiences that they produce.

CONCLUSIONS.

The final part of the thesis summarizes our research results in order to highlight its contribution to the current debates in Romania regarding both the contemporary art and the status of aesthetics. We believe that the main merit of our approach is the use of the conceptual and methodological arsenal of the art sociology with respect to contemporary art. As far as we our knowledge goes, the Romanian researchers in visual arts showed only a marginal interest so far over this type of approach, unlike the theorists from the literary area who have already made a series of proposals based on the art sociology's assumptions. A second quality of our endeavour is its contribution to highlighting the multifaceted nature of contemporary art that claims for a horizontal and plural discursive approach. In this direction we formulated the proposal of a conjunction of the philosophical analysis with the one specific to the sociology of art. Another aspect of our approach which we consider important is the identification of a typological series of stances of the contemporary aesthetic discourse

in reference to three standpoints: the “crisis” of the philosophical discourse, the challenges coming from the contemporary art as well as the current prominence of other types of discourses. The three avatars of contemporary aesthetics that we have identified – ontological, political and analytical – indicate how the philosophical aesthetic discourse is positioning itself in relation to the above-mentioned standpoints, but also to its entire history. Ultimately, our hope is that this thesis would thus contribute to the edification of a new kind of aesthetical approach.