

DEFINITION AS A LANGUAGE ARISING FROM POLITICS AND IN CONFLICT WITH ART: A PERSPECTIVE INFORMED BY JACQUES RANCIÈRE`S THE POLITICS OF AESTHETICS AND ALEJANDRO JODOROWSKY`S ENDLESS POETRY

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This paper investigates the act of defining art as a politically charged process that often conflicts with the nature and purpose of art itself. Drawing on Jacques Rancière's theory of the "distribution of the sensible" and the aesthetic regime, as well as Alejandro Jodorowsky's film *Endless Poetry*, it contrasts the political logic of definition – rooted in exclusion, visibility, and categorization – with the diverse and evolving language of art. Through historical, philosophical, and cinematic analysis, the text argues that the language of politics and that of art operate according to fundamentally different principles, despite their functional similarity. It further examines how art challenges established frameworks governing perception and the presentation of truth. While politics depends on binary logic, exclusion, and control, art navigates multiplicity, presence, and transformation. Ultimately, the paper questions whether it is even possible – or desirable – to define art within frameworks foreign to its nature.

Keywords: Aesthetic regime, Definition of art, Distribution of the sensible, Visibility and exclusion, Language and perception, Contemporary artistic practice, Politics of aesthetics, Jacques Rancière, Alejandro Jodorowsky, Philosophy of art, Critical theory, Cinema and visual arts

В статье акт дефиниции искусства рассматривается как политически ангажированный процесс, который часто противоречит природе и предназначению самого искусства. Опираясь на теорию Жака Рансьера о «распределении чувственного» и эстетическом режиме, а также на фильм Алехандро Ходоровски «Бесконечная поэзия», автор противопоставляет политическую логику определения, основанную на исключении, видимости и категоризации, разнообразному и развивающемуся языку искусства. С помощью исторического, философского и кинематографического анализа в статье утверждается, что язык политики и язык искусства, несмотря на их функциональное сходство, действуют в соответствии с фундаментально разными принципами. Далее рассматривается, как искусство бросает вызов устоявшимся рамкам восприятия и представления истины. В то время как политика зависит от бинарной логики, исключения и контроля, искусство управляет множественностью, присутствием и трансформацией. В конечном счёте, статья задаётся вопросом, возможно ли – или желательно – вообще определять искусство в рамках, чуждых его природе.

Ключевые слова: Эстетический режим, Определение искусства, Распределение чувственного, Видимость и исключение, Язык и восприятие, Современная художественная практика, Политика эстетики, Жак Рансьер, Алехандро Ходоровски, Философия искусства, Критическая теория, Кино и изобразительное искусство

Introduction

In the context of ongoing discussions about what art is today, and whether or how it should be defined, I would like to examine certain aspects of our observation of art as a preliminary step toward inquiring into it – a step not necessarily inscribed within the current dominant discourse on art and its definition. In order to do so, I explore Jacques Rancière’s concept of the “distribution of the sensible”, as presented in his book *The Politics of Aesthetics*, using it as a framework for observation. I highlight several ideas introduced by the author, considering their potential implications within what he defines as the “aesthetic regime”. Partly, I contrast these ideas with excerpts from Alejandro Jodorowsky’s film *Poesía Sin Fin* (Endless Poetry), as well as with other art practices,

drawing on various writers for further reference. By doing so, I aim to deconstruct an approach to art centered on the act of definition, thereby raising a question about the quality of our observation.

Contextual overview: Politics of Aesthetics & Endless Poetry

Jacques Rancière divides the arts along a timeline into different “regimes”. The first, the “ethical regime (of images)”, is grounded in Plato’s thought. In this regime, the notion of ethics is intertwined with the arts in relation to their content and purpose. (Rancière, 2004, 20) The second regime, the “poetic or representative” one, centers on the separation between the ideas of fiction and lies. (Rancière, 2004, 35) It is a regime of visibility concerning the arts. (Rancière, 2004, 22) A poem’s action is not an imitational construct but a dynamic composition of knowledge situated in a particular “space-time,” a movement of “intelligible structures.” (Rancière, 2004, 36) Consequently, poetry is freed from any ethical requirement, such as adherence to truth, since it has already positioned itself as fiction (Ibid.). Furthermore, it is “superior” to history, as it follows its own logical cause, unbound by erratic events along a timeline. (Ibid.) The “clear division between reality and fiction makes a rational logic of history impossible as well as a science of history.” (Ibid.)

Rancière goes on to affirm that, with the advent of the “aesthetic revolution” and the Romantic era, the boundaries between the “logic of facts” and the “logic of fictions”, however, become blurred and entangled with “the new mode of rationality that characterizes the science of history” (Ibid.). Poetry is reduced to an “arrangement of the signs of language.” Nevertheless, this does not mean that language now serves a purpose in itself; on the contrary, the transformation immerses language in “the materiality of the traits by which the historical and social world becomes visible to itself, be it in the form of the silent language of things or the coded language of images” (Ibid.). Navigation within this new domain of signs defines a novel modality for the production of fiction. It is “a way of assigning meaning to the empirical world,” inscribing it into different entities – “places,” “groups,” “articles,” “faces,” “spaces,” “circles,” “bodies” (Ibid.). This fictionality, which characterizes the aesthetic age, unfolds within the limits of “the potential of

meaning inherent in everything silent, and the proliferation of modes of speech and levels of meaning.” “Descriptive and narrative arrangements in fiction” become essentially indistinguishable from those of the social and historical world. (Ibid., 37)

With the notion of *narrative*, “writing history and writing stories come under the same regime of truth” (p. 38), entailing the idea of a “common destiny.” Here, the “‘logic of stories’ and the ability to act as historical agents go together.” (Ibid., 39) As a result, art and politics lead to “reconfigurations of the shared sensible order.” They “call into question the distribution of roles, territories, and languages.” (Ibid., p. 40) It follows that, according to Rancière, the politics of aesthetics operate at a level where both art and politics follow a similar modality of functioning: narration, interpretation, redistribution, and reconfiguration, which produce effects in the real world. The question, then, is whether this functional modality, taken as a segment, reflects the broader dynamics in which it is situated, as in the relation of an event to its context, or, alternatively, to what extent is it indicative of a similarity in nature between art and politics, if at all?

The following film excerpt offers insight into this question from an artistic perspective:

In Alejandro Jodorowsky’s 2016 film *Poesía Sin Fin* (*Endless Poetry*), the director recounts his youth in Chile through the story of a young boy who grows into a poet. Having befriended another poet, Alejandro and Enrique take a walk through the city.

- “‘Alejandro, do you agree with me that the language we were taught carries crazy ideas?’ asks the friend.”

- “‘That’s right, my dear Enrique,’ answers Alejandro. ‘Instead of thinking straight, we think in a crooked fashion.’”

Transferring their thoughts into their world, as they face a truck parked directly in front of them, Alejandro declares, “We, poets, aren’t constrained in any way,” and they decide to maintain a “straight line,” walking over the truck instead of around it, so as to continue their path. Then, upon reaching the house of an elderly lady, they knock on her door, presenting themselves as “poets in action” and asking if she would let them pass through her house, since it is the only way to keep their path straight. When she inquires why they are doing so, Alejandro answers, “to develop our

consciousness,” at which point she acquiesces and lets them in. The poet friends conclude, “la poesía es un acto,” which translates as “poetry is an act” or “poetry is action.”

Drawing from the example above, art indeed narrates, interprets, redistributes, and reconfigures, all the more so given that the effect it has in the real world is not limited to a mere “distribution of the sensible” through the “assignment of meaning.” Poetry not only produces an effect but embodies the action itself. The poets’ actions influence others in the city: the truck driver ends up throwing oranges at them because they walked over his truck, and the lady who lets them into her home rearranges her bedroom so that they can continue straight. Yet, while this film may provide evidence of the similarity in the functional modalities of both art and politics, it also highlights a fundamental issue – language – which, as will become evident below, ultimately resists such resemblance. The following passages aim to corroborate this distinction by tracing the different dynamics underlying each. At the outset, it is useful to map out the attributes of the aesthetic regime in contrast with artistic practices.

The attributes of the aesthetic regime

In *The Politics of Aesthetics*, Rancière specifies that it is the “dispute around the relations of words to things that makes up the heart of politics.” (Rancière, 2004, 40) This implies that the very act of definition is political – since essentially, these relations of “words to things” *are* definitions – while politics is revealed as the dispute surrounding these definitions: a space where word and thing relate through their very disassociation; a place where separation establishes the relation.

This logic of separation finds further resonance in the historical overview examined below. Much light is shed on the halo surrounding the need for definitions through the work of H. U. Gumbrecht in *Production of Presence*, where he traces the European history of the humanities and highlights, alongside the interpretative trend, the Cartesian heritage and its emphasis on world-reference. (Gumbrecht, 2004, 31) Furthermore, the “classification of knowledge” led by Descartes, as noted by Paul Oskar Kristeller in *The Modern System of the Arts* (Kristeller, 1951a, 525), represents

a political act, wherein the new *structure of knowledge* functions as a means to gain power by navigating a defined (and thus controlled) system – effectively asserting power over past knowledge. While art in the 18th century still upheld the trinity of the “good, true, and beautiful” in aesthetics, the emancipation of the natural sciences a century earlier, driven by the “modern” understanding of the possibility for an “accumulation of knowledge” (Kristeller, 1951b, 24-26), laid the groundwork for science to become the actual bearer of truth.

Moreover, in discussing the aesthetic regime, Rancière describes it as “a way of assigning meaning to the empirical world,” inscribing it onto different entities. (Rancière, 2004, 36) Yet, the determination of those entities – “places,” “groups,” “bodies,” and so forth (Ibid.) – their very perceptual formation, or, in Rancière’s terms, “the materiality of the traits by which the historical and social world becomes visible to itself” (Ibid.), is implied through acts of definition, classification, and categorization, all of which relate to the political dimension of defining knowledge.

In other words, the act of definition parcels out the world into concepts one seeks to grasp, with the aim of controlling the world from which those concepts are derived. (This reflects the Moderns’ response to the Ancients: we will now control what we know.) This act of definition is political in both its motivation and objective. The modern concept of science as a truth rendered tangible – thus proven, and consequently trusted – provides the platform on which the act of definition can thrive, since defining entails making tangible, and hence making visible, as will be further explored below.

Accordingly, within the Cartesian “modern” tradition, acts of definition, classification, and categorization are fundamentally and purposefully based on separation and exclusion. The act of definition itself involves a deliberate choice of exclusion in both its practice and form, separating that which is from that which is not. The clarity and guarantee offered by science depend on specific conditions available only within its exclusive domain of observation. On the other hand, the “proliferation of modes of speech” that Jacques Rancière attributes to the aesthetic regime of art functions as the very fabric through which politics thrives,

generating an illusion of movement via an oscillation grounded in dualism – centered on dispute and separation.

What also characterizes definition – and constitutes a notable difficulty in defining art, as Berys Gaut succinctly points out – is the “circularity” of definitions. (Gaut, 2000) However, circular definitions are not uncommon, as words are used to define other words within an exclusive space shaped and delimited by language. Consider, for example, the term “value.” According to the Cambridge Dictionary, it is defined as “the importance or worth of something for someone.” (Value, n. d.) The term “worth” is defined as “having a particular value, especially in money,” (Worth, n. d.) while “important” means “necessary or of great value.” Similar examples abound. (Important, n. d.) This implies that a definition has no bearing on our understanding of the terms it supposedly elucidates, unless – knowingly or unknowingly – we also take into account our understanding of the remaining terms.

Moreover, the philosopher observes that the “aesthetic revolution” introduces “a new mode of rationality that characterizes the science of history.” (Rancière, 2004, 36) While he reveals a political aspect to the aesthetic regime, he also describes it as “a new regime for relating to the past.” (Ibid., 25) The past is inherently inscribed within it, as this regime is new only to the extent that it carries the old – it is “the newness of tradition.” (Ibid.) As such, definitions are always oriented toward what has already been. In turn, truth in the present necessarily implies an embedded past.

Another significant attribute of the aesthetic regime is visibility. In Rancière’s terms, the Poetic regime is a “regime of visibility.” (Ibid., 22) The aesthetic regime similarly rearranges the visible; it is a “recomposition of the landscape of the visible”. (Ibid., 45) The notion of ethics, which persists across all three regimes, plays a role in affirming it. While the regimes move from the ethical to the poetic-representative, the notion of ethics recedes – yet only from view – since, as stated previously, it is the positioning of poetry as representation that liberates art from having to justify itself with regard to truth. Accordingly, in the aesthetic regime, the notion of ethics is not readily apparent. As Rancière notes, “the limits between the ‘logic of facts’ and ‘logic of fictions’ become blurred.” The notion of ethics manifests as separation itself – between truth

and lies, past and present, and even within the process through which the aesthetic regime assigns meaning to various entities. (Ibid., 36)

In this dynamic, truth increasingly takes the form of exclusion. Whereas in the representative regime truth distinguished fiction from lies, in the aesthetic regime truth defines the regime itself: it is the very exclusion that sustains and delimits it as a distinct order. Truth becomes yet another reaffirmation of separation.

On that account, the notion of visibility is significant not only because of the transference of the idea of truth but also as an imposed framework for perceiving it. As Rancière notes, “artistic practices are ways of doing and making” (Ibid., 13), and “aesthetic practices are forms of visibility that disclose artistic practices.” (Ibid.)

Art in its own terms

Having outlined the attributes of the aesthetic regime, the following passages will contrast these with artistic practices, in order to explore what their similarities and differences may reveal. One may begin by noting that artists have engaged with visibility in various ways, challenging any definition based on it, arguably in response to the dispute it stirs. A contemporary example is the artist and collector Chislain-Mollet Miéville. More intrinsically, the notion of visibility also recalls works of imaginary art, such as those by the lettrists Isidore Isou, Maurice Lemaître, and others.

More broadly, the gap sustained by dualism in politics is addressed differently by art. Through conceptual, interactive, and immersive art practices, among others, artists have addressed inclusiveness, each in their own distinct way. This is exemplified by Yayoi Kusama’s 1965 *Infinity Mirror Rooms – Phalli’s Field*, where the experience transcends the mind confronting its binary projection to become an immersive situation of endless perpetuation. Similarly, the 1965 *Untitled* piece by Art & Language, consisting of a mirror hanging on the wall, integrated the audience into the work by reflecting their image, thereby creating a connection in which observation and the observed mutually constituted one another. Marina Abramović’s 2010 exhibition *The Artist Is Present* focused simply and directly on presence as the artwork’s single most meaningful aspect.

By multiplying representations and critically questioning them – whether in terms of representation itself, conceptualization, expression, or other forms of human manifestation – art aims to narrow the gap founded on dualism. It achieves this by posing questions that prompt genuine movement and inquiry. Lawrence Weiner describes art spaces as “a place to pose questions.” (*Out of Sync – Art in Focus*, 2016) Renaissance artists, Impressionists, Dadaists – all primarily engaged in inquiry. As Weiner states, “Art is about things you do not know.” Even when conceptual, art seeks a realm beyond dualism – a space of multiplicity or paradox, as exemplified by the works of M. C. Escher or Piero Manzoni’s excrements priced at gold value.

In the 1990s, Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami declared: “One must always keep in mind that they are watching a film. Even in moments when it seems very real, I would like two arrows to blink on both sides of the screen, so that the audience does not forget that they are watching a film and not reality – a film made based on reality. This approach has intensified in my more recent films and will continue to do so. I believe I need a more discerning spectator. I am opposed to manipulating their emotions or holding them hostage. When the audience does not undergo such sentimental blackmail, they remain their own master and observe the facts with a more conscious eye. As long as we are not subjected to sentimentalism, we can master ourselves and the world around us.” (Kiarostami, 1995)

In further dissonance with politics, art has been inquisitive throughout the decades. Whether it was Magritte’s apple or O’Keeffe’s iris, art has enabled us to reflect on “the Treachery of Images” while also allowing us to go beyond the immediate concrete by examining it more closely. This is the light that brightens the Little Prince’s face as he sees the box with the sheep inside. “This is exactly the way I wanted it,” he exclaims, referring to a sheep only he can see.

In 2011, the Beirut Art Center presented *Image in the Aftermath*, a collective exhibition featuring various artists, including Walid Raad. The audience was invited to see something by representing it in their mind. By “blurring” different logics of representation, the works primarily aimed to question those very logics. (Groys et al., 2011)

Moreover, with regard to the “newness of tradition” mentioned above, brought about by the “aesthetic revolution”, one might ask: to what extent has this past, embedded in the present, done justice to the arts?

Throughout history, art has not been uniformly incorporated by political power. Although various art movements have undergone comparable processes of institutionalization, some movements – such as Dadaism or Conceptual Art, for example – have not been integrated in the same way as Renaissance or Classical art.

The jolts introduced by the works of Duchamp, Kosuth, or Beuys, for example, have not exactly blended into the prevailing system of power. Many artistic works have been relegated in such a way that they are remembered today merely as historical events, making their reoccurrence meaningless while depriving them of any actual value in shaping today’s political landscape. Surrealism in art today functions largely as *déjà vu*. But where else do we *voir*¹ surrealism except in retrospective exhibitions that reveal who Gala really was, trace André Breton’s footsteps through Paris, or serve as inspiration for contemporary fashion designers?

The challenging works *Fountain*, *One and Three Chairs*, and *Social Sculpture* remain unanswered, as the only possible response would have required a structural transformation of the established system of thought and power. Rather than integrating these works, the power structure has isolated them by incorporating history instead. While these works remain *frozen*, it is history that is accredited, becoming a central pillar supporting the prevailing political system. In this context, art institutions – functioning as a form of “accumulation of knowledge” – are thereby positioned as authoritative voices on art.

In parallel, art itself relates differently to the past.

The film *Poesía Sin Fin* presents a scene in which the director stands behind his younger self – the main character – forming a single body as they both look directly into the camera lens. He says to him, “*I am whom you will become, or you are whom I have been.*” There is no distinction between past, future, and present, as the two figures unite in the eyes of the spectator – in the now. They

¹ see

speak of the fear of death, which is but a disguised fear of living, the meaning of life, and the duty to free oneself from guilt by fully expressing oneself.

Everything about this scene – renouncing the timeline by merging past, future, and present into one; addressing the meaning of life as an essential and contemporary issue; pointing to a genuine relation between cause and effect, wherein the fear of living is disguised as the fear of death; and, equally importantly, presenting guilt under a new light, as related to the harm one causes oneself rather than to others – draws a notable distinction between art and politics. Hence, the film, as an artistic practice, although inscribed within the aesthetic regime, stands nonetheless in complete dissonance with the politics of that regime. To substantiate this claim more fully, the following passages will further refine this dissimilarity, ultimately bringing its underlying dynamics to light.

Art and Aesthetics: A language divide

This being said, it is worth noting that Jacques Rancière, when addressing “the autonomy of art or its submission to politics,” dismisses the debate as “vain” (Rancière, 2004, 19). He justifies the futility of arguing over the submission – or lack thereof – of art to politics, elucidating that “the arts only ever lend to projects of domination or emancipation what they are able to lend to them, that is to say, quite simply, what they have in common with them: bodily positions and movements, functions of speech, the parceling out of the visible and the invisible. Furthermore, the autonomy they can enjoy or the subversion they can claim credit for rest on the same foundation.” (Ibid., 19)

On the other hand, when referring to historicity, the philosopher nonetheless draws a distinction between “two different things”: that which is “specific to a regime of the arts in general,” in one respect, and, alternatively, “the decisions to break with the past or anticipate the future that take place within this regime.” (Ibid., 20) Discussing “literary locution,” he states: “This has always been, as is well known, the phobia of those in power and the theoreticians of good government, worried that the circulation of writing would produce ‘disorder in the established system of classification’” (Ibid., 39)

Clearly, aesthetics and arts are two distinct movements. This is further sustained through examples of systemic censorship, especially in its most extreme forms, such as when in relation to the genocide in Gaza, Palestine, whereby many artists have faced censorship (Baere, 2024)—and among them, to name but one, Ai Weiwei, over an online post he made. (Rufo, Youngs, 2023)

Referencing Plato in *The Politics of Aesthetics*, Rancière mentions artisans as “not [having] time to devote themselves to anything other than their work”, and notes that “having a particular occupation defines what is visible or not in a common space.” (Rancière, 2004, 12) In accordance with this, what today manages to align time with visibility is the “spectacle” or the show, as presented by Guy Debord in *La société du Spectacle*, where work is equivalent to *visibility time*. Correspondingly, the “recomposition of the landscape of the visible” that Rancière describes in relation to the aesthetic regime becomes a rearrangement of how truth is presented – an integral aspect of the show or spectacle.

In this regard, dualism, as the core of politics, underpins visibility by establishing a gap between what is visible and what is not. Equally, the “dispute in the relation of word to thing” reflects a dual connection between word and action – where one is visible and the other is not. Within this oscillation, meanings are determined, with attention focused on their disassociation. They also define language around the very dichotomy that delimits them.

This entails a displacement of trust – a core implication of what has been exposed. Just as the notion of ethics has drifted across the regimes to ultimately shape the last one, truth serves to benefit the dynamics of visibility in the aesthetic regime. From the time most forms of art were regarded as crafts, the arts have been fundamentally associated with an idea of mastery, which, in turn, is linked to truth. This is supported by the philosopher, who affirms that in the representative regime, “assigning [art] to a *technē*” meant that “it’s a technique and not a lie.” (Rancière, 2004, 43)

However, as Rancière argues, “the aesthetic regime of the arts disrupts this apportionment of spaces,” and “it also calls into question the neutralized status of *technē*, the idea of technique as the imposition of a form of thought on inert matter.” (Ibid.)

Indeed, technique has been transformed through Da Vinci's anatomy, Caravaggio's composition, Manet's light, Braque's deconstruction, Pollock's movement, Tom Bagshaw's illustrations, and Mathieu Le Sourd's installations. Over time, as our grasp of form and its significance evolved, mastery came to stand apart from technique.

Although technique remains the voice of a regime of evaluation, definition, and categorization, it is mastery – in its broader sense – that has revealed itself in situationist art, ready-mades, art brut, silk screens, silent music, fog installations, large-scale sculptures, real-life theatre, and possibly even invisible art. Thus, the emphasis on the idea that art is not a lie reflects a relationship of trust vested in it. More specifically, this trust lies at the heart of art's need to justify itself as fiction – an imperative central to its very purpose.

Nevertheless, according to Jacques Rancière, within the aesthetic regime, language does not acquire a purpose in itself. This severing of language from function, however, is only possible within a regime of segmentation. Indeed, it is precisely this *amputation* that reveals the fundamental distinction between art and politics.

In an interview with Christine Palmiéri, Rancière asserts that “we must have gone astray thinking that artistic modernity was about art freeing itself from any constraint other than itself. In reality,” he says, “this relation art holds with that which it is not has always occupied modern art.” (Palmiéri, 2002) In Jodorowsky's movie, the poets declare that their action aims at “the development of consciousness.” (Jodorowsky, 2016)

The purpose of art emerges as its *causa sine qua non*. Furthermore, the interdependence of purpose and process reveals what is perhaps the most fundamental characteristic of art – or rather, of its language, of art as language. This is not meant in a reductionist way, confining Rancière's presentations to language, as in a movement from the spatial to the discursive, but as an invitation to perceive language as purpose within process, which, only in a framework of segregation would be seen otherwise.

The following film scene illustrates the idea: ‘*Not giving me anything, you gave me everything*’, says Alejandro Jodorowsky, addressing his father. ‘*Not loving me, you’ve taught me the absolute necessity of love*’, he goes on, describing what effectively constitutes

a *paradigm shift*. In Alejandro's case, deeply experiencing the absence of his father's love is akin to the mastery of nothingness – an experience that enables a paradigm shift, brought about through an understanding of nothingness in its full dimensionality. Beyond realism, figuration, painting, motionlessness, and visibility, art is continually redefined, each time in a different way, as it perpetually renews itself, while mastery sustains this constant reinvention.

Conclusion

From the above, one can deduce that within the aesthetic regime, art perceives, speaks, and engages by acknowledging that which it is not – its purpose lies precisely in this interest in otherness. Its language, in other words its mode of being, is as diverse as its interlocutors, for art is in constant evolution.

In contrast, the language of politics is fundamentally different, reduced almost to a binary yes-or-no state. Its purpose is merely to maintain the status quo, perpetuating a dualistic oscillation between visibility and invisibility.

In another scene from the film *Poesía Sin Fin*, people wearing masks cheer for the leader Ibañez as he rides a horse at the head of the crowd. The young Alejandro walks in the opposite direction, shouting, "*Death to Ibañez!*" The dictator and the cheering crowd pass him by without any interaction, while the poet's friend tries to reason with him, explaining that they cannot hear him.

And while the dictator and the cheering crowd do not react to the poet – failing to integrate him into their perception – he does perceive and respond to them. He speaks, reacts, and remains visible to the spectator. It is only to the dictator and his crowd that he is not visible.

At this point, it is worth recalling Rancière's definition of aesthetics as "the system of a priori forms determining what presents itself to sense experience" (Rancière, 2004, 13), and "not a theory... but a specific mode of being." (Ibid., 22) For if we are to infer that politics and art are two different languages, it becomes clear that within the aesthetic regime, *I don't speak you* is equivalent to *you don't exist*.

In conclusion, on the margins of the discourse surrounding the definition of art, a closer look at the available tools and frameworks

of observation reveals that these may express a language very different from that of art itself. Among these tools are definitions – circular, grounded in exclusion and dualism, and oriented toward the past. Beyond the scientific facts that may support them, such definitions are ultimately the result of political action. They tell a biased story.

Art, by contrast, has spoken a different language and has continually sought to outgrow a regime that seeks to contain it. It is a quest in perpetual movement. So, on the one hand, how can one understand art – let alone contain it within a definition – when everything from the frame of observation to the language applied may be inherently different in nature from that of art? On the other hand, how much is one truly observing art when nothing beyond the frame of observation is taken into account? Perhaps reflecting on these questions can lay the groundwork for approaching art through a different lens, possibly even in another language.

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