

## Le statut de l'esthétique et/ou de l'art dans la philosophie analytique

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**ABSTRACT :** As a philosophy of signification and meaning, based on the logical analysis of language as a methodological paradigm, stemming from modern logic, from which its themes are approached, analytical philosophy has also been interested in the *definition* or the *essence of art*, a concern for aesthetic research. This reflection aims to show that aesthetics, anchored in the history of so-called continental philosophy and backed by metaphysics, was first marginalized in the beginnings of analytical philosophy, including one of the projects nurtured by its founders, was the elimination of metaphysical considerations in the language of thought, and it was subsequently reconsidered in the philosophy of the second Wittgenstein. It is from this aesthetic philosophy and/or Wittgenstein art that one can locate the starting point of aesthetics and/or analytical art and better understand its specificity. Examining this reflection on aesthetic/analytical art in Wittgenstein's views reveals the affirmation of a cultural and societal anchoring of artistic production, which appears to be justice done to African art.

**KEYWORDS :** Art, African art, Aesthetics, Analytical philosophy, Metaphysics

**Résumé :** Comme philosophie de la signification et du sens, reposant sur l'analyse logique du langage en tant que paradigme méthodologique, issu de la logique moderne, à partir duquel ses thématiques sont abordées, la philosophie analytique s'est aussi intéressée à la *définition ou l'essence de l'art*, une préoccupation des recherches esthétiques. Cette réflexion vise à montrer que l'esthétique, ancrée dans l'histoire de la philosophie dite continentale et adossée à la métaphysique, a d'abord été marginalisée dans les débuts de la philosophie analytique, dont l'un des projets nourris par ses fondateurs, fut l'élimination des considérations métaphysiques dans le langage de la pensée, et elle a été ensuite reconsidérée dans la philosophie du second Wittgenstein. C'est à partir de cette philosophie esthétique et/ou de l'art wittgensteinienne qu'on peut situer le point de départ de l'esthétique et/ou de l'art analytique et mieux appréhender sa spécificité. L'examen de cette réflexion sur l'esthétique/art analytique dans les vues de Wittgenstein laisse transparaître l'affirmation d'un ancrage culturel et sociétal de la production artistique, laquelle apparaît comme une justice rendue à l'art africain.

**MotsClés :** Art, Art africain, Esthétique, Philosophie analytique, Métaphysique.

### I. INTRODUCTION

If "because art produces beauty in its own way (insofar as it constitutes the fine arts), to reflect on art is to develop aesthetics" (SHERRINGHAM; 1992, 223-224), many intellectual discourses on art and the beautiful as constitutive of aesthetics have evolved in the history of thought with a clear desire for scientific distancing, in order to account for art and aesthetic emotions to from the methodological and conceptual elements that are specific. A look into the historical development of the philosophy of art and aesthetics, based on conceptual commentaries on classical works, shows that scientific research has summoned archetypes not only to dispel the mystery of art, but above all to articulate the essence of art and the nature of beauty as problems of aesthetic studies. A long prisoner of a classic metaphysical conception (Plato, Aristotle), aesthetics acquired its autonomy as a "science of sensitive knowledge" (BAUMGARTEN; 1988, 121) in Alexandre Baumgarten (1750-1758) or as a "science of the beautiful" with Emmanuel Kant. This scientific status accorded to aesthetics will be contested in contemporary so-called analytical philosophy, which emerged in the Anglo-Saxon world in the 19th century under the leadership of Frege and Russell. These and their epigones implemented the methodological principles of analytical philosophy to account for an opposition to the historical, speculative and metaphysical approach of the so-called "continental" aesthetic. This is to say that the ambition nourished by a critique of metaphysical speculations or of discourse empty of meaning led in the beginnings of analytical philosophy to a discrediting of aesthetics and / or art that can be observed in the first Wittgenstein and the positivists. However,

dare we think, the rejection of aesthetics as a science or the marginalization of art due to the cognitive emptiness of its propositions did not constitute an obstacle to the emergence of an analytical aesthetic, of which the trigger is to be found in the “refounding of aesthetics” (DOUNMO; 2019) in the second Wittgenstein, the latter having chosen to soften the logical rigor and review his analyzes of the Tractatus. From there, one can wonder if the constitution of an analytical aesthetic does not ultimately arise from the relaxation of logical rigor, highlighted against the metaphysical discourses in analytical philosophy?

The present reflection aims to present aesthetics in the history of philosophy (I), to show that the critique of metaphysics in analytical philosophy has led to a disdain for aesthetics (II) and to present the aesthetic philosophy of the second Wittgenstein as the foundation of analytical aesthetics, one of the challenges of which is the recognition of a cultural basis for artistic production (III).

## II. AESTHETICS IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY : TOWARDS AUTONOMIZATION OF AESTHETICS AS SCIENCE

Here we want to briefly revisit the history of philosophical aesthetics which, until the questioning of metaphysics by analytical philosophy, was justified by this metaphysics and therefore undeniably anchored in the history of philosophy.

### 1. CLASSIC AESTHETICS: AN ALLIANCE OF AESTHETICS WITH METAPHYSICS

The awakening of aesthetic theories is late in Western philosophy, especially in ancient Greece, to the extent that one could identify an Egyptian heritage in the systematization of Greek aesthetic thought. The research of Théophile Obenga or Cheik Anta Diop sufficiently demonstrates how Egyptian art, whether in painting, sculptures, architecture, etc., was oriented towards the representation of the magnificence of the gods or of any other person in the company. Art was a reflection of social, religious and political significance. Plato recognizes this Egyptian heritage when he insists in his Laws: “Moreover, to examine the paintings and the sculptures which were made in this country ten thousand years ago (and when I speak of ten thousand years, it is not is not a way of saying, but what really is), we will realize that, compared to those which are the work of artists of today, they are nothing more beautiful, nor more ugly, but that 'they attest to the same technique'”(PLATO; II, 656e-657a).

In Western Greek Antiquity, the theories of aesthetic thought are visible among the Socratics, especially those who systematized Greek thought (Plato and Aristotle). For, a study of the beautiful at that time was only possible in a fully constituted philosophy. From the start, the Greek aesthetic, from even its timid beginnings in the memorable Xenophon to its flourishing in Neoplatonist writings, centered on the beautiful, which was considered an attribute of things. Aesthetic reflection here is inherent in metaphysics, because it unfolds in connection with the doctrine of being. The first observation here remains that the aesthetic impression, the subjective appreciation of beauty, is an epiphenomenon, even ignored. The aesthetic question was therefore not approached independently, because specialization in the field of knowledge was not always on the agenda.

In Plato, to note a certain ignorance of the specificity of art. Aesthetics is not an independent discipline. It is diluted in its philosophy of ideas. In the Banquet, Plato analyzes his aesthetic theory of the beautiful. True beauty is thought of there as "Eternal Beauty". This one knows neither becoming nor perishing, growth nor destruction; it is a Beauty which is not beautiful on one side, help on the other side; no speech, nor a science, nor of anything which is immanent to another chosen, to a living being can qualify it. Thus, "Beauty in itself [is] simple, pure, unadulterated, and not soiled with human flesh, colors, and all kinds of deadly trivialities" (PLATO; 385, 211d-212a). It is a Beauty that is distinguished from nearby beauties, sensitive, subject to becoming, but also from beauties close to art. No specific assessment criteria are allowed.

We find that essential beauty has nothing to do with art, but art has to do with beauty. The relationship between the two is not reciprocal. Art is located in the dependence of Beauty which it claims to reach and represent. The essence of the beautiful classic, because it pertains to ontology and qualifies the intelligible world, God or eternal truths, is beyond the reach of art. There is no unified thought of art or the arts in Plato, since art is seen as mere imitation or reproduction. Indeed, Plato admits like his teacher Socrates that the idea of Good is the highest in the hierarchy of ideas. In Book X of the Republic, he makes it known that the objects of nature and even the creations of man (artisans), such as a bed or a table, derive their existence from an Idea, and that these Ideas are immutable. . He speaks only of the Ideas of the Good, of the Just, of the Beautiful. If ideas are immutable and eternal, then the arts we make must resemble them, for, he says, “Form itself, no worker shapes it” (PLATO; 2016, 596a). Consequently, all innovations or the idea of human creation is prohibited, especially in poetry, as in other arts (painting, architecture, etc.). He states to this effect: "But are the poets the only ones whom we should watch and force to introduce into their creations only the image of good character? Should we not also watch other craftsmen and prevent them from introducing vice, incontinence, baseness and ugliness in the painting of living beings, in architecture, or in any art? And if they cannot comply with this rule, should we not forbid them to work with us, lest our guardians, brought up in the midst of images of vice as in

bad pasture, do not pick and not do they draw from it, a little every day, many fatal herbs, and in this way do not unwittingly amass great evil in their souls? "(PLATO; 2016, 401b).

Be that as it may, the philosophical thought of art and the beautiful constitutes the foundation of classical aesthetics, even if it is marked by a paradox: the ontological overvaluation of beauty which is accompanied by the devaluation or of the depreciation of art. This one is powerless to produce perfect beauty. According to the philosopher Jean Lacoste, "if the philosophy of art begins with Plato, it begins, paradoxically, with a condemnation of the 'fine arts' and of poetry" (LACOSTE; 2010, 5). In other words, "it was Plato who conferred a metaphysical meaning and value on the beauty of the universal foundations, and whose theory of ideas took on an ever-increasing significance for the aesthetics of the plastic arts; yet, for his part, he was not in a position to judge these same plastic arts fairly" (PANOFSKY; 1989, 17).

In the same perspective, Aristotle will be interested in aesthetics without devoting a treatise to beauty in itself. But, the stagirist makes greatness an element of beauty. In *Metaphysics*, for example, Aristotle makes it known that: "The highest forms of Beauty are order, symmetry, the definite, and this is especially what the mathematical sciences show us. And since these forms (I mean the order and the definite) are manifestly causes of a multitude of effects, it is clear that mathematicians must consider as the cause in a certain way the cause we are talking about, the Beautiful in one word" (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 53).

Beauty is of the order of the abstract, of the contemplative life, which is superior to the political life and is characterized by "the knowledge of beautiful and divine realities" (ARISTOTE; 1972). When he deals with the existence and essence of the divine as the first still motor, it is to ascribe to it perfection and beauty. Beauty here characterizes the most perfect being, the supreme being. According to Marc Scherringham, in the classical ontology of beauty, there is an assimilation of beauty to the perfection of being. In this sense, the Idea of Good and the intelligible world will be beautiful par excellence in Plato, the Prime Motionless Mover and the supralunar world in Aristotle, the One and its primary emanations in Plotinus, or even God and his work, nature created at Saint Augustin (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 52).

If Beauty as perfection of being is fundamental in classical aesthetics, then the affiliation of aesthetics to metaphysics becomes obvious. Aristotle agrees with Plato's idea of the beautiful although he distinguishes between the beautiful and the good. The two authors develop an ontology of the beautiful, which will govern all classicism, as still evidenced by medieval scholasticism which makes the beautiful a "transcendent", that is to say one of the universal kinds of being (with the good and true). But, a divergence from the point of view of the abode of beauty can be noted in the two authors. For, with Plato, the beautiful dwells in the supersensible firmament while for Aristotle, it is housed in immanence and is perceptible by our senses (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 51).

Moreover, as a learned classifier of sciences, Aristotle classifies art among other human activities, those which are of no importance. Art occupies a lower status. It is part of the productive life, which is immediately discredited because it is painful (it is a job, and not a leisure), it solicits the body, it is the servile and unworthy life of a free man. . From this perspective, there is a neglect of the productive aspect of art in favor of its knowledge which is its principle. The consequence of this pejorative conception is pointed out by Gilson, according to which the professors and the scientists believe themselves more qualified than the technicians or artists. We are witnessing an intellectualist definition of art: knowledge of the rules that make it possible to manufacture one of the intellectual or material objects (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 64). Moreover, for ancient classicism, the unique principle of artistic production lies in imitation.

Medieval thought, being a combination of ancient philosophy and Christian theology, considers that man in his activities must submit to the divine will. In other words, there is a depreciation of art, the work of man, for the benefit of the world, of nature, the work of God. There is a clear transformation of the ontological thesis into theology. "In the realm of aesthetics, it means that God is the model and the origin of beauty. Considered in himself, the divine being is supremely beautiful, and as everything he accomplishes bears the mark of his perfection, the entire universe is illuminated with his incomparable splendor" (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 95). Moreover, the Church was seen as a foretaste of the heavenly city, promised to believers, where bliss reigns. None of its architectural, decorative or iconographic elements is unfounded. Medieval arts as well as their authors anchored in Christianity, carry a true transcendental value. Art finds a fundamental justification, because it contributes to the worship of the divine. Aesthetics here keep a connection with metaphysics and spirituality.

Clearly, classical aesthetics flourish in ontology and its strong lineage with metaphysics and spirituality. The question of beauty is approached separately from art, and a particular emphasis is placed on the devaluation of the latter. Aesthetics is therefore not an autonomous field of reflection, it is not a particular science, because it is diluted in metaphysical and theological reflections.

## 2. MODERN AESTHETICS: DETACHMENT FROM AESTHETICS FOR ITS EMPOWERMENT AS A SCIENCE OF BEAUTY OR THE FINE ARTS

In modern times, intellectual pretension identifies with the enlightenment of reason against obscurantism and fanaticism, and the study of the beautiful breaks away from philosophy to become a field of autonomous reflection. Descartes, father of modernity, will install the human subject as a starting point for philosophical reflection, he will substitute the metaphysics of the subject for the metaphysics of being. Thus, in the field of aesthetics, there is a desire to break with the ontological conception of classical aesthetics. The deontologization of aesthetics (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 120), especially with the Enlightenment, brings about a rapprochement between art and beauty. The innovation of this period lies in going beyond the classic dichotomy of the liberal and mechanical arts, to "fix definitively the modern system of the fine arts" (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 147).

With Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, inventor of the "aesthetic" neologism (1950), aesthetics became an autonomous discipline, he detached it from philosophy, in particular from the metaphysical prison in which the ancients locked it, to make it a specific branch. Knowledge. In his *Theoretical Aesthetics*, we are witnessing the development of a new aesthetic theory, notably the theory of sensitive beauty: "Aesthetics (or theory of the liberal arts, inferior gnoseology, the art of the beauty of thinking, the art of 'analogon of reason) is the science of sensitive knowledge" (BAUMGARTEN; 1950, 121). He is therefore considered the inventor of modern aesthetics, in the sense that he sees the search for beauty as the end of aesthetics (BAUMGARTEN; 1950, 127).

Beyond the debate between rationalism and empiricism on the aesthetic phenomenon, modern philosophical aesthetics truly take shape in Immanuel Kant. His posture is based on a reversal of the valuation of the subject on the objective valuation of the being. From the "Copernican revolution", we understand that the subject of knowledge is not the empirical ego, that is, the ego as a personal one; but it is the transcendent self, the one who gives form to the experience, who informs the object without itself being the object of experience. That said: in the field of aesthetics, the beautiful is no longer, as in the Platonic-Aristotelian approach, an attribute of things, but of our representative states: "the beautiful is what is represented, without concept, as the object of universal satisfaction" (KANT; 1846, 79). We are witnessing here a universalist theory of aesthetics where the beautiful is what provides a satisfaction that is not linked to a particular interest, nor to an immediate sensation, nor to a personal feeling. The judgment on beauty is therefore a universal judgment. This is not to be confused with the pleasant, which is a matter of relative judgment. Also, it should be noted with Kant that the productions of art are free, because they are not subjugated either to nature (since the artist transfigures it), nor to pre-existing rules which would prohibit any innovation. Only the "arts of genius", as Kant explains, therefore deserve the title of "fine arts": "the fine arts must necessarily be considered as the arts of genius" (KANT; 1790, 204-205).

Thus, there is no science of Beauty, of objective property to which the idea of beauty refers, it is dependent on the feeling that subjectivity experiences in the aesthetic judgment of taste. The subjectivity of the beautiful is therefore no longer simply a fact (Humean empiricism), but a law. On the other hand, the work of art takes on mysterious elements with regard to the genius, creativity and unconscious thought of the artist. The consequence is that art is eradicated from the devaluing ontology in which classicism lodged it and ceases to be inferior, heteronomous, subject to being, to knowledge or any other superior domain; it thus becomes autonomous and finds its end in itself. Whether natural or artistic, the beautiful is no more than an opportunity for the subject to feel the pure disinterested pleasure that Kant claims to be shareable. He affirms, in fact, "Indeed, one who is aware of finding in something a disinterested satisfaction cannot help but judge that the same thing must be for everyone the source of a similar satisfaction. For, as this satisfaction is not founded on some inclination of the subject (nor on some reflected interest), but the one who judges feels entirely free in relation to the satisfaction which he attaches to the object, he will not be able to find in the particular conditions the true reason which determines it in him, and he will regard it as a basis on something which he can also suppose in any other; he will therefore believe he is right to demand a similar satisfaction from everyone" (KANT; 1846, 79).

Producing art then amounts to presenting free forms, ultimately inexplicable but exemplary and instituting for the art world. Kant establishes the second paradigm of philosophical aesthetics on the substitution of subject for being. He installs aesthetics in the innermost part of the subject as the sense of self that subjectivity experiences in its freedom.

## 3. ROMANTIC AESTHETICS: FROM THE EXALTATION OF THE ESSENCE OF ART TO THE SEARCH FOR ITS METAPHYSICAL TRUTH

The romantic aesthetic, taken in its philosophical dimension is another current which appears in the XIXth century in reaction to classicism and dependent on an alliance between literature and philosophy under the pen of German philosophers strongly imbued with Kantism such as Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Heidegger. Here it is no longer about art which lacks truth but about truth which needs art; the latter then becomes sovereign and no longer inferior as in classicism or simply autonomous as in criticism. As

André Lalande points out: “This doctrine is above all characterized by a reaction against the spirit and methods of the 18th century, in particular against aufklärung, by mistrust and depreciation of aesthetic or logical rules, by the apology of passion, intuition, freedom, spontaneity, by the importance they attach to the idea of life and that of the infinite”(Lalande; 1968, 934).

Hegel, in particular, affirms the specificity of the romantic aesthetic. As a reminder, classical aesthetics flourish in ontology, beauty characterizes being, art could not be said to be beautiful unless it reproduces the structure of ideal or natural reality, and artistic beauty will always be inferior to that of being; there is a radical dichotomy between beauty and art with a devaluation of the latter. Kant establishes the second paradigm of philosophical aesthetics which no longer distinguishes between nature and art, the beautiful objective is indifferently natural or artistic, since it characterizes the transcendent subject. But Hegel, from the romantic perspective, identifies the beautiful with art, and ends up defining aesthetics as the theory of art. At the start of his Cours d'esthétique, he wrote: “This work is devoted to aesthetics, that is to say to philosophy, to the science of beauty, more precisely of artistic beauty, to the exclusion of beautiful natural. [...] According to current opinion, the beauty created by art is even far below natural beauty, and the greatest merit of art is to come close, in its creations, to natural beauty. [...] But we believe we can say, against this view, that artistic beauty is superior to natural beauty, because it is a product of the mind. [...] The spiritual alone is true. What exists only exists insofar as it is spirituality [...]. The beautiful produced by the spirit is the object, the creation of the spirit, and every creation of the spirit is an object whose dignity cannot be denied (SHERRINGHAM; 2003, 221).

There appears here an affirmation of the aesthetic unification of the subjective and the objective, grasped as a moment of the absolute spirit. Art can be said to be beautiful, because beauty is of spiritual essence. Art is no longer an imitation, for the spirit which is freedom and subjectivity infinitely exceeds the inert objectivity of nature. It is, Hegel asserts, "a specific way of bringing to consciousness and expressing the divine, the deepest human interests, the most all-encompassing truths of the mind" (HEGEL; 1979, 14). And the beautiful becomes "the sensible manifestation of the idea" (HEGEL; 1979, 160), because the latter is realized externally and acquires a definite existence, as natural and spiritual objectivity.

The romantic aesthetic exalts art, which identifies with the beautiful and the true absolutes. She turns knowledge of art into superior knowledge. It is no longer thought of on the basis of imitation, as a manifest will of the mind which frees itself from will and desire and accesses pure contemplation; as a lever by which man breaks free from daily rules to create in freedom. We then understand Schopenhauer's influence on the arts such as literature, and especially music, which for him represent the most complete form of art. The artists disregard the rules of composition and style established by the classics to favor the sensitivity, the imagination and the feeling of nature. Romanticism therefore proclaims the cult of the self, the expression of feelings to passions. There is in the artist a desire to explore all dimensions of art, in order to express his moods.

From this historical perspective, we note a theoretical impact of the Enlightenment critique, and more particularly of the Kantian critique, regarding the limited scope of discursive modalities in metaphysical inquiry. This criticism was quickly rejected by Romantic philosophy, one of the primary objectives of which was to restore access to metaphysical truth not through reasoning, but through the essence of Art. The transcendent function of Art will obtain in this context an onto-theological and speculative value present in almost all the aesthetic considerations of various continental thinkers, from Hegel to Heidegger.

The observation in this brief history is that aesthetics are originally justified by metaphysics, they are well anchored in the history of philosophy. However, the critique of metaphysics by analytical philosophy, in its beginnings, will lead to a notorious disinterest in the so-called "continental" aesthetic.

### **III. ANALYTICAL AND CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF METAPHYSICS: TOWARDS A DESIDERATION OF AESTHETICS AS NON-SCIENCE**

We want to show here that the founders of analytical philosophy did not pay particular attention to research on aesthetics and art. From this perspective, the early Wittgenstein and the positivists rejected the idea of a scientific status for aesthetics. The idea of an analytical aesthetic developed later from Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations.

#### **1. THE DISCREDITING OF PHILOSOPHICAL AESTHETICS AT THE START OF ANALYTICAL PHILOSOPHY**

Analytical philosophy has ensured its supremacy in the Anglo-Saxon world as a new way of philosophizing which is opposed to the so-called "continental" philosophy, supposedly metaphysical and speculative. This philosophy emphasizes the logical analysis of language, as it is a reflection / analysis on the conditions of utterances and on the production of meaning. The real can only be grasped by the force of language and logic, taken as a method (LECLERCO; 2018), is the path leading to the analysis of thought itself. It is a philosophy of knowledge, distinct from a philosophy of being (ROSSI; 2002, 105). Marked by an aim of objectivity, to which the use of logical language seemed to answer precisely, the contributions of Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell, founders, will have a lasting influence on the whole of the analytical current. To this traditional acceptance corresponds a working method based on rational argument and critical discussion,

favoring clear and concise language. In this same perspective of methodological, but also conceptual clarity, analytical philosophers tend to make explicit the terms and formulations used in their writings, following a literal prose, avoiding the metaphorical form or rhetorical deviations (NEF; 1997, 131).

However, what we note in these founders and which will be taken up by Carnap is the desire to transform philosophy into a scientific philosophy (ENGEL; 2002, 127). It is the linguistic aspect of philosophy that is valued to deal with the language of science to the detriment of metaphysical questions which lend themselves to confusion and ambiguities. This is why philosophy itself is reduced by Russell to a form of philosophy of language. "By questioning the presuppositions of classical philosophy, analytical philosophy brings to light the syntactic and semantic complexity of our statements, proposes a new method and elevates language to the rank of a real dimension of thought" (Le Ny; 2009, 44).

It therefore appears among thinkers of analytical philosophy a manifest desire to generalize his method in all the various fields of research of philosophy, including that of aesthetics. This epistemological paradigm will affect the development of aesthetics in the Anglo-Saxon world, which has become "analytical" from the 1950s. By making the analysis of language its methodological principle and the critique of metaphysics a prerequisite and a tacit commitment, analytical philosophy is posed as a revolutionary philosophy, and the traditional so-called "continental" aesthetic and its historical approach will receive a blow, because the metaphysical lever of yesteryear is undesirable.

In the meantime, a so-called analytical aesthetic will develop and its primary characteristic is that it does not concern itself with questions of beauty. Stemming from empiricism and pragmatism, this aesthetic is based on the logical-philosophical instruments of analytical philosophy and is made up of homogeneous theories, linked by the analysis of questions and definitions of art. Thus, one of the essential characteristics of this analytical aesthetic is the rejection of the question of the beautiful in favor of art, because the latter does not need to be beautiful to exist and be recognized as such. However, the pre-Wittgensteinian founders of analytical philosophy did not devote any special research to art. Gottlob Frege, for example, in his *Logical and Philosophical Writings* (FREGE; 1971), evokes poetry and reduces it to a simple ornament that radically excludes logic. Only logic is endowed with a meaning and capable of receiving a denotation. G.E. Moore, Bertrand Russell and later the members of the Cercle de Vienne will perpetuate this posture which reduces artistic and poetic language to a cognitively empty and useless language. This discrediting of art as we will see is also evident in the analysis of the proposition in the first Wittgenstein.

It was not until the second Wittgenstein that the real theories of analytical aesthetics developed. They assert themselves independently of traditional aesthetics, both by the restriction of its objects, and by the specificity of the analytical style of its research methods. For Dominique Château, "analytical aesthetics claims to be a new version of aesthetics, a way of conceiving it which cuts it off from its tradition, like a new language that one would claim to substitute for the common language and in which it would be difficult to translate" (CHATEAU; 1994, 8). But, the analytical philosophers who will drink in the philosophy of the first Wittgenstein will reject the aesthetics of their field of research; this in the name of the dominant anti-metaphysical posture and the unconditional credit given to science in analytical philosophy. Nelson Goodman and Cathérine Eligin show precisely this ousting of philosophical aesthetics in analytical philosophy: "The nascent analytical philosophy intentionally left aesthetics aside. She admitted that it is foolish to look for a rule to determine the meaning of an aesthetic symbol. She only hoped to find rules for the simpler signs, those of science and ordinary language" (GOODMAN, ELGIN; 1990, 90).

In other words, the basic analytical philosophy did not give much space to aesthetics. This is what we want to clarify from the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, inspired by the first Wittgenstein.

## **2. LOGICAL POSITIVISTS: BETWEEN ELIMINATION OF METAPHYSICS AND DISDAIN OF AESTHETICS / ART**

The desire to answer the question of knowledge by resorting to logical language is at the center of the concerns of logical positivists, like the first Wittgenstein, and attention is paid to the common use of language, no longer to its internal structure, but in its own way of signifying: such was the cause of a reversal of the aesthetic paradigm. Their disregard of aesthetics and art, inspired by Frege and Russell, is significant, and stems from the project of eliminating metaphysics.

The first Wittgensteinian conception of aesthetics takes shape in the *Tractatus* (WITTGENSTEIN; 1961) in an aphoristic style peculiar to its author. As part of his analysis of the proposition, Wittgenstein believes that aesthetic and ethical concepts are linked by their transcendental, that is, non-factual, character. He rightly asserts that "ethics and aesthetics are one" (WITTGENSTEIN; 1961, 103). To say that aesthetic statements and ethical statements do not have a positive content to which we can attribute a truth, they express something other than the empirical world. Wittgenstein places aesthetics as ethics in the order of the ineffable, the unspeakable. For this reason, there can be no serious aesthetic and ethical propositions: "propositions cannot express anything higher" (WITTGENSTEIN; 1961, 103). Moreover, the author of *Lessons and Conversations* refuses to register aesthetics as a branch of psychology whose purpose is to provide us with causal explanations

of our aesthetic experience (WITTGENSTEIN; 1965, 49). Aesthetic explanations are neither causal nor susceptible of experimental verification. It is not simply an explanation of the beauty or majesty of a work of art, but any explanation of an aesthetic impression: "The kind of explanation that one seeks when one stays." perplexed by an aesthetic impression is not a causal explanation, is not an explanation corroborated by experience or by statistics of man's ways of reacting [...]; p. ex. you can do an experiment on a piece of music in a psychology lab and find that the music acts in such and such a way under the influence of such and such a drug. This is not what one has in mind or what one gets at when researching aesthetics (WITTGENSTEIN; 1965, 49).

Therefore, aesthetic or ethical statements are meaningless statements, because they express what is beyond the limits of language, the limits of the world. The aesthetic / ethical discourse cannot be stated, it has no meaning, it is quite simply transcendental. The aesthetic is thus silenced, because its statements are meaningless. However, it should be noted that this contempt for aesthetics is part of the project of building an ideal language. The second Wittgenstein, on the other hand, that of *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) abandoned this project and re-found the aesthetic. There he exposes his logical theory of meaning by including both ordinary language and aesthetic language.

Members of the Vienna Circle will misinterpret this conception of aesthetics in the *Tractatus*. Rudolf Carnap (1928) in his ambition to radicalize the Vienna Circle project, that of the elimination of metaphysics, does not stray from the posture of his masters on the subject of aesthetics. Analytical philosophy opened up perspectives which allowed him to think of a constructivist epistemology and / or a philosophy of "rational reconstruction" centered on the critique of previous theses of traditional philosophy. In his text on the "overcoming of metaphysics by the logical analysis of language", he makes an unqualified critique of metaphysics, because it constantly challenges the empirical conditions of the possibility of knowledge. In doing so, he tackles ethical and aesthetic problems in order to place them in the same basket as metaphysics. Aesthetics and ethics are not on the agenda of the logical analysis that underlies the activities of neopositivist science. For Carnap: "any so-called knowledge which wants to have taken beyond or behind experience, [all] metaphysics which, resulting from experience, wants to know by means of particular inference what is outside or behind experience, [as well as any question which bears on the "thing in itself" and not on the empirical thing, and "any philosophy of values or of a norm" whose statements escape empirical verification]" (CARNAP; 1985, 173).

Among this knowledge, aesthetics occupy a good place since the criterion for judging beauty does not depend on experience. The metaphysical and aesthetic statements shine through their arbitrary, confused, abstract, ineffable, senseless, unknowable characters, characters which absolutely deprive him of the right to live in a positivist context where logic has made empiricism its breeding ground and its oxygen. The field of art serves as a benchmark for Carnap, not to expose it as a field of scientific reflection to be considered, but to explain the metaphysical attitude that he rejects with all his energy. Indeed, he says, "metaphysicians are musicians without musical talent" (CARNAP; 1985, 177), "poets deceived by language, in short artists misled in the language of science" (HOTTOIS, 1997, 281). Obviously, art is not a domain of knowledge where verifiable propositions have cognitive significance, it is rather seen as "the expression of the feeling of life". Artists do not talk about the world, it is by creating a work of art that they exteriorize their feeling. Poetry and music are, according to Carnap, the surest means of expressing this feeling of life, because they are so utterly free from all objective reference. Speaking of metaphysicians, Carnap writes: "If they are artists, it is in making a work of art that they will find expression. Various authors have already clarified (example: Dilthey and his disciples) the way in which the feeling of life is given through the style and manner of the artist" (CARNAP; 1985, 176).

Without saying so explicitly, the field of aesthetics / art is not seen as a truly scientific field of reflection. The members of the Circle of Vienna, in their "scientific conception of the world" seek to get rid of metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics which are essentially of the "unspeakable", of the "mystical" and of the "Inexpressible". In other words, aesthetics are part of metaphysics, they belong to the realm of values, and therefore they are "out of the world". It is either non-knowledge or non-science. We can, therefore, understand from the pen of Wittgenstein, the last aphorism of the *Tractatus*, which sounds like a slogan to logical positivists in the battle against metempirical discourses: "what we cannot talk about, we must keep silent. (WITTGENSTEIN; 1961, 107). Only the propositions of the natural sciences can be said (WITTGENSTEIN; 1961, 106) and allow a better knowledge of the world. The idea of aesthetics as a science or as a science of beauty therefore appears to be an aberration. He dismisses the idea, saying: "You might think that Aesthetics is a science that tells us what is beautiful - it is almost too ridiculous for words. I suppose it should also include what kind of coffee tastes pleasant" (WITTGENSTEIN; 1965, 32). This attitude which has long animated traditional aesthetic thought and art theorists has no effect in analytical philosophy. The aesthetics in gestation would be that which wants to be a-metaphysical: it is the analytical aesthetic.

The disdain for aesthetics here is justified above all by the methodological orientation of analytical philosophy. Its thinkers (such as Russell and Carnap) are true followers of the scientific orientation of philosophy. Russell, for example, tries to introduce a "scientific method" into philosophy, through the cult of science. Likewise, in the scientism of the logical positivists, one speaks of philosophy as a "scientific philosophy" to affirm their effort to imitate the objective canons of science. As Hans Reichenbach asserts, analytical philosophy "has created a whole set of tools: symbolic logic, axiomatic method, etc., It is a real mechanization of thought, bringing to philosophy the entire contribution of the powerful machine. positive sciences "(REICHENBACH; 1932). Inspired by the first Wittgenstein, who nevertheless established a distinction between philosophy and science by refusing that the latter adopt the conception of the explanation of the latter, the members of the Vienna Circle will interpret it differently and radicalize this posture which reduces philosophy to an elucidation of scientific proposals bearing directly or indirectly on experience, thereby excluding the field of aesthetics. This desire for certainty and rigor, inspired by logistics, which leads some analytical philosophers to reduce the field of philosophy to a science, is only the expression of a radical anti-metaphysical posture. This is the origin of the difficulty in being able to give epistemological credit to aesthetics. However, was there not a truncation of the thought of the logician by the members of the Circle of Vienna?

#### **IV. THE CONSTITUTION OF AESTHETICS / ANALYTICAL ART AND ITS ISSUES AT SECOND WITTGENSTEIN**

There was an intentional disinterest in aesthetics and art in the early days of analytical philosophy, but reading the second Wittgenstein carefully, questions of aesthetics and art are not marginal. Wittgenstein's return to his thoughts of the Tractatus is not only a strong sign that shows the near failure of an elimination of metaphysical discourse due to the incomprehension of the positivists, but above all for the constitution of so-called analytical aesthetics.

##### **1. THE WITTGENSTEINIAN RECONSIDERATION OF AESTHETICS OR THE BEGINNING OF AESTHETICS AND ANALYTICAL ART**

Research into aesthetics and art in the analytical tradition really evolved under the impetus of the second Wittgenstein. We can see that analytical philosophy does not really escape the metaphysical considerations that it nevertheless challenges. Wittgenstein's second thoughts, particularly those of the Investigations, question the dogmatism of the Tractatus, which sought an ideal logical order of language. "Wittgenstein realized that the criteria of absolute logical rigor he used in the Tractatus do violence to the real life of language" (GREISCH; 2002, 491). A decade after the Tractatus, the practice of philosophy for him dissociated itself from any reference to a history of previous philosophy to appeal to our experience, always already caught up in "language games" (WITTGENSTEIN; 1961, 125,134) in close relationship with a pragmatic type of attitude. Wittgenstein disintellectualizes the question of aesthetics / art, without referring to a specific science (Baumgarten), nor to a generic science (Hegel), nor to a metaphysics (Heidegger). But, his thought and his questioning will give rise to the analytical philosophy of art. Art theorists will have in Wittgenstein the appropriate instruments for reconsidering art, and once again, for a new, this time analytical, way of thinking about art. According to Danielle Lories, it is from here that we can locate the beginning of the aesthetics and the philosophy of art in analytical philosophy: "the analytical philosophy of art is born historically, to my sense, at the time when the theses, or rather, the questioning by Wittgenstein of the Investigations, of the metaphysical, essentialist discourse, of the philosophical discourse in general, are taken seriously by the estheticians and transposed to their own field: the reflection on the 'art. The consequences drawn from the teaching of Wittgenstein with regard to the philosophy of art come at the right time to revive an aesthetic whose writers of the time frequently denounced the lamentable state, poverty, boredom and fundamental maladjustment to contemporary art: its inability to account for the latest artistic developments" (LORIES; 1985, 214-2015).

Aesthetics in Wittgenstein are at the opposite of the prevailing metaphysical discourse. Because, to the question of: what is art? Wittgenstein thinks that it is not a question of seeking the essence of art and the properties common to all works of art, but simply of describing life situations or cultural productions which can be like artistic productions. . This is part of the method in general. To define is to describe and give examples (WITTGENSTEIN; 1965, 32). It is about describing possible situations in which the word can be used: "In order to see clearly about aesthetic words, you have to describe ways of living" (WITTGENSTEIN; 1965, 32). Faced with the question of the specificity of art, Wittgenstein builds a relationship between philosophy and art in favor of art. For him, philosophy is non-poetic, and therefore not art. This is not to be confused with philosophy, but the practice of the latter is akin to artistic practice. It is in this sense that the aesthetic in Wittgenstein aims to reinforce the specificity of art, he asserts in the Notes Mêlées, "in truth, philosophy should be written only as a poetic composition". This connection between philosophy and aesthetics is also expressed in the Lessons and Conversations when he asserts that "the subject (aesthetics) is very broad and utterly misunderstood [...]. We move from one area of philosophy to another, from one group of words to another



"(WITTGENSTEIN; 1965, 15). This posture is confirmed by Salvador Rubio Marco for whom the intimate link between philosophy and aesthetics is undeniable: "aesthetics is philosophy when it deals with a specific region of language, namely the words we use speaking of art and aesthetics" (RUBIO MARCO; 2006, 120).

Likewise, in addition to the different metaphors through which Wittgenstein deals with aesthetics, notably of the image or the painting, of music, of the theater (Tractatus), of painting and of art in general (Investigation Philosophique), his biography presents us with a very rich artistic life. We note that the aesthetic concern that animates his life goes hand in hand with the duty of ethics. This shows that he did not conceive of an aesthetic reality without an ethical content. Ethics is inscribed in the subject's relationship to the world and defines the subject's reaction to the neutrality of the world. Art, for its part, represents the immediate grasp of things in the wonder that defines the aesthetic relationship to the world. He asserts that the work of art is the object seen *sub specie aeternitatis*; and the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. This is the connection between art and ethics (WITTGENSTEIN; 1999). The importance of this posture is to bring out the ethical issues of aesthetics. The field of architecture is the area par excellence where the identity between ethics and aesthetics materializes, it is the place of purity where art is stripped of all metaphysical pretensions in favor of simple monstration. architectural or artistic. In this identity between ethics and aesthetics in the work of art, there is a desire to limit the domain of the expressible. Art must show since it does not say so, just as ethics is not a matter of language, but of deed. Even if aesthetics can be distinguished from art, with Wittgenstein what is said about the arts also applies to aesthetic judgments: "when we speak of aesthetic judgment, we mean among a thousand other things of the arts" (WITTGENSTEIN; 1965, 24). This proximity aims to make people understand that aesthetic productions and ethical conceptions must be positive. The world and life being a WITTGENSTEIN; 1961, 87), the role of aesthetics is to perceive it and ethics to preserve it. According to Jean Bouveresse, this Wittgensteinian conception is a Eudemonist conception. Referring to the testimony of Paul Engelmann, Wittgenstein's friend with whom he built the house at Kundmannsgasse, he writes: "Wittgenstein's conception of aesthetics is, like that of ethics fundamentally Eudemonist: from what we can know from his tastes, Wittgenstein considered that the productions of art must indeed be essentially positive, that they must represent a solution and not a problem" (Bouveresse; 1973, 153). Thus, the idea that reduces art to simple consolation is challenged in Wittgenstein in favor of a committed conception of art thanks to its proximity to ethics. Wittgenstein's views on aesthetics or art will influence the greatest thinkers of analytical aesthetics.

Overall, the rise of analytical aesthetics is indebted to the change of epistemological paradigm operated by analytical philosophy, especially in reaction to so-called continental philosophy. Following this rupture, the first substantial developments of analytical aesthetics united a common desire to escape the evaluative and speculative premises of traditional aesthetics. While recognizing the logical impossibility of defining art, analytical philosophers interested in aesthetic questions, notably Morris Weitz, from the 1950s refocused aesthetic reflection on the type of concept that art is. Thus, the influence of the Wittgensteinian notion of "family resemblances" is decisive in this respect for Weitz and sets the tone for the advent of analytical aesthetics, by situating the issues at the level of a reflection on classes and the categories. Indeed, the various works which give a synthetic overview of its evolution highlight the different perspectives and methods with which analytical aesthetics tackles the question of the philosophy of art in its multiple dimensions: definition of the task of philosophical aesthetics, specificity of the aesthetic experience (or its contestation), ontology of the work, aesthetic concepts... (LORIE: 1988). During the sixties, analytical aestheticians will effectively reintegrate these questions using a descriptive approach that closely matches analytical ontology. Nelson Goodman's research on the language of art (1998), Lerold Levinson's research on the aesthetics of music, the meaning and ontology of film, art and humor (2015), Joseph Margolis (1965) and Arthur Danto on Art Criticism (1964) are central and have a decisive impact on ontological theories of analytical aesthetics. Wittgensteinian aesthetics will have been a trigger for the history of aesthetics and the philosophy of art in analytical philosophy.

## 2. THE IDEA OF A CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL ANCHORING OF ART

The deployment of the aesthetic / analytical art makes it possible to understand the intrinsic relationship that there can be between the work of art and the culture of a people or the culture of a time. If we can say today that analytical philosophy is a way of thinking specific to the Anglo-Saxon tradition, even if we can note an influence of continental philosophy, the aesthetic or the analytical art is the same. reflection of an undeniable Anglo-Saxon culture. In *Lessons on Aesthetics*, Wittgenstein insists that aesthetic judgment is linked to all culture. He states to this effect, "The words we call expressions of aesthetic judgment play a very complicated, but also very defined role in what we call the culture of an era. To describe their use, or to describe what you mean by taste, you have to describe a culture" (Wittgenstein; 1965, 28). The manifestation of taste qualifies aesthetics, which itself is conceived as an implementation of these judgments. However, the expression of taste is linked to the language game played. We can then consider language games in the field of aesthetics as exclusively cultural. "Musical taste", for example, can only be understood if it is linked to musical practice in a given society or to a tradition. In this case, he thinks, "it is an entire culture that is a language game" (Wittgenstein; 1965, 28).

It follows from this culturalist thesis of art that aesthetic judgment cannot be universal. Indeed, in his *Lessons and Conversation*, Wittgenstein addresses "Negro art" to show the difficulty of an externalist judgment in relation to a given cultural "family area". It is difficult, he thinks, for a European to make aesthetic judgments about Negro art, because it is not aware of the specificities of the African tradition. In other words, without a connection with the link that Africa establishes between religion, the sacred and art, it is difficult to appreciate Negro art. That is to say that African art in general is not cut off from African culture, it is the expression of the tradition or of the habits and customs, mores and way of thinking of the African people. Thus, it is an art which has a consubstantial link with religion and is sacred. It is, not only as Engelbert Mveng thinks, the expression of a sort of ontological grasp or self-possession (MVENG; 1974, 64), but also, Njoh-Mouellé thinks, an instrument of reconciliation between the metaphysical and the sensitive: "art objects are arranged around man like a supplement to be intended to reconcile him with a hostile nature ..." (NJOH MOUELLE; 2002, 34-35). This characterization shows that African art symbolizes the spirituality of African culture. It carries an expression of life, a cultural message. It expresses the cosmological and anthropological complexity of African societies and is part of a metaphysical and mystical constancy that originated in ancient Egypt.

The above supports us in the idea that there is a specificity relating to culture in the work of art. A cultural specificity on which any external judgment is epistemologically problematic and should take into account the rules specific to a given culture; this posture seems to do justice to African culture or to African art, which Wittgenstein deserves to mention as an example of his analysis of aesthetic philosophy. The Westerner who has never traveled to Africa to study and learn about his culture cannot make a credible and authentic aesthetic appreciation of an African work of art and vice versa. Because the rules of appreciation differ from one cultural area to another. "Aesthetic action", to speak as Mbog Bassong, shows the cultural and societal anchoring of the work of art and "wants to be the sum of the ways of thinking, of apprehending and of acting, of which the orientation of norms proceed from the collective models instituted for which emerge, in a consensual manner, a meaning and a value" (BASSONG; 2007, 91).

Even if one can note an ambiguity in Wittgenstein about his analysis of African art, there is in his posture a recognition of cultural specificity with regard to art and an affirmation of differences, of respect for diversity. Hence the valuation of interculturality, which is understood as a dynamic that promotes interethnic harmony, by becoming aware of our cultural differences strongly anchored in our social practices. In other words, it is respect in dealing with other cultures. The affirmation of a cultural anchor allows African art to assert itself with fair value and no longer be the object of devaluation or plunder as we still see today. Africans must reappropriate African cultural identity from their artistic production and avoid this cultural alienation imposed by non-African ethnocentric discourse. Works of art are part of historical heritage as a process of social identification, are a complex set of products and derivatives of culture. And, as Kouéma Mabika Louis points out, cultural mastery releases the creative energies of development through art (KOUÉNA MABIKA; 2005). One of the challenges of Africa today is to reorient artistic research in order to avoid the insignificance of works of art whether in the field of music, cinema, theater, painting, sculpture.... African culture is full of positive values. It is not reduced only to witchcraft or mysticism which would be refractory to scientific research. This is why Jean Marc Ela recalls "the challenge of looking at the other, in many cases, it was often the lack of relevance of the studies which, given their theoretical ethnocentrism, made the knowledge of the 'African object, the voice of a subject incapable of freeing himself from self-idolatry and the pressures of his culture to assume the shock of realities whose overwhelming encounter causes astonishment and opens the way to discovery" (ELA ; 2007, 194). African art is not based on the sacred or the mystical, as we tend to believe, it is yet to be discovered.

## V. CONCLUSION

We wanted to understand, within the framework of this reflection, the specificity of aesthetics or art in analytical philosophy. We wondered whether, in the end, analytic aesthetics did not arise from the difficulty of being able to completely get rid of metaphysics? The analysis of this problematic allowed to understand that the critique of metaphysics in the first moments of analytical philosophy, in particular with logical positivism, fostered a disenchantment with aesthetics and art. Convinced that the grasp of the real can only be done through the analysis of language, from which emerges the notion of signification, an indispensable instrument of scientific discourse, the founding fathers of analytical philosophy made the critique of metaphysics their creed. **Consequently, aesthetics are undesirable, because they are silenced.** If in the first Wittgenstein ethics and aesthetics are of the order of the transcendent or the inexpressible, logical positivists will be inspired by it to marginalize it. However, post-tractatus philosophy is marked by an ebb, that is to say, a re-questioning of the philosopher on these previous ideas, in order to modify them. The second Wittgenstein will save aesthetics in analytical philosophy by showing that his statements can be endowed with meaning; it suffices to integrate them into a set of usage and rules or into a "family area". Here it is no longer a question of starting from certain words, but from certain circumstances or activities in order to understand the artistic work. We believe that Wittgenstein deserves credit for initiating the development of analytical aesthetics, but he developed a cultural approach to art. This made it possible to understand and defend the cultural anchoring of African art by denying

it any metaphysical and / or sacred basis. Aesthetics may not be a science, but it “relates to the culture of a people” (MONDOUÉ, NGUEMETA; 2014, 118), “an entire culture that emerges from a language game” (WITTGENSTEIN, 1965, 28).

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