

one can say that an ever recurring redefining of art represents a part of any “generative formula” of art along with aesthetic theory. The whole history of reflections on art – from Plato’s and Aristotle’s concepts of mimetic function at the core of the meaning of art to the many explicit negative and positive definitions of art in relation to the sensual experiences, insights, truth and social action in avant-garde manifestos – one way or the other – exposes various aspects of manifestations of *subjectivity* through artistic practice. It is important to stress an innermost determination of subjectivity, which in spite of all efforts by philosophers such as René Descartes, Johann G. Fichte or Jean-Paul Sartre, makes any total reduction of the *duality* as an inevitable attribute that determines the subject impossible.² As we know, especially from the times of German idealist philosophy in the period of romanticism, this *duality* as a determination of the notion of the *Subject* can be discerned ontologically, epistemologically, ethically and, very significantly, also aesthetically. What I basically have in mind is the *opposition subject-object*, which in the relevant articulations finds everything from Kant’s epistemology to Hegel’s dialectics. However, this duality bears importance for aesthetics because it differs from just “simple” duality of empirical sciences, since the activity of the subjective side makes the opposition decisively asymmetrical.

Giorgio Agamben brought forward an aspect of the *duality* within subjectivity, which more or less determines a whole period of bourgeois culture. The fact that within this culture aesthetics and art were largely linked by the concept of beauty situates subjectivity at the centre of any reflection and consideration of the activity of the perception of art. Agamben exposes the determination, which I talk about here, by evoking Friedrich Nietzsche’s criticism of Kant from *Genealogy of Morals* in view of aesthetic “pleasure without interest”, which introduces the “spectator” into the concept of “beautiful”. Nietzsche disagrees with Kant and therefore, as Agamben says, his point is to “purify” the concept of “beauty”:

This purification takes place as reversal of the traditional perspective on the work of art: the aesthetic dimension – the sensible apprehension of the beautiful object on the part of the spectator – is replaced by the creative experience of the artist who sees in his work only une promesse de bonheur, a promise of happiness. Having reached the furthest limit of its destiny in “the hour of the short-

2 “Mais la dualité est indéfectible,” (But duality is ceaseless) said also Jean Baudrillard not so very long time ago. See: Baudrillard, 2004, p. 159.