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The Classification of the Substantive Arts

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Abstract. In this paper, I discuss certain criteria for classifying the substantive arts. In the first section, I explain the idea of substantive arts and then put forward sociological, historical, thematic and metaphysical criteria for classifying the arts that I deem to be external to the classified materials. I subsequently outline five classification criteria internal to works of art, themselves understood as techniques. Such criteria take into account the materials used in the works, the degree of destruction exercised therein, the degree of disconnection between the artist and the artwork, the sense organs involved in perceiving these works and the scope of the analogies between them and the other parts of reality. To end, I draw final corollaries in line with the discussion.

Keywords: Substantive arts, Classification, Lessing, Abstract art.

1. THE IDEA OF SUBSTANTIVE VERSUS ADJECTIVE ARTS

Discussing classification criteria encompasses a set of arts that have since the 18th century been known as fine arts, noble arts, useless arts, aesthetic arts, poetic arts, contemplative arts and superfluous arts. Following the expression coined by Gustavo Bueno [2000a], I refer to them as «substantive arts» and make use of the idea of substantive arts I have advanced elsewhere (Alvarogonzález [2021]). In this use, «substantive arts» stands in opposition to «adjective arts»; the latter serve certain purposes external to themselves, be they psychological, political, religious, military, social, economic, entertainment or other purposes. However, the substantive arts are not intended to serve any particular institution or any immediate practical purpose.

As I have argued, the substantive arts constitute a set of techniques and technologies that seek to invent certain products or actions that bear a recognizable analogy to other parts of reality. Analogies always have an exploratory or analytical purpose (Alvarogonzález [2020]). Consequently, as a technical or technological invention, a work of art contributes to exploring new patches of real-

ity, makes it possible to analyze parts of existing reality or performs both tasks at the same time. In allegorical works of art, this analogical character is evident; however, even in so-called abstract art the artworks' connection to the rest of reality is never lost. This connection may affect only the formal parts of the artistic work or may also relate to certain concepts that are not immediately «things», but that also form part of the reality external to the artwork.

As techniques and technologies, the pure substantive arts such as painting, sculpture and music are limited to certain highly specific regions of reality, involve very specific abilities and are irreducible to each other. There are artistic movements (classicism, romanticism, impressionism, etc.) that look to establish crosscutting values for various artistic categories (music, painting and literature, for instance), but their success in doing so is debatable. In any case, it seems that this crosscutting nature relates more to the ideological or doctrinal moment of these arts rather than to their technical or technological moment.

2. THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE ARTS

In this section, I draw a distinction between external and internal classifications of a given region of reality. By way of example, classifying triangles by color or components is external to the geometric concept of a triangle. However, classifying them by the relative length of their sides (equilateral, isosceles, scalene) is internal to the concept, since the triangle is defined as a three-sided polygon. Similarly, the compound classifications made by the first alchemists are laundry lists that mix together heterogeneous external criteria (color, taste, state of aggregation of matter, etc.) and lack a single basis for division, whereas the periodic table of the chemical elements is a classification internal to the concept of the chemical elements and internal to the laws of chemistry. In what follows, I take cues from the idea of substantive arts as discussed above and touch on the

classification criteria that are external and internal to such idea. My discussion will focus on certain post-18th-century classifications since, prior to this date, what I call «substantive arts» were classified together with techniques and sciences (Kristeller [1951]; [1952]).

The progressive loss of interest in arts classification programs is a sociological fact, but it has no theoretical justification. In my view, there is no unified art or total art that would render the task of classifying the substantive arts unnecessary. Just as the internal classification of triangles, according to their sides and angles, confirms the definition of a triangle as a three-sided polygon, the classification of substantive arts, using criteria that are internal to their own definition, will allow us to evaluate the fertility and accuracy of that definition.

2.1. Discussion of certain classification criteria external to the idea of substantive arts

2.1.1. Empirical, sociological and historical classifications

External classifications need not refer to any specific idea of art to distinguish and classify the arts, since the arts are activities or historical-cultural institutions alongside others. Just as there are techniques, trades, guilds, schools and a host of diverse institutions, the substantive arts (sculpture, painting, music, literature, theater, dance) are also organized into groups and guilds that follow their own dynamics, differing from others on the basis of social indicators (status, teachings, common interests, etc.) (Dickie [1974]; Fokt [2014], [2017]; Danto [1973], [1998]). It suffices to consider that these institutions are the mere result of human activity and, consequently, open to retrospective, historical analysis (Levinson [1979], [1989], [1993], [2002]). Musicians' guilds differ from painters' or sculptors' guild, and each of them has its own uses, techniques, teachings and traditions in which the various styles are framed (Carney [1994]). Put forward by Davies, the «cladistic» theory of art is based on a historical point of view that purports to be purely denotative and

philosophically neutral (Davies [1997], [2004], [2015]). From these perspectives, the distinction between the arts in their adjective and substantive function does not need to be significant, since there is a historical and institutional continuity between them. From these tenets, the classification of the arts is but the verification of certain historical processes in which some institutions oppose others (musical institutions versus pictorial institutions, for example). In general, these authors recognize that it is not possible to reconstruct a single historical course encompassing all the substantive arts or one that allows us to construct a phylogenetic classification in which certain arts emerge from others. Rather, it is a question of verifying that each of the substantive arts has its specific technical sources and follows its own courses and dynamics, although certain parallels could be established between some of them at certain points.

2.1.2. Thematic classifications

Classifying the arts by their subject matter is also external to the concept of substantive arts that I take as a reference here. The distinction between religious versus profane or military versus civilian works of art mixes highly heterogeneous arts together, such as music, painting, sculpture, architecture and dance. Certain thematic classification criteria qualify as ontological (dealing with nature), anthropological (dealing with human subjects), zoological or theriological (depicting non-human animals) or even divine (dealing with gods and angels).

In *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Kant defined beautiful art as distinct from mercenary mechanical trades, as «a manner of presenting that is purposive on its own and that furthers, even though without a purpose, the culture of our mental powers to [facilitate] social communication» (Kant [1790]: § 44). Kant compared the beautiful arts to the languages and classified them based on the content they transmit. On the one hand are certain arts – oratory and poetry – that express thoughts and on the other are the arts that

express intuitions. Sculpture, architecture, painting and gardening express the form of intuitions while music and the art of colors express their subject matter (Kant [1790]: § 51). All of them must be connected with moral ideas or else they would merely be distraction (Kant [1790]: §52). Kant's classification is eminently external to the structure of the arts, akin to a linguist classifying national languages following the matters dealt with in the speech acts instead of using other internal classification criteria such as their phonological, morphological, syntactic or semantic structure.

2.1.3. Metaphysical classifications

Among many others, an example of a classification of the arts based on metaphysical criteria is given by Hegel in the introduction to *Aesthetics*, where he distinguished five arts, classifying them according to their degree of materiality and spirituality. For Hegel, the content of genuine art is ideal, since art is not an imitation of nature but rather an expression of the absolute spirit. The more material arts, in which technical aspects prevail, are at the same time the least expressive compared to the high expressiveness of the most spiritual arts since beauty is but the sensory manifestation of life and spiritual freedom. From more to less material, the scale of the arts put forward by Hegel was as follows: architecture, sculpture, painting, music and poetry (Hegel [1818-1829]: 82-90).

In certain core issues, Hegel's classification is reminiscent of the classification of disciplines made by the Neoplatonist Plotinus, although it must be kept in mind that the idea of «arts» in Antiquity is most different from Hegel's Romantic idea, since for Plotinus the arts include all techniques. Plotinus based his classification on the various degrees of materiality and spirituality of the arts and considered, like Hegel, that the more spiritual and less material arts were superior. Thus, as in Hegel's scale, the lowest place in the hierarchy is held by architecture, followed by medicine and agriculture, which help nature, and then painting, which imitates it. The arts that improve human action, such as rhetoric, music and poli-

tics, are even more spiritual, while the purely intellectual, most exalted art is geometry (Plotinus, *Enneads*, IV, 4, 31; V, 9, 11).

Based on this paper's tenets, all the arts are material to the same degree, although each one of them has specific material contents (stones, sounds, dyes, human operations, etc.), while Hegel's and Plotinus's ideas of spirit are eminently metaphysical.

2.1.4. Nelson Goodman's distinction between allographic and autographic arts

Nelson Goodman differentiated between autographic and allographic art. In autographic art, there is a closer link between the author and the artwork, and the distinction between original and copy is highly significant, as in painting. In allographic art, however, the work lacks that close relationship with the author, as in music, when the same musical piece is performed thousands of times, or in literature, where the work is multiplied in thousands of copies (Goodman [1968]: 112-115). This criterion for classifying the arts is of great interest to those who trade in works of art, but its philosophical significance is controversial. Eddy Zemach defended that, once certain works can be reproduced with such a high degree of accuracy that they can only be distinguished from the original by procedures beyond normal perception, the insistence on possessing original artworks could be interpreted as a variety of fetishism, as an irrational reverence for something (Zemach [1986], [1989]). Contrary, Steven Farrelly-Jackson argued that the full aesthetic response to an artwork entails its consideration as a performance (even in painting and sculpture), and includes interest and valuing of objects as parts of the artist's life (Farrelly-Jackson [1997]). The idea of substantive arts I have defended elsewhere (Alvargonzález [2021]) implies that the expressive aspects of artworks are neither necessary nor sufficient characteristics to define substantive arts. Consequently, at this point, my position is closer to Zemach's than to Farrelly-Jackson's.

2.2. The internal classification criteria to the idea of substantive arts

As I see it, the substantive arts are a set of techniques and technologies by means of which certain products or actions are invented that have a recognizable analogy with other parts of reality (Alvargonzález [2021]). Substantive works of art do not have an immediate practical purpose and, in this regard, are far removed from ordinary life. Since they are constructed by analogy with other parts of reality, they fulfill the objective aims of any analogy, i.e. exploratory and analytical purposes (Alvargonzález [2020]): a work of art can aid in exploring new patches of reality and in analyzing parts of existing reality. Frequently, these two tasks occur simultaneously and in varying proportions in the same work of art, which means that they do not serve as criteria for classification.

The substantive arts are techniques and, as such, depend directly on a number of factors. First, they depend on the materials used. Second, they depend on the degree of destruction that these materials allow. Third, since there are techniques that build products (productive techniques, poetry), such as pottery techniques, and techniques that build processes (techniques of praxis), such as hunting techniques, a further distinction can be made between the arts of *poiesis* and the arts of *praxis*. Moreover, works of art are designed to be perceived, so the sense organs involved in perception provide us with another firm criterion for classification. Lastly, as I have said, works of art involve analogies with other parts of reality that are external to them. These analogies can be restricted only to terms and the relationships between terms or can also include operations. Below I outline the reasons why some of these criteria lead to significant classifications of the arts while others do not.

2.2.1. Classification based on the materials used to construct the analogy with respect to the rest of reality

Given the physicalistic component of all works of art, a pertinent criterion for classifying the sub-

stantive arts looks at the materials used to construct the exploratory and analytical analogies of which the essence of such arts consists. Making a work of art with stones is not the same as making a work of art with sounds. Stone construction must follow dynamic and static laws, while sound construction must follow the laws of acoustics, harmony and tonality.

The most relevant classification of the arts based the materiality of the arts themselves makes a differentiation between the arts that use the human language of words and those that do not. Moses Mendelssohn differentiated the beautiful letters (theater, poetry, literature), which use «arbitrary signs» such as the language of words, from the fine arts (painting, sculpture, architecture, dance, music), which use «non-arbitrary signs» that he called «natural». To quote Mendelssohn: «All real and possible things can be expressed by arbitrary signs [the language of words] as soon as they have a clear concept of them. For this reason, the field of beautiful letters extends to all imaginable objects», while the object of the arts that he calls «natural» is more limited since these arts «use preferably natural signs» (Mendelssohn [1757]: 253). While launched from Mendelssohn's idealist philosophy of art, this classification is nevertheless materialist in practice since it follows the criteria based on the materials with which the works are constructed. As can be seen, the category of arts made with non-arbitrary signs – Mendelssohn's «natural» arts – is a negative category within which we must continue to classify various species.

Two centuries later, Ayn Rand made a distinction between conceptual arts such as literature and the non-conceptual, visual and auditory arts (Rand [1971]: 45-75). This criterion contradicts her own definition of art since, according to Rand, all the arts are essentially conceptual, since they are all the product of the conceptual level of human consciousness. In any case, leaving aside the adequacy of the label used by Rand («conceptual» versus «non-conceptual»), she treads the same terrain, differentiating the arts using the human language of words from the other arts.

2.2.2. Classification based on the degree of destruction of reality

Since they are a variety of techniques and technologies, the substantive arts always entail a certain degree of destruction of reality. In techniques and technologies, this destruction can be stronger or weaker and ranges from the simple channeling of certain natural processes to pursue human ends, as with a sailing ship or windmill, to absolute destruction, such as in hunting and military techniques (Bueno [2000b]). In the arts, this destruction and recomposition of the parts retains the scale of the human sense organs' discrimination capacity.

All the arts, even the most abstract arts, construct analogies using geometric, biological, ethological, acoustic, technical and other morphologies. Consequently, «abstract» art is abstract in relation to certain morphologies, but never in absolute terms, even though it prefers geometric over anthropological morphologies, or acoustic morphologies that do not contain verbal structures. When the degree of destruction is maximum, abstract works of art still cannot dispense with the forms provided at the scale of human perception, even if such forms are the result of destroying reality at various levels and these formal parts are combined in a strange manner. The degree of destruction and explosion of reality may be higher or lower within the same art, as happens with the arts that tolerate both «figurative» and «abstract» modulation. Accordingly, this criterion is not valid to differentiate certain arts from others. In his system of fine arts, Étienne Souriau differentiated the arts of the first order or unrepresentative arts (arabesque, abstract painting, non-vocal music) and the second-degree, representative arts (Souriau [1947]: 115-125). However, this criterion falls short in classifying the arts, since there are arts with both modalities: abstract and representative painting and sculpture, non-vocal versus vocal music, arabesque versus representative drawing. On the other hand, pure prosody, which Étienne Souriau considered the abstract modulation of literature, does not give rise to

art, since the accent, tones and intonation cannot stand on their own (Souriau [1947]: 132). At any rate, these prosodic features are also formal parts of any literary work (Souriau [1947]: 121, 126).

However, the arts linked to the human language of words (literature, theater, vocal music, sound film) leave no room for the abstract since the level of a language that has been blown up always includes a structured vocabulary with references to specific things and actions. For this reason, these arts are always «representative» arts, «allegorical» arts, arts that have some references outside them, arts preserving the anthropic scale of the language of words and of human operations. One could posit that an abstract work of art could be deemed «self-referential» since it shows itself to itself, as its own reference, as with the theorems of the formal sciences. This interpretation is tantamount to holding that these abstract arts do not refer to anything outside of themselves. The prominent case would be non-vocal music, which is necessarily an abstract art. However, these arts imply the composition with certain morphologies that are not completely detached from other morphologies of reality, even when taken from the formal sciences. In reality, all the arts are «allegorical» to a greater or lesser extent, such that works of art or their constituent parts are always connected by analogy to things in the world that are outside the work of art itself.

In the directly representative arts (the arts that do not admit the modality of abstract art), the doctrine of modality may be used to construct the related classification. The depiction of impossible things and events is typical in science fiction narratives that violate the principles of science. Depicting possible yet non-existent things and events occurs in fictional narrative. In this regard, representing existing or necessary things and events transports us from the arts into the sciences. If exclusively existing things are represented, then we find ourselves in the field of history or forensic reconstruction, and if necessary things are «represented» (strictly speaking, they are constituted) we are in the field of the other formal, natural and human sciences. Because they

are directly allegorical, representative works of art often analyze the reality to which they refer. Such would be the meaning of the cathartic function of these arts, which allows us to appreciate how confused and false ideas amalgamate with clear and true ideas so that, in the world, they appear as inseparable, although they could be analytically dissociated.

2.2.3. Classification based on the connection or disconnection of human subjects in executing the artwork

As techniques or technologies, the arts can benefit from the classic Aristotelian classification that differentiates the techniques that give rise to artifacts or products, and those that lead to actions. The former are the productive techniques (in Greek *poieîn*, in Latin *facere*), such as the potter's technique, while the latter are the techniques of praxis (in Greek, *prateîn*, in Latin *agere*), such as military techniques and persuasion techniques (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* [1140a-1140b]: 30). By applying this criterion to the substantive arts, we can differentiate the arts that consist of the active execution of a process by one or more interpreters. This is so in the «performing arts»: theater, music, dance and dramatic cinema. Yet there are other arts that produce a product that has a separate existence from its author and its interpreters, as is the case with painting, sculpture, architecture and literature. Films and recorded music pose special problems since the performance becomes a product.

Ayn Rand made a distinction between the «primary» arts (literature, music and the plastic arts) from the «secondary» arts that present the human body in action (such as dance) (Rand [1971]). For Rand, music is a primary art. She posits that the secondary arts require the primary ones: dance requires music, theater requires literature. Cinema would be a secondary performing arts.

Nelson Goodman differentiated «uniphasic» arts, which do not require a performer, such as painting and literature, from «biphasic» arts, which require a performer, such as live music

(Goodman [1968]: 99-127). In any case, Goodman's distinction does not correspond to mine or Rand's since, for Goodman, the cast sculpture would be an example of biphasic art, compared to the carved sculpture that would be uniphasic (Goodman [1968]: 112-115).

Arts involving real-time execution are very similar to games in that they do not admit separation from their operative exercise. In games, the analytical and exploratory functions are highly attenuated, and the propedeutic and entertainment functions, which put them closer to sport, prevail. In any case, in games, the «spectator» of the arts (for example, the spectator of the theater or dance) becomes an actor who has to participate in the game, notwithstanding the fact that certain games may also be shows. In games and competitive sports, there is an immediate goal: victory. In any case, in the performing arts, there is a real-time interaction between the artist and the spectators and among the spectators.

2.2.4. Classification based on the sense organs involved in the perception of the work

The substantive arts always have a phenomenological, perceptual and subjective component. As such, regard should be had to the sense organs involved in each of them. With this criterion, the exclusively visual arts (painting, sculpture, architecture, dance) are differentiated from the exclusively auditory arts (music, oration) and from those that involve both sight and hearing (theater, cinema). Here I follow Plato, who considered that the arts that he called «superior» only involve sight and hearing (*Greater Hippias* 302 a, and ff.), thus excluding the culinary arts from the fine arts (*Gorgias* 462, 463d). Mendelssohn shared a similar criterion, stating that the fine arts use natural signs acting via hearing and sight since we do know of any beautiful art concerning the other senses (Mendelssohn [1757]: 1997). The reason that there are no substantive arts built up around the senses of smell, taste and touch is that, in those senses, humans lack a range of perceptual discrimination as rich and varied as our ability to

discriminate sounds and visual stimuli (Souriau [1947]: 110-112).

Ayn Rand held that sight and touch alone provide us with a direct notion of entities. Hearing, taste and smell either provide us with information about some of the attributes of the entities or put us in contact with the consequences produced by the entities, but they do not put us in the presence of the entities themselves. For this psych-epistemological reason, Rand considers that music radically differs from the visual arts (Rand, [1971]: 45-75).

Étienne Souriau posited that the fine arts form a system and can be classified based on what he considers to be nine artistically usable qualia: lines (arabesque and drawing), volumes (architecture and sculpture), colors (abstract and representative painting), luminosities (light projections, cinema, photography), movement (dance and pantomime), articulated sound (literature) and musical sound (music) (Souriau [1947]: 126). The problem is that the qualia supporting this classification remain a *petitio principii*, as when Souriau differentiates «articulated vocal» sounds from «musical» sounds. The difference between articulated and musical sounds takes for granted that which it seeks to define, i.e. the existence of a human language of words as opposed to the existence of etiologically human music, which are both human techniques arising prior to the corresponding fine arts. In my view, the psychophysiological criteria linked to the phenomenology of human perception are not sufficient to ground a classification of the arts, although they should never be disregarded.

2.2.5. Analogy can affect terms, relationships and operations: a reinterpretation of Lessing's classification

In *Laocoon*, Lessing made a distinction between painting and poetry based on the role that time plays in these arts. He found that there are certain exclusively static arts, which are the plastic arts. Lessing referred to painting alone, but sculpture (leaving aside kinetic sculpture) and architecture also meet the requirements of static art. In other arts, though, the succession of the

parts of the work is a distinctive feature, as they are «narrative arts». Lessing referred to poetry, but it is logical to make the supposition that music, dance and cinema are closer to poetry than to the static arts (Lessing [1762-66]).

A more precise reformulation of Lessing's criterion must take into account the fact that contemplating sculpture requires movements of the spectator and, therefore, at least in that precise sense, it is not entirely static. The same goes for the contemplation of a painting, which involves the voluntary movements of the eye muscles: the perception of painting does not occur instantly but is mediated with the gaze in a complex process that also entails the passage of time. In painting and sculpture, time is the perceptual time of the spectator, while in cinema, theater, literature and dance, time is one of the constituents of the work itself that contributes to determining the artwork's structure and internal morphology. Reinterpreting Lessing's criterion implies looking at the artwork's nature. In certain arts, the spectator governs the process of receiving the artwork while in others this process is narratively guided by the artist. Thus, one could speak of «Eleatic», static arts compared to other «Heraclitean», processual arts. The static arts seem capable of transcending time, as is the case of the Grecian urn in John Keats's famous ode.

When taking substantive arts as analogies, Lessing's classification can be reinterpreted by accounting for the fact that the analogies present in certain works of art are focused exclusively on the terms and the relationships between terms (as in painting), while analogies of other works of art have formal parts that are processual (they are operations). In the latter case, a formal consideration of time is necessary: it is not that time appears materially represented by a clock in a painting, but that the artist's work must unfold in time.

In the procedural arts, the artist leads the reader or viewer to read, hear or see what the author determines. The spectator or reader agrees to be guided and places himself in the hands of the author, who thus becomes a *psychagoge*, a «conductor of souls». In the *Ion* (535-536), Plato acknowledged the psychagogical function of cer-

tain arts in stating that poetics moves the passions of the public since it makes the public rejoice, flush and sadden. For both Plato and Tolstoy, these arts are like an infection, exciting the emotions and disturbing the subject's harmony. Moses Mendelssohn also acknowledges this psychagogical function of works of art in remarking that artists awake and appease the spectators' passions and make them fear, calm down, get angry, laugh and shed tears (Mendelssohn [1757]). As Spinoza taught, no one can claim to be completely free of passion and emotion. Subsequently, Johannes Nikolaus Tetens would conceptualize these passions and emotions as «feelings» (Tetens [1777]). William Wordsworth, in his famous preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, advocated for the cognitive function of poetry, which causes our emotions to cease to be impenetrable and become transparent (Wordsworth [1802]: XXXVII). Only the so-called plastic arts (architecture, sculpture and painting) remain in the immanence of terms and relationships, thus relatively leaving aside the operations that, while appearing when they are constructed, play but a minor role when they are contemplated. In any case, the psychagogical function does not completely disappear in the visual arts, which also produce psychological effects on the spectators; nevertheless, the processual arts inevitably deploy this function.

Based on this theory of the analogical objective finality of works of art, I make the supposition that the sentimental conduction of the psychagogical arts allows us to explore certain subjective and social contents while presenting viewers with the opportunity to take some distance from their real correlates. Just as a painted lion does not bite, neither is the image of an emotion or a feeling the feeling itself, such that harmless analysis of feelings is possible. Aristotle, in *Poetics* ([1449b]: 21-28), introduced the notion of «catharsis», a Greek word meaning «cleansing», and compared the cathartic function of tragedy with medical purgation so that the audience undergoes a purification of excessive passions (Golden [1973]). In *Politics* ([1341b]: 37-39), Aristotle stated that music ought to be used for catharsis as it occurs in certain religious ceremo-

nies (Lear [1988]). Aristotle’s catharsis has also been interpreted as a clarification of emotions (Golden [1973]) Lessing, in *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, defended that, through tragedy, the audience experience the purification of the uncontrolled emotions of pity or fear, finding the proper balance between them (Lessing [1769]: essays 77 & 78). Benedetto Croce stated that this catharsis produces a calming effect since the audience, vicariously experiencing certain feelings without the need of undergoing them, manages to free itself of those affections (Croce [1966]: 219).

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In Table 1, I summarize some of the conclusions about the classification of the arts following from the foregoing discussion.

Table 1. The classification of the substantive arts.

	with language of words	without language of words
building objects [poieîn, facere]	Literature	Plastic arts: Painting Sculpture Architecture
executing actions [prateîn, agere]	Theatre Sound film	Non-vocal music Dance
Scenic arts	Vocal music	

The human language of words is such a specific technique and has so much power and precision when constructing analytical and exploratory analogies that the arts constructed with it (even if they only partially make use of it) are inevitably guided by the content of the text and inextricably linked to a specific language. The human language of words is always procedural, since the words have to take the place of each other in the speech and reading acts. Therefore, the arts that use it will always be procedural arts in which the psychagogical function can never be entirely absent. Furthermore, the arts that use the human language of words cannot be modulated into «abstract art» since language is always allegorical.

The non-verbal visual arts, the plastic arts, enjoy the privilege of immediacy, concreteness and clarity, as well as the distinctiveness of visual perception. They are poetic arts that always entail the construction of objects.

On the other hand, since they are abstract procedural arts, dance and non-vocal musical works of art make it possible to evoke passions, feelings, and states of mind in a manner perhaps more lively than the plastic arts, yet at the same time in a less objective way.

The distinction between abstract art and representative art proves moot to classifying the arts, for, as I have found above, there are no abstract arts in an absolute sense and the same art (painting, sculpture) frequently supports both representative and the abstract modalities. Equally significant is the fact that certain arts, like those using the human language of words, do not support the modality of abstract art.

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