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Flows, Vortices, and Counterflows: Artification and Aesthetization in Chiasmatic Motion on a Mobius Ring

Yrjö Sepänmaa

Abstract

My first question is the general orientation towards the aesthetic and artistic in our culture. Secondly, I deal with intentional and sought-for aestheticization and artification, which are driven particularly by art and aesthetic education. Thirdly, I concentrate on the effects of the change on people and culture, in general, and on art, in particular. The processes of art and the aesthetic have their counter-movements that create tension and dynamics. I characterize the flow pattern as chiasmatic motion taking place on a Möbius ring. Art and the aesthetic are a pair, the parts of which are related to each other through the question of beauty and ugliness. At times art and beauty move apart into invisibility and at times they approach and unite and again branch and divide into their own directions, while the internal protest movements of each simultaneously form chiasmatic relationships. There is neither direction nor stable motion; there are parallels and oppositions, rotations and vortices, faster and slower, arising and vanishing.

Key Words

aesthetic literacy, anti-aesthetic, anti-art, arts and crafts, beautification, beauty, chiasm, design, total work of art



Excess and Ascesis (sponge), c-print, 2010

Motto

I consciously strive to embrace both extremes in each work, or at least each series of works. I want to build my art upon the tension between these opposites. The beautiful and the repulsive are like the two poles of a forever-swinging pendulum, repelling each other just as occurs when the like poles of a magnet are brought together. When forced to collide, they create a third image that is fraught with just the kind of conflicted tension that I want to capture in my art. Saara Ekström[1]

1. Introduction

Artification is inseparably linked to art; aestheticization is similarly linked to the aesthetic and, thus, to beauty. Artification is characterized not only by internal moves between the core areas and the margins but also by border crossings into and out of art. Artification can comprise the change of art into more art, even as far as pure art; the counter-movement is less art, for example, tendency art, and the like, and impure, mixed, and everyday art.

The aesthetic area of artification is wider than art. However, its structure is different. It is more a question of differences of degree and tone than of externality and internality. The aestheticization movement takes place, on the one hand, on a scale between the beautiful and the ugly towards beauty, and on the other hand, externally oriented from moral and other values to that scale. Aestheticization is thus not only a reinforcement

of beauty relative to ugliness but also an emphasis of aesthetic values relative to other values, in an extreme form of aestheticism. Aestheticization signifies an internal intensification, corresponding to artification, into pure beauty. For its part, the counter-movement is either uglification or a movement away from the scale of beauty and ugliness.

Passive, unintended artification flows on a general level towards art, a trend in which the characteristics of art are strengthened up to a conversion into art. It is a cultural phenomenon. Active, intended artification is intentional and determined, as is the planned education, teaching, counseling, and research work supporting this. It can be located and is visible. In the aesthetic, there are the same passive and active sides: on the one hand, conscious promotion; on the other, a taking place by itself.

Contemporary art has been de-aestheticized^[2] at the same time as everyday life has been aestheticized, at least on the surface.^[3] Negative values in art correspond to negative values in the environment. Passive beautification and active beautification also have their counter-flows. These can be an attack against superficially understood beauty, with the intention of demonstrating that beauty is, above all, a value to be taken seriously, or of emphasizing that aesthetic values are more diverse and that beauty is one of them, and not necessarily the dominant one. They can also be programmatic vandalism or brutalism, the impulse for which has come from anti-artistic or anti-aesthetic phenomena. The goal of the artification of the everyday is not so much making something into art as using the resources of art to increase aesthetic quality.^[4] The impulse to artification can equally come from outside, when art shows itself as a goal and artification as an intermediate stage.

My article is divided into two main parts. First I consider artification and then aestheticization, both of them in active and passive forms. In the unifying last portion, I question their connection and differentiation; both occur. I seek to demonstrate that artification is developing into a more independent phenomenon with a wider intermediate field. That which has already become art is on one side, that which can potentially be artified is on the other. That which is artified is made by an artifier, whose fields include handcrafts, industrial design, fashion design, and building. The three areas, art, the artified, and the rest of reality, live in parallel to each other, in interaction. The intermediate area referred to as the "applied arts" is divided into sub-areas that, in turn, reinforce their own special natures. In part, this is literally a question of the application of art, that is, the use of the means of art for the shaping and creation of reality. And, in part it is simply the meeting of the needs of practical life in an aesthetically satisfactory manner, so that it would be clearer to speak of aestheticization. Artification and aestheticization meet in the territory of everyday aesthetics.

De-aestheticization, the orientation towards negative aesthetic values, such as the ugly, startling, cruel, frightening, unpleasant, and shocking instead of positive values, takes its place as an internal counter-movement to aestheticization.^[5] The negative counterpart can be used to promote goals that are, as such, seen as positive, but recourse to it is also one kind of protest

and provocation in an underground spirit.

A more uncompromising form of de-aestheticization arises from the emphasis on other values. Indirectly, it represents the disparagement or direct rejection of aesthetic values, both positive and negative. Thus the counter-movement to aestheticization or being aestheticized comes mainly from external pressure and the supremacy of other value areas. This leads to the marginalization and withering of the aesthetic value area. The pressure can be either intentional or can arise, for example, from a belief in the ineluctability of economic values.

2. Artification

a. the boundary of art and crossings of it

Boundary crossings, metamorphoses, and disappearances are not a matter of dramatic pictures of the future as much as a second coming, a death, or a move to a state of anarchy. The question is applicable even to emphatically everyday movements, jolts, and strains.

Why and when is it important to know the boundary of art? The boundary dissolves as marginal phenomena increase, but classification is required to show an appropriate context for interpretation. The important thing is to know or decide the category as a member of which something is examined.^[6] In practice, drawing an art-philosophical boundary affects support systems, memberships in associations and clubs, museums' exhibition activities, educational institutions' programs, research funding, art administration, and the media. When genres that are still seeking a form appear in the territories of old genres, defense starts as a fear for occupations.

Artification is a flow, a trend, that occurs for different reasons and takes many forms. It is a general, goal-oriented activity that has an author but remains mostly anonymous. Why does artification take place? Is the result a work of art or something like a work of art? What happens to something that is artified? If nothing else, at least the manner of examination changes: depiction, interpretation, and evaluation become primary. The guarding of the boundary of principle between fact and fiction becomes more alert, if boundary lines are crossed, for example, by random art and *pop-up* architecture. The bond between art and the aesthetic is formed by art having, in a traditional view, an aesthetic core. Art has acted as a means of defining and expressing the aesthetic; its aesthetic character is derived by circular reasoning from the nature of art, so that the artistic has also been aesthetic and the aesthetic artistic. For a century now, this union has been neither absolute nor valid.

On the boundary between art and reality, between the fictive and the real, a varied group of activities has formed that exploits the means of art and artists. They do not even seek to be art, or else directly deny association with it. Precisely in this way, a system arises to form a *craftsworld*, within which there are then part- and sub-worlds. The closeness of art and craft is illustrated by the fact that the English word *art* does not by itself make a distinction.

The established phenomena of the intermediate area, certainly aesthetic but not normally art, are objects and material culture

with all their appurtenances, ceremonies like weddings, funerals, and church services, popular festivals with fireworks and parades, trade fairs, exhibitions, and sports competitions. An artist who enters the intermediate area does not make art and may even deny the artistic nature of his or her creations, even though professional skills and means are used. The art-like boundary neighbor thus formed then affects art directly or indirectly. The question is not of everyday activities, like child-care, shopping, hobbies, or family time, that do not belong to the artist's role activities but of work that demands professional know-how but doesn't aim to create art. Artification is then not made for art's sake but instead for producing something aesthetically significant, yet nevertheless requiring the professional skill of an artist. Making this does not come closer to art with the intention of merging with it but, on the contrary, distances itself from art by creating or reinforcing a parallel system.

The effect on art is indirect. The more easily approachable intermediate area takes attention and audience from art the more it unintentionally drives art to the margin, to become an avant-garde remaining distant and hermetically sealed, ever farther from the general public. The smallness of the audience for experimental exhibitions, theater, and other art, even a direct loss of audience, compared to classical performances, is revealing. The vanguard of contemporary art has alienated art from the majority of the art public, or else people arrive at the venue curious and hungry for sensation, to be amazed, to be horrified, and to show disapprobation.

b. the eight meanings of artification

I distinguish eight forms and ways of how a change into art or simply a development in the direction of art (or a distancing from art, de-artification) take place. In all of these, there is an active (intentional) and a passive (unintentional) form. The passive means a general trend, fashion, or development line in culture. The active is conscious, goal-oriented activity and influences up-bringing, control, teaching, education, and counselling, though it also includes sanctions, prohibitions, and commands.

Artification 1: a drawing towards art and the counter-movement, fleeing from art

There is a seeking towards art, but there is also a search away from and out of art and the aesthetic. Anti-art is *still* art, although it is already on the boundary. In terms of art theory, it is a special form of conscious art; anti-art is different from non-art, which is over the boundary but from which art, and particularly anti-art, occupies new areas in order to artify them.

I use the term "chiasmatic motion" to refer to opposing currents: a search by actual art and professional artists for the margin, and a testing of how impassable the boundary is. Simultaneously, a movement is directed from outside and the boundary zone towards the historical and museum-like, classic, central area. Artification, in the sense of a metamorphosis, is the latter, a movement towards art and from there towards an envisaged, imagined core. A flight from art, on the other hand, is a seeking for the boundary zone as programmatic anti-art or avant-garde art, as far as a crossing of the boundary line and a

breaking of the link to art. A Möbius band or ring illustrates an unnoticed movement to the other side; however, there is only one surface. Art that flees into itself and denies its identity is, in practice, an impossibility; it can destroy itself only by ending all its activities, by dying naturally or by its own hand.

Artification 2: from the margin towards the center

A general trend in art culture is a reinforcement of marginal genres and then their relative movement towards the center to the traditional core or to form new cores, such as circus art, with the *Cirque du Soleil* at the peak. Temporary forms, like light and food art, and also *parkour* and ice dancing, which move on the boundaries of sport, either change into actual art forms by losing their marginal characters or fall out of fashion to be consigned to temporary forms. As in the case of figure skating, these can also begin to emphasize their skill aspects and distance themselves from art.

Fashion design and industrial design have a strong tendency towards art; shops are galleries down to their names, while art museums display design. The Guggenheim in New York organized an extensive exhibition of Giorgio Armani's fashion design. In architecture, building art's belonging to the sphere of art is reinforced. The creations of star architects are unique works with names, from which an oeuvre is constructed with rises and falls.

Artification 3: the growth of art-like-ness

Features that are regarded as being art-like are reinforced in non-art; means known from art are used, for example, in nature and other documentary films, such as *Onkalo/Into Eternity*, which is a documentary concerning the final disposal site of nuclear waste in Finland.^[7] The world changes or is changed into a story; the narrative character becomes a way of seeing. The art boundary is reached and crossed in docu-drama and reality art.

A narrative is created, when, for instance, animals are turned into thinking and goal-oriented actors and their lives are seen as a nearly unbroken survival drama. At more peaceful moments, animals build architecture that can even act as a model for humans. Even natural phenomena are personalized and are seen as having intentions and bursts of emotion. The Katrina hurricane destroyed most of New Orleans.

Artification 4: metaphorical art

Metaphorical art, which is seen as though it is art but is not regarded or classified as art, is becoming widespread. Art begins to act as a viewpoint to matters and objects, in which case something to which attention would otherwise not be paid can be seen in the object. Respecting and valuing art are a background power, particularly in the art-colored talk characteristic of nature depictions. Art is the valuable point of comparison. There is a paradox in the fact that examination models for and objects for comparison with nature, which is always regarded as valuable, are sought from the cultural environment, the world of objects, and the media. "The sky above the port was the color of television, tuned to a dead channel," begins William Gibson's science-fiction novel *Neuromancer*.^[8]

In the consciousness of the general public, an aesthetic ideal is still expected from art; therefore, contemporary art is quickly labelled as scandal-seeking, elitist, and lacking content. Traditional art is an object of comparison and a model of thought in nature literature, for example, even though contemporary environmental art would offer closer links. Art-like creativity and inventiveness are seen in the entire process of making. Thus, art is not only finished works but also processes, acts.

Art-talk and practices specific to art are becoming common outside of art. Criticism takes over new areas and has created, for example, car, restaurant, and food critics, so that it could also be considered whether representatives of these sectors should be admitted to associations founded and controlled by art critics. The depiction, interpretation, and evaluation of objects take place using a language familiar from art: the structure of criticism is the same irrespective of the object.

Artification 5: the construction of art-like institutions

Artification and aestheticization appear much deeper and broader than as transformations in our ways of seeing and handling the objects and our manners of speaking of them. They also appear in the formation of supporting institutions. Artification involves such a development of structures. Artified objects need a supporting institution around them just as works of art need a supporting art institution around them (such as an art circle) that is conceptual and often material, too. The widest is the conceptual environmental institution with its actual applications, which appears as a mirror image of the art institution or art circle.[\[9\]](#)

Systems become not only artified but also aestheticized. They have in common a three-component basic structure and role operation taking place within its framework, from the maker through intermediaries to the receiver. Art and other activities are seen as acts of this triad. Part and sub-institutions are built, and operating models arise. The environmental institution operates as the partner of the art institution. It has only to be found and seen; once seen, it is particularized and further refined to become more fine-grained.[\[10\]](#)

From a concentration on objects, we move to co-operation models, networks, and symbioses: our images of mutual co-operation between humankind and nature, machines and humankind. In social aesthetics, the product vanishes out of the way of activity; the activity, not the result, becomes primary.

Artification 6: art as effective means, decoration, and accent

Art remains art but receives instrumental tasks in new contexts, for example, as an interior-decoration element or an improver and enlivener of public accommodation. The use situation and environment then determine what kind of art can be used in what context and what kind of art will be produced for it.

Art and the means developed in it act as aids, for example, in museum architecture and in the dramatization of exhibitions. Art was exploited in this way in the Shanghai *Expo 2010* exhibition in a section that followed the everyday life of six families in different parts of the world.[\[11\]](#) Hospitals, schools, and public offices are enlivened with art, works of art are placed in public

indoor and outdoor spaces to make them more pleasant. Art is used as a stimuli for the shaping of outdoor locations and as an aid to presentation. A part of art returns openly to serve educational, financial, communicational, and ideological purposes. Advertisements act like art if they are viewed conscious of the fact that they are not art. Part of art is broken off to form everyday art, which approaches applied art.

Important things are marked and emphasized with the aid of art.^[12] Art is an accent, a peak, sometimes like an ornament. When creating a symbiosis of the environment and art, the environmental artist artifies the immediate area of his or her work.^[13] The task even of fields in the landscape is not to produce food but to diversify and enliven the milieu, the landscape image.^[14] Environmental-art monuments, like the Berlin memorial to Holocaust victims, are given large forms.

Artification 7: art chauvinism

The worlds of art begin to compete with reality. The bond with reality is reinforced when the area of art expands to overlap and color the real world. This pushes the viewer too far into extreme art chauvinism, into activity that approves art's upper hand. Excesses are not in the interest of art itself. If there is too much art in too many places, its identity becomes vague. Understanding the world begins to take place on art's conditions through submission to art. Even the fact that the external is seen as non-art means seeing it in relation to art. The opposite takes place when art expands by building alternative realities, when the only obstacles are those set by the imagination. Significance then becomes a widening of our mental elbowroom. The building of a fictive space, the creation of another reality, does not take away from anything.

Does the artified area then remain to form a buffer zone that protects the peace and independence of actual art to be freely that which it is? An increasingly independent sphere of phenomena is thus forming and growing parallel to art, that is related to art but has, however, a different identity. Would it be possible to speak of a media-cultural intermediate area as a non-art and of those maintaining it as non-artists and non-critics, and so on? In Finland, non-writers have been referred to in this way, writers who certainly write but not necessarily books. Rather, they maintain their status and public ego as media personalities in columns and public appearances.

Artification 8: a total work (of art)

Advertising language has turned the *BeoVision 10* flat-screen (almost) into a painting. In the brochure it is shown as a picture on a wall among other pictures. When closed, the television is Kazimir Malevich's *Black Square*; when opened it becomes an electronic, living painting. In advertisements, the *Avanti*-car, originally designed by Raymond Loewy, appears in the middle of the paintings in an art museum. A minimalist-design *Movado* wristwatch is advertised as a museum watch because it has been acquired for the permanent collection of the New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Alessi's domestic appliances or furniture by Eero Aarnio are humorously representational; they use the shapes of living beings to express human properties and emotions.

These are self-evidently material that belongs to design shops and design museums but have also found a place in actual art museums. Products are marketed and sold using the designer's name. The products themselves have a brand name or a title, like a work of art. The emphasis on this name or title comes from the practices of art. Leading brand goods combine high technical quality and innovative design. The goal of the designer and manufacturer is not design for design's sake but to reconcile different values, with practical value being the most important of these. Successful designing produces beauty in both the narrow sense of the outer shell and the wide sense of successfully reaching general goals. Aesthetic value is realized on an upper level, too, in the optimization of the proportions of different values. Economy is not and cannot be justified by the purchase price but by durability, timelessness, and technical progress. Aesthetic matters are the basis of coming close to art: the best of design is picked to be art, thus following an honorific and not a classificatory line of definition.

These total works of art come in different sizes, ranging from individual design objects to buildings like the Villa Mairea at Noormarkku in Finland and the Schröder House by Gerrit Rietveld in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Such works extend from cities, like Brasilia by Oscar Niemeyer and utopian communities to conceptual works, such as the world as a global work of art,[\[15\]](#) to say nothing of Bruno Taut's conceptual landscape architecture, which extends from the shaping of the peak of the Matterhorn to arrangements of galaxies.[\[16\]](#)

All the most significant changes do not take place in the world of objects and beings. Some arise in viewers, as when they begin to see objects through art, or something as an alternative. "Seeing-as" is also its own kind of classification and expansion, such as commending an object by comparing it with art. This way of seeing extends farthest when, in the final resort, everything is seen in relation to everything, as one.

When conceptualized, seeing means understanding and comprehending, no longer the operation of the eyes and the sense of sight. "Don't you see?" Beauty and the aesthetic then receive a strong intellectual flavor. Thus nature and the environment, and even human life, are experienced as art, as a system, and a dynamic arrangement. The life of an individual person but also of a building becomes a work that has a dramatic life cycle. This is the idea of the total work of art, *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[\[17\]](#) One large work of art is created that contains many separate ones; larger entities are formed from sub-totalities. A world of objects is built from objects and space. Correspondingly, one progresses from the individual to groups, to families, peoples, and finally to humanity and the human relations prevailing in them,[\[18\]](#) that is, to social aesthetics.

3. Aestheticization and beautification

Aestheticization links to the tradition of the philosophy of beauty and is therefore independent of art and of art philosophy. However, connections and overlappings arise from the fact that art fosters and realizes aesthetic values and produces corresponding pleasure. Art, too, is aestheticized or de-aestheticized. Traditionally, art has been an area for the free testing and realization of values. The values of beauty reinforce their position relative to other values. Aestheticization is a

cultural trend that can be supported as long as values are taken into account in equilibrium without becoming aestheticism. The aim is a good life, a totality in which aesthetic values have their own appropriate place. However, this does not exclude pure art, *art for art's sake* type of art.

Aestheticization has meant the strengthening of aesthetic activity and an aesthetic manner of examination in nature and culture. In terms of positive aesthetics, nature in a natural state is, as such, a subject for honorific examination. The cultural environment is made, built. It is something in which aesthetic goals are included but whose success depends on skills or chance. Humankind is responsible for realizing its value goals within ecologically acceptable limits.

Aestheticization has both a superficial and a profound significance. The surface is a shell and covering, an exterior. The actual content is under the surface. These, the formal and the content aspects, can be separated conceptually, although they unavoidably appear together and as a combination. The content is intellectual beauty, the elegance of scientific theories, the beauty of a harmonious life, and the welfare of humankind and nature.

Aestheticization is often understood as a movement from profound questions towards the surface. Superficialization is regarded as negative and is associated with ideas of disguise and deception. Things like cosmetics, hairstyles, perfumes, and bodybuilding are regarded with suspicion. However, the surface, too, is significant. In an ideal case, the surface and profound levels are in harmony but in practice there are often tensions between them. We suspect that the outer shell leads us astray.

Sometimes, even often, aestheticization is understood as the admiration of morally reprehensible or otherwise questionable phenomena. Such are violence and war, for example, as well as religious and political agitation. It is also seen as negative if some basic need, such as food or behavior and table manners, are excessively aestheticized. Aesthetic values then seem to become something for the fine regulation of which only a welfare society has the time and money. On the other hand, genres with intrinsic values, such as Japanese *ikebana*, flower arrangement, or growing a *bonsai* tree, are traditional and valued forms of aesthetic culture: the great in the small. [\[19\]](#)

Beautification, a sub-form of aestheticization, is interpreted as being positive but cosmetic. It is done in everyday activities, such as small improvements to the environment like picking up trash and decorative planting. The means and goals are within the reach of ordinary people and the renovations are visible, concrete, and affect mood by evoking a sense of pleasantness and welfare. However, beautification has a tendency to encourage kitsch-like decoration.

Beautification has a superficial and a deep level. In this, there is the difference between sensory perception and comprehension. Each produces an aesthetic experience separately, but only together do they become whole. Reference is made particularly to aesthetic welfare and its obverse, illfare. The need to develop one's own physical nature and cosmetic appearance has recourse to aesthetic surgery or dieting, for example, even though in the eyes of others there may be no need. Obvious distortions of

beautification occur in breeding pets with a regard purely for appearance, copying the beauty of models, and preventing normal growth and forcing it into unnatural shapes.

The entire aesthetic culture may be distorted. Yu Kongjian, a contemporary Chinese landscape architect, sees the modern form of the ideal of small-footedness and the binding of feet, which was part of his culture, in the forcing of nature into forms that are foreign to it. The roles have changed: what was valued has become rejected and the rejected has become desirable. Aesthetic civility and wisdom have received a new significance reinforced by ecological thought. Natural "big-footedness," unforced nature, is now an ecologically justified ideal. Eco-aesthetics has this deeper meaning and message.^[20] In developing "rational Buddhism," Wolfgang Iser also aims at this level above humankind, away from anthropocentrism.^[21]

The creation of beauty is both physical and abstract. The physical is, for example, the altering of the environment; the abstract is concentrated examination. Criticism helps by offering interpretations and forms of examination. Aestheticization is a question of degrees of difference, of tones, not of giving status in the same way as in art, even though reference is made to aesthetic objects. Every object becomes potentially aesthetic when it is taken as a subject of such examination. All human and perhaps even animal activity possesses an intentional or unintentional aesthetic aspect. Its protection, maintenance, and development have their significance as reinforcers of this aspect.

Culture as such, even aesthetic culture, is a value-neutral term. Cultures are systems whose existence is not a value in itself. After all, there are both ecologically durable and self-destructive cultures. Aesthetic environmental culture means an individual person's or group's way of arranging its relationship with the environment in terms of beauty. Aesthetic environmental *civility*, unlike aesthetic culture, is a value term. Civility is engaging in activity by taking other people and nature into account. The first step is aesthetic *literacy*. In the best case, it is possible to speak of environmental *wisdom*.^[22] A civilizing project is formed from aesthetic education. It supports aestheticization understood as positive. Ultimately, the aim is a fully examined good life in which values are in equilibrium, in harmony. Such an equilibrium can be understood as aesthetic, as "super beauty."

4. Artified and aestheticized

a. the development of an intermediate form

Only a part of design, dressing, building, interior design, handicrafts, and many other activities is located on the side of art. The professionals in such fields, designers and manufacturers, are not normally regarded as artists but they have the same creative thinking and problem-solving ability. Artists have the skill to utilize and apply their training and personal views to these needs that these activities fulfill. However, it is more usually a question of professionals specializing in sub-areas, some of whom, because of the nature and merit of their works, then move to the art side. When beginning to work as a designer, an artist is in the position of an enlightened layman. The actual skill and contribution lie in innovative activity with the nature of basic research, on the basis of which innovative development and application are then made

and continued by other professionals.

The aesthetic is located in the same field of value as the ethical, the practical, the economical, the safe, and the healthy. Its narrower significance lies in this series; the wider and deeper significance is a property (the super-aesthetic) of the totality formed by the various values together. Constructive joint activity takes place between the values but they also struggle mutually for space, supremacy, and autocracy. Sometimes the struggle weakens and sometimes strengthens the position of aesthetic values in relation to the rest of the value world. Any disturbance whatever in the constellation is aesthetically significant.

The counter-movement can be an anti-aesthetic reaction coming from aesthetics' own field. Barry Katz created the crude *rawphisticated* as a counterpart of the refined *sophisticated*. An example is a manipulated image of a cell-phone, the rough, wrinkled, lower part of which merges into a polished and highly finished upper part. The writer seeks a justification for the imperfection ("a deliberately unfinished finish") from nature:

No orange is a perfect sphere; no tree grows in a perfectly straight line. Why then do we seek perfection in our lives and in our objects?

Katz concluded that it is precisely "errors," deviations from perfect forms, that make objects individual and variable.

The rawphisticated phone plays with the real world of being and becoming and refuses to privilege either the unfinished or the perfected state. It comes out of your pocket dog-eared and wrinkled, like a business card would, or rough and chiseled, revealing the hand of the sculptor.[\[23\]](#)

The loss of beauty is not a question of programmatic alternatives but of changes in the hierarchy of the various value areas and thus not the direct opposition of some part. If one gains the upper hand, it may lead to the marginalization of others and thus act against them. Opposition may also be a programmatic belittling of other values. The aesthetic itself is guilty of this when promoting aestheticism. More commonly, however, it finds itself subordinated to financial or other values.

b. the development of structures, institutionalization

The entire artification and aestheticization process can be seen through the institutional theory. The art institution has become established and analyzed. It is attacked, more mildly, by unconventional works and, more seriously, by breaking structures. The philosophical basic outline remains clear; *maker – work – receiver* together with organizations and the theory holding this structure together. A corresponding structure, which I have called the environmental institution, can be seen in the environment. It exists on the level of hidden activity, consciously unperceived and unconceptualized.

I see the art institution and the environmental institution – these two aesthetic systems and cultures – as a pair that perceives and covers aesthetic culture in its entirety. Of course, part- and sub-cultures, and the structures holding them together, can be distinguished within each side. Important part-cultures of the intermediate area are the applied arts (*arts and crafts*) and the

world of skill, the *craftsworld*, formed around them. When an art form arises, much more than individual works arise: authors, networks of intermediaries (critics, researchers, and educators), and receivers, occupations, and institutes concentrating on it are formed. These maintain journals and other publications, research, and teaching.

Institutionalization is developing in contemporary folk art, too. It is becoming a shadow institution that appears to be turning into one form of normal art. Makers are referred to as artists, exhibitions are arranged, publications are made, research is initiated, and theoretical frameworks and formal structures are outlined.^[24] Wild activity, such as painting graffiti, is reconciled to become one part-area of the field of art. It is artified into an actual art through an intermediate state. Graffiti, street art, and reality art have travelled the road leading to art. The same road has been travelled by environmental art, the material of which is the real environment into and from which the works are made. As large-scale "installations," these then form an artified environment. A corresponding "institutionalization" has occurred in relation to nature in a natural state through environmental criticism, though generally only attaining a metaphorical, not a literal art. In essays, photographs, and documents, depictees of nature divide, delimit, collect, and articulate nature into works.

What happens as artification takes place as a parallel, partly interactive aestheticization. An adopted aesthetic viewpoint aestheticizes the most diverse phenomena, and aestheticization creates conceptual and formal structures and fields of activity, such as aesthetic education. The structures also discharge and dissipate under the pressure of programmatic counter-movements. Some objects only become unfashionable, remain little used, and are forgotten, even though they can always be returned to public attention.

c. the active and activated public

The maker-side's partner is the public, the receiver. Artification and aestheticization also take place due to the public. Ultimately, this is what determines the viewpoint and the manner of examination. Such a viewpoint can, in principle, be selected for anything at all, though it's always worth asking how rewarding it will be at any particular time and whether it will do justice to the object. The viewpoint brings up the issue of beauty as the center of attention, and in that sense aestheticizes what is being examined, at least for a moment. Sometimes an object is already artified or aestheticized in the design and making stage. Sometimes its examination as art or as a beautiful thing and the accompanying metaphorical art discussion and aesthetic terminology already lead to a change. The cultural atmosphere at times favors a specific form of examination and at other times it does not favor that form.

That atmosphere encourages, does not encourage, or directly rejects it. Thus, an individual is in the sphere of influence and control of a culture's attitude climate.

In a culture favorable to aesthetic and artistic values, objects are made, altered, protected, cared for, and maintained according to specific expectations. Through their choices and emphases, the observers act as a creative and critical party and then assume at least part of the maker's role. A positive atmosphere and the models that are available encourage and lead to this. Thus, the

observers color the object and, through their speech, propose their own choices and emphases to others, too.

Classification as art takes place from the art institution, not from outside. Art cannot separate itself from the art world other than by destroying the structures supporting its world, but the artist can step over to the non-art side, either professionally by moving to external areas of application, or by returning from the artist role to "civilian," everyday life. The outsiders cannot, by speech, simply by saying, make art; they make it only in a metaphorical sense in order to praise and value the object, and sometimes the exact opposite, to label it as artificial, affected, or false.

Literal artification has an effect on the metaphorical. Even new forms of art, like environmental art, lead one to see and treat the environment and its objects like art, both generally and specifically: a view from a window as a video work; the *aurora borealis* as light art; a road and roadside views as road art; or, more traditionally, rock cuttings as sculpture and the cycle of the seasons as a drama. Reality art has created preconditions for random art. The change in art is reflected as a corresponding expansion or contraction of the metaphorical area; the illustrative is literally a mirror image or a shadow.

Thinking as art leads to an art-like interpretation of reality. Does artification then make reality less real? Fiction has its own, other reality. Its value is in the expansion and enriching of reality through the force of creative imagination. The food cupboard door in the painting in Paavo Rintala's artist novel *Jumala on kauneus (God is Beauty; in Finnish, 1959)* is not just any door whatever: "It opens into the world of beauty, where the beautiful is. From where beauty flows into the log cabin here...."[25] Fiction may also entice and mislead into a life in an imaginary reality, or a fairy tale, or fantasy. Correspondingly, its characters can be seen in real people and events. It is in virtual reality that the border crossings go farthest.

From the point of view of science, life that relies on untenable interpretations, such as by taking mythological concepts of reality literally, may be seen in regarding omens and illusions as real. In the film *A Beautiful Mind*, the principal character experiences his hallucinations, such as his conversation companions who appear out of nowhere, as real, but knows that they are illusions and learns to relate to them as such and to live with them.[26]

5. Conclusion: views

Aesthetic culture, civility, and wisdom are linked together, in this order, in a rising line. I predict that divergence rather than merging will be the most likely direction of the development of the mutual relationship of actual art and the everyday, that is, applied art and that which is artified. Like science, art is becoming increasingly specialized. The avant-garde distances itself from both the traditional core areas and the art-colored intermediate forms, too, but in doing so it closes itself off, beyond the reach of only a few professionals. The situation is undesirable but unavoidable, quite as impossible to change as to show a layman a shortcut to the cutting edge of science.

Above all, artification supports the reinforcement of the

intermediate area; it need not directly affect art itself. The effect takes place indirectly, by the art-colored intermediate area taking up space and attention, possibly even resources, from art itself, and thus affecting art negatively as its area narrows. The artified begins to meet the needs that art has served. A new speciality of conceptual application arises, the theory and practice of which is created by artistic research, and the "publications" of which are material works. In order to create these, product design, milieu building, and landscape care arise.

The basic separation of the artified and aestheticized from art has, in fact, taken place already in the applied arts ages ago. Artification and its parallel, scientification, combine in the applied sciences and arts. The joint sectors are, among others, fashion and product design, interior design, advertising, couture, food, politics, country images, branding, tourist destinations, and sport.

Artification, together with scientification, is a concept and term characterizing and collecting this area, but it is also a phenomenon seizing territory, whose dynamism is emphasized by the process view of the terms. Artisans, artists, and others work in the applied area. For a wider meaning, titles like *artificer* derived from art, and *artifier* derived from artification have been developed. The intermediate area is not only and no longer the application of art but it is a field of various specialities in which different professional groups can show their skills and competences. The work is mainly group work into which individual performances merge. Applications are expanding to ideas and ideals: to advertising agencies' campaigns for political parties, churches, and charities. Wordplay, the twisting of phrases and sayings, and the borrowing and theft of ideas come in the first stage, in place of serious discussion and ideals. The models are the allusions, ambiguities, and original solutions valued on the art side.

The aestheticized intermediate form will become more general and generally more important. Creativity means an aesthetic problem solution, taking other values into account. Thus, the point of departure is not only art but also, at least as much, the aesthetic value area and the aesthetic activities of everyday life. When art and the aesthetic meet as providers of influences, a new emergent, which cannot be returned to either side, forms as the intermediate area. Aestheticization and artification are similar in that they represent an increase in the phenomena of the intermediate area and in a move towards it. Thus, the aesthetic features of the rest of reality remaining, at least for the time being outside these developments, also begin to be reinforced.

Artification's effects on art are of at least two kinds. The positive is the production of new kinds of works and genres, which are transfers from the intermediate area. The negative, even threatening effect, is in taking over of the sector from art and marginalizing art into its own avant-garde.

Art, for its part, affects artification by serving as a means for its non-artistic uses. It also develops an artist's standby profession, which has been reinforced recently through community-art projects, among other things. The aim in this is not so much the works as it is the group spirit and joint responsibility, perhaps even the common taste, developed in working together.

In the precursor mode, active aestheticization and passive aestheticization both mean cosmetic beautification and, in a more refined form, programmatic aestheticism, which, taking into account the totality of life values, is provocatively superficial and, being one-sided, negative. Secondly, in a deeper sense, the tendency to aestheticization raises a question of the defense of aesthetic values in a value system and a search for an optimal state in it, in the name of aesthetic and other welfare. Thirdly, it is a question of education and an introduction to aesthetic literacy, civility, and wisdom – to an aesthetic life.

The fictive world is a parallel world, a space of unlimited growth. Art can expand in its direction without obstacles. On the other hand, art's expansion in the real world and in culture can be seen as a question of the equilibrium of a system of values and, therefore, as dependent. "Reality art" must adapt to the system of life values; dependent art cannot expand over its dimensions. The ideal is not to change everything into art any more than it is to aestheticize everything.

An overemphasis on the aesthetic means a distortion, aestheticism. Underestimation, on the other hand, leads to atrophy and the disappearance of the field, an impoverishment of the richness of human life. The optimal ratios of the values must be found, and a dynamic equilibrium among them. In it is a second, abstract level of aestheticity. The aesthetic is one value among others but also a critical factor characterizing and evaluating the whole system of values. In this sense, I have spoken of beauty in two forms, one as a specific value type among others, but also as all-encompassing and all-coloring, as a property characterizing the outline of the totality, as super-beauty.

Art and the aesthetic are not necessarily connected to each other or to reality. Even fictional realities and their parts have both aesthetic and other properties. They can all be studied and spoken of just as much as the properties of the real world. The philosopher Jaakko Hintikka sees a parallel between reading fiction and studying reality: "Reading is but a series of tacit questions put to the text in analogy with scientific observations conceived of as questions put to one's perceptible environment."^[27]

When art and the aesthetic act as parts of actual reality, both are within the sphere of similar limits set by life values. Crossing the limits is, on the one hand, dynamic development and the opening of new views, and on the other, going on the side of bad taste and improper behavior, and, in an extreme form, an insult to and crime against humanity. The positive and negative possibilities are always present, and it is not always clear which is which.

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