

Art Language et. al.



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I. Without prior regards to Problems of legitimation etc.' It Could be contended that propositions which assert such things as theories of aesthetics etc have some sort of nominal 'effect' in our world- and that there would therefore be a case to show how this 'effect' of 'theories of aesthetics etc. can occur - (a consideration that may well be very significant in any type of behaviourism). We could take the propositions of the type offered by Steazaker that post Duchanipian 'art' takes the form of "----- is art" as either saying something about the conceptual status of art, or offering some alteration of the term 'objects' (medium sized dry goods individuals - chairs etc) It might be thought that the terms do not in any way intend to (by nature of their domain) alter our understanding of 'objects' - philosophically etc. - or that they have any grounds to - they are pretty meaningless statements physically speaking, what is being asserted could be something like a paradigm shift in art- but even then we have something being altered.

Maybe a new kind of 'metaphysics' will avail itself in the 'behaviourist sense of being socially effective, and that the assertion made by Victor Burgin that art language et al. will attain the same status as astrology etc. will occur, this would result, one would think, in a tendency to make 'art' more socially significant, but perhaps the connotation of being a pseudo science is something to be avoided (public ally) as if the scientific technique is the only technique that is legitimate if not publicly then , as far as Burgin is concerned. The Burgin 'position' would seem not as much concerned with criticism or analysis as it would at first appear-, rather he is suggesting that theories should be firmly based on empirical techniques ( ? an advanced form of pragmatism or a common sense attitude) which Burgin would think socially effective in art language, however there can be no compulsion to accept this programme, perhaps it only serves to defend or provide some sort of an ontology for those people who seek to embark on such an 'empirical' art - language programme which is one in which science or philosophy of science is used as a philosophy of art.

Other than this the whole activity could be seen as something 'external' to art language acting in a kind of legislative manner (second or third level activity ?).. (The idea of 'legislator' and the way in which legislative theories are art often (or qualified as art) brings up the Judd dictum 'if someone calls it art its art" which is a poor way of qualification, it raises all kinds of problems such as, is the caller then an 'artist', which way does this work? (for example , if 'a' asserts 'x' to be the case and 'a' is valid if and only if 'x' is true then we have an intentional relationship where may be a statement of the kind ----- is art, but it could quite easily be that 'x' is true if and only if 'a' is valid etc., and the validity of ----- is art would be dependant on 'a'. We have no way of telling). It really depends on what Judd meant, and the only authority here lies in accepting Judd as an artist, or in a position to legitimate, and criteria should we accept his proposition ?).

'Use' could have two main implications in our discussions in the more general sense (perhaps common sense) it is employed pragmatically, and pragmatic attitudes if used too radically would most likely lead us away from any considerations of art language et al. to talking about 'use' (which is often aligned with common sense) and who says -what is useful - we don't want to keep appealing to

'higher' and 'higher' authorities -(we embark on naive theories of why some things are more useful than others) and in common sense begin to talk pseudo philosophically. Wittgenstein seems to be offering a sense of the word whereby it is used for defining or seeing what we mean when we talk about meaning, it may well be thought to exhibit pragmatic tendencies (which are probably really analytic) but it is much more concerned with an analytical method with regards to linguistics.

In (recent\*) essays as 'In Reply', and in "Marginal Note" Victor Burgin would seem to be offering an empirically based legitimation programme in art language. For example in "In Reply" Victor Burgin states, "I argued in 'Rules of Thumb' against the recent recastings of the 'art pour l'art' position. It is unlikely that an activity carried out with a declared disregard for the empirical world, yet which possess no language of its own- will attain comparable standing with mathematics or logic. It does not follow that 'a disregard for the empirical' in art language et al does not mean that therefore it can only attempt to concern itself with the a priori, and before embarking on an empirical programme we might ask in what way empiricism is better equipped to deal with problems and how can it be the only legitimate method. The assertion that art Language et al, possesses no language of its own is also difficult to see, in that he is doing just such a thing himself -unless he considers himself as not, but then he is not 'playing by our rules' he is outside our concern. In a sense art language et al is private (discrete) even though this would be true of every symbol it would be private and empiricism would not have

any claims. The idea of validity through science and sense data must be abandoned otherwise the theory becomes self admitted non-sense, where is its empirical legitimation, Burgin must step outside of his own theory in order to avoid contradiction. (and the problems of philosophy of science)

Holistic theories (Absolutism etc) and the attitudes induced by their presence are often used as a framework for some kind of art language discussion, either in the form of a dogmatic "I believe this to be true of all things" or as a kind of pragmatic model for discussion. (Usually externally but certain members of the art language movement seem to imply such theories at times). The misplaced idea of something external to art language et al that embraces it has little meaning, and that such types of theories somehow have authority in what should be said. These theories are often employed in criticism or misplaced 'help' are usually not only naive in their understanding of the world of discourse but contain vast discrepancies in their own premises (and these problems are not ours). Just because they claim some kind of universality does not mean that we have to accept them on faith (as do many) (including the much vaunted 'common sense' point of view) without first clearing up the proposed theory's inability to show any credentials as acting in a hierarchical manner -(this is often manifest in the almost - religious manner in the way people conjure up 'common sense' to answer specialist questions).

The 'phenomenological problems' anticipating the type of "behaviourism" of Burgin's pragmatic attitude seems not only contradictory but irrelevant, if he considers his activity outside all others in "his" (in either his or Baldwin's sense) position (one of neither hic nor illic) (in his terminology valid or invalid) -in a position of being outside everything. These a priori positions would seem to limit or condition the prevailing areas of discussion by implying external logics or pseudo logics in Burgin's sense -or philosophy, behaviourism et al.

Types-of empiricism (various sciences, philosophies of science etc.) are often used as examples of correct procedure, as they would appear to exhibit rational and deterministic procedures. It is the case however that much of modern science far from being certain of its procedures is facing the kind of problems that those who would advocate its use seek to avoid. Kosuth in "Art after philosophy" quotes Ayer, "The fact that it has recently become fashionable for physicists themselves to be sympathetic towards religion... marks the physicists own lack of confidence in the validity of their hypotheses which is a reaction on their part from the antireligious dogmatism of nineteenth-century scientists, and a natural outcome of the crises through which physics has just passed.-A.J. Ayer. "The philosophical implications of the loss of confidence in the idea of particles etc. in something as fundamental as physics provides little comfort for those who would use the same empirical techniques for such things as linguistic analysis in the pragmatic terms of Burgin. This recent 'scepticism' in science is often used to defend recent pseudo-metaphysical theories' of art and the throwing out the old psychological/anthropological theories of aesthetics, for a kind of naive transcendentalism etc. -is not this really all irrelevant nonsense, the only sensible legitimation in art language must be internal, and these theories are useless for this reason, not that in some cases they may well be invalid, their validity is not in question, it is not significant in art language et al, and it follows therefore that 'common sense' and all other non-intentional theories are not significant.

II. Ostensibly art language et al might well be thought to exhibit tendencies towards an embarkation on a "body of doctrine" attitude, a kind of art language of art language and such a concern with self (internal) classification may well pre-judge issues and limit the possible intentional programme with priorities for primarily establishing an ontology etc. Accordingly there is a shift towards talking about 'objects' (such as psychological and historical types etc.) as some sort of basis (somewhere to begin an art language programme from) and i think it is clear that this is neither satisfactory or does it explain why we have so much diversity in our proposed ontologies, rules of use etc. in one sense it seems a good place to begin but this seems then to produce the need for constant 'intellectual buttressing' and modification in order to maintain 'first principles' beyond what is necessary. Such a 'Body of Doctrine' attitude is typified in having something like a simple ontology (c.f. Steazaker) which is then used to developed a 'typically linear' theory, it may take the form of, purpose 'a' is such that all extensions of 'a' will have in common with each other 'a' hood, you could call this something like a simple modal 'theory of art' and it may well seem -in this case due to gross simplicity to have some sense about it. But we now see we have established logical laws in "art theory" when we had no compulsion to do so, now how will we use this in future discussions, surely we can dispose of these laws with the same ease with which they were introduced. There could be a mistake in seeing similarities in other activities (science etc) and thinking that these similarities are 'significant' similarities, we may get involved without cause in 'arbitrary' problems, theory of types etc. (we need only to realise the real lack of criteria for such problems -we have no rules of thumb here). It may be convenient to talk about particulars etc. but this does not suppose anything more than mere convenience, (because it is taken on these terms should tell us that it shouldn't be taken on any others). (This might be useful in seeing another sense of the assertion of Kosuth in "art after philosophy" -(art after philosophy) as referring to the domains of philosophy and the domains of art language. Without using (or having to use) Kosuth's sense of talking about philosophies history or future -this type of question is not our concern unless

we maintain some position as prioritizing the position of the art linguist (which) are not the concerns as those of the philosopher (of etc.). In talking about logical expressions - and seeing these as what is O.K. for solving the problem of legitimation etc., or rather 'self referential' art language problems of the sort found in philosophical logic begin to arise (Ramified theory of Types etc.) and its then quite Legitimate to ask (for) the rules of formation of 'self referential art language' and produce a meta art language, (this is ignoring the grounds we had in the first place for acting in such a formal manner). It's difficult, it would seem therefore to avoid tautology and the problems of logical necessity. I can't see how the rules of logical inferences can apply -(with any strength) here even without the problems of the hardness of the logical must etc. we are at liberty to say in this case that we really are not playing the same 'game' -and in our 'game' (art language et al) who is to say what we 'must' do and where we 'must' go? And anyway I can't see why we have to have an ontology -or one that is so hard.

When you start talking about ontologies you get involved with (unnecessarily -or how do you show them without getting involved etc. ) predicate terms and in the way we would see art language existing -(in syntactically, logical, terms etc.). One way of dealing with the problem would be to ask in what terms we are talking -and in that way in what way existence is predicate of art language, there might be a danger in philosophising about particulars that are not much use in art language.

There seems to be a lot of talk of hierarchies and so called first and second level activity. (and in some cases third...etc. ) in art language et al. This desire to propose meta and meta meta structures etc. see Ramsden in "Art language and art Language" proposing some sort of position for arbitrating just why philosophy of art shouldn't be included in any art language programme due to the problem of the 'two activities'; in doing so creating another level, a legislative level of saying just what is viable in art language -in Ramsden's opinion. It's only natural therefore such programmes would or might inevitably lead to vague and unsatisfactory terms as "Theory of types" should appear- in order to explain certain aspects of this kind of language programme. (It seems that really all that is at stake is some kind of preserved idea of a 'separate activity' ) Is it not really that the terms being employed (art language and the idea of ontology) may well not need to be as precise as we think; that they are used in a semantically loose fashion, more like clues than a picture of reality -to start then to embark upon problems of what can be precisely said in these terms, and in others, would be to start to formulate a programme of philosophy of the particular terms, but in what way can this procedure 'legally' exercise what can be said internally in the programme in the 'first level activity', these would depend on some sort of intentionality. (and not just re-using the Judd quote). To talk about levels of activity in any other way invites the question of legality, unless it's something like the philosophy of ..... etc. and not concerned with legality or intentionality for that matter. The difficulties involved with such tightly self referential art language programmes may well explain something of the recent tendencies in art language of employing the hypotheses of psycholinguistics etc. a natural reaction from the resultant difficulties of self referential art language. (even though this might prove to. Show similarities in the kind of problems it. Presents to art language et al.) The development of a psycholinguistic attitudes in art language avoids many of the problems involved in tight linguistic analysis. However, I cant see how these theories avoid such fundamental problems (again) of legitimation etc

with the additional ones of empiricism (someone might come up with a better idea in linguistics) which although may have some value could become very dictatorial, without first (internally) being shown to have some special distinct concern in art language et al. Surely this is still only taken on convenience, it will be interesting to see if this new approach does not get over involved with its own problems, and be little use in art language et al.

The idea of idiosyncratic art language must bring with it a certain idea of what is meant by this, you might well raise this question, and it is here that many of the problems would seem to arise -mainly in how radical we want the idiosyncratic to be, its usual that what follows is a neat answer perhaps even in our terms -you begin to impose some framework that may at a latter date, if we keep an open mind, need to be changed. The reluctance to define terms (on what evidence ?) may well be objected to on the grounds of being (to interested in) over sceptical, in a sense this is where we begin to clarify certain aspects of this question even though - and I can't see what difference it makes - we have no special technique of problem solving (shared in common with most other activities) a priori other than what appears to be the case at this moment. (and it's clear that this isn't all that much help-positively.)

Any notion of classification (and formulation of rules etc.) in an art language programme will exhibit these tendencies in a remarkable way - that is the programme will be a function of the chosen rules of formation, it has already been mentioned that this does not follow strictly in fact we can chose rules as we go along, its not really a question of defining ---- or simple analysis for that matter. The problems of philosophies terms (c.f. Ramsden) in art language et al. may raise the question -externally art language looks like philosophy -and how then is it any different. The best answer for such a question would be that there must already be a good enough difference for you to start to see similarities -that is in your linguistic terms.

We may then start to talk assertions of properties and using a Platonic sense of categories of philosophy etc. - and just who is to say here? And don't we again begin to get some kind of 'method' of understanding questions of legitimation etc?

III. The tendency of art language programmes to exhibit a degree of intentionality cannot be treated as a natural result of History (a legacy of minimal art..... etc.) it would only lead to a re-examination of the casual rationale apart from moving towards the domains of philosophy it can never prove to be successful in dealing with metaphysical problems without some additional legitimation. (Victor Burgin et al might be tempted to use it as an empirical explanation for the phenomenon -or anthropology physics ..... etc.) History may well be affective in providing clues in the development of the programme, but it cannot account for the programme. The art language programme of intentionality is more about the discussion in hand, and seeing history as significant in dealing with problems seems only to be dependent on us having similar feeling (it is perhaps more the job of the historian that the 'job in hand'). If you like it may be clearer if you see art language et al as being about a kind of self definition, that is its concerns are with itself, as it is, they are therefore distinct from history.

"Universal Theories" (types of general metaphysics it has been maintained are separate to and distinct -n apart from art language et al. -some one might there is a contradiction here and it all depends on the domain of general theories of metaphysics -if it's that radical its their job to show how art language does relate legitimately. The concern is with particular propositions in relation to some kind of holistic theory. We have no logical (----) compulsion to see these relations as 'significant' we would be taking too much on faith of the domain of these theories - universals etc if we did. (In philosophy "universal theories" etc are perhaps seen more as an attitude -( a philosophical attitude) Is it not that universal theories etc. are the result and therefore the domain of philosophical inquiry. (Things like science etc have plenty of legitimate concern for these kinds of theories).

The metaphysical (and legitimation) problems of a 'philosophy of art' are generally typified by their being external. The ontologies (attitudes etc.) seem to come from more general philosophical theories, 'philosophy of fine art' is not seen as a separate activity but as the special concern of the philosopher,' philosophy of 'fine art' usually follows some broader philosophical implications, in fact 'philosophy of fine art' is a branch of philosophy in much the same respect as such things as theories of ethics etc. It is maintained that an art language programme's (broadly) metaphysical problems etc. should have some sort of intentionality. It would follow that philosophy of fine art's legitimation is external, while art language et al, should be intentionally legitimated (perhaps to produce a sense of there being sorts of pseudo ontologies in art language). This accounts for why art language shouldn't talk about 'art'. This consideration of agreeing not to... follows quite naturally from intentionality -though there are different views of how this should be as can be seen in the attitude of Victor Burgin towards art language (specifically). The influence of general theories on philosophy of fine art is seen as the philosophy of fine art being part of the general theory, the general theory is superimposed on the philosophy of fine art (etc.). I would maintain that the reverse is true in art language - that is in how art, language 'shares' philosophy -(this is where we get a sense of similarity) and uses philosophy -theory of aesthetics, theories of ethics etc in its discussions. These are internal to the art language programme and the advocating of "art is art" is not in any way in dispute here.

The argument for radical intentionality lies in the programming of art along the lines of excluding anything: and therefore (in order to move forward?) has to employ some form of logical process. I think in some senses it could be argued that 'theories of ethics' etc could well be intentional in art language et al, the extent of this intentionality however (in some cases) sees that such things as theories of ethics etc. cannot be intentional . As Steazaker would have us believe, it is that 'philosophical theories do not exhibit any intentionality that is in his terms philosophical theories of the type. "Theories of ethics" etc. are involved with "real entities". It would be seen that this leaves us with only arts condition being concerned with arts condition. How this is arrived at is not at all clear, just how he can exclude everything else - in an attempt to provide art with 'something' (some attribute) of its very own, this is more than simple intentionality, which is quite capable of handling "theories of ethics" etc. It is that art entities are involved with the 'essence' of art and 'progress' by extending 'art entities' and are intentions of art: this would seem to imply tautology. An intentional theory of art language et al. (or for that matter "art philosophy") being vertical is in no way related to 'subject matter' content to the extent of the theory excluding

theories of ethics etc. It only legislates the way in which we should regard the subject matter, theories of ethics etc. unlike philosophy fine art etc. which cannot have intentional "theories of ethics" etc. (Theories of ethics are external to the philosophy of fine art). And using an intentional theory- it is possible show -by this that the domain of philosophy of art and art language et al - have significant differences, as well as accounting for subject matter (content), which does not have to be non existential (applying an 'art as art' tautology) i.e. that intentional theories may allow art language. et al. a content. Art language's 'emptiness' is more likely a legacy of some minimal attitudes.

Art language et al. may well appear tautologous -pseudo logic(al) etc following its intentional attitude of separateness from philosophy of art ... but isn't that possible universes of discussion available in Art Language et al are not restricted by tautology or contradiction following a priori from its intentionality or a postori from its content (theories of ethics etc.)

IV. Theories of art that are external to art language et al as well as being internal in a extensive way i.e. producing art entities by using such things as theories of ethics in this way - as extending the subject matter/or logic (tautology in Steazaker)/ or domain of art language: seem to - in the way they are introduced to be if not always talking about art then about their intentionalities (and even criticism is used in a way to justify someone else's view 0 by showing the faults in some other programme - this is unsatisfactory really, but here is the same thing , the problem of legitimation is somehow 'transcendental', perhaps a real metaphysical problem). - art language as I see it would tend to put me outside its domain- in which case I can ask then in what domain am I in? (this is clearly nonsense) but the only criteria for art language et al (and here is this in any way clear what I mean, of what things In am talking) is that "if I call it art its art" - but really do we need to do this, the only real fault is the persistence of the pseudo problem (?). I think it may lead to thought of criteria for what is art - which is it not the same as asking what is good or what is read etc. - art language seems poorly equipped to deal with these problems as they may well be not problems in art language, people will just want the answer in their terms and in a sense it is all the answer they have- this may well not be true but this is difficult to show. A definition of ----- is or as art is in no way a clear picture, at best it can give us some idea of what is meant, and something like "Judd says if you call it art its art is really useless, or only answering questions like "how do you know its art?" but the fault lies both in the question and the answer, and how far you go before demanding some conclusion - some kind of an answer. The better the question the more likely that the answer will be better' would be some sort of case/but this just seems acceptable to the pragmatically minded, to common sense, but who decided that we have to use common sense as a judge ?

