

## *Original Paper*

# Forging a New Paradigm: On the Structure of the Interdisciplinary and Its *Application (Part 4)*

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Received: February 9, 2022      Accepted: February 24, 2022      Online Published: March 10, 2022

doi:10.22158/sshsr.v3n1p61

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/sshsr.v3n1p61>

### ***Abstract***

*This article has three sections. In section one, I define my terms which leads to an outline of what this New Paradigm is. In section two, I develop this paradigm and suggest a visualization of it, a structure as it were. This will assist in a more thorough understanding of such a paradigm. Theoretical speculations and modelling aside or rather avoiding a “purely” philosophical bias, I then apply this model to an example culled from art and aesthetics, yet involving, in line with this New Paradigm, other disciplines such as science and sport in order to exemplify or perhaps prove my argument, by virtue of the “mixture” or inter-disciplinary framework as applied to several different variables. This section forms the bulk of the article as such an application concretizes the theoretical framework in specific ways so that the reader will ascertain the usefulness of such a venture, which in turn ought to spur and spawn future research.*

### ***Keywords***

*art, science, sport, Postmodern, aesthetic, language turn*

### **1. Introduction**

This article has three sections. In section one, I define my terms which leads to an outline of what this New Paradigm is. In section two, I develop this paradigm and suggest a visualization of it, a structure as it were. This will assist in a more thorough understanding of such a paradigm. Theoretical speculations and modelling aside or rather avoiding a “purely” philosophical bias, I then apply this model to an example culled from art and aesthetics, yet involving, in line with this New Paradigm, other disciplines such as science and sport in order to exemplify or perhaps prove my argument, by virtue of the “mixture” or inter-disciplinary framework as applied to several different variables. This section forms the bulk of the article as such an application concretizes the theoretical framework in specific ways so that the reader will ascertain the usefulness of such a venture, which in turn ought to spur and spawn future research.

## 2. “Sketching” the Framework—Method

The New Paradigm I will argue for is the necessary interrelatedness of knowledge and experience, which at the same time elides an absolute description of reality. This is not simply a case of the limitations of our knowledge and experience or one’s partial grasp of reality, but that the very fact that, to borrow a metaphor (Note 1) from physics, light behaves not simply as a particle, a discrete something, but also flows and vibrates as a wave; it is, as it were spread out and imprecise. It is this nature of nature that precludes a total grasp or elides definitive analysis and understanding. Yet one may experience this interrelatedness or oneness, in the same way our senses cojoin in say the experience of eating a meal, even if one sense (or discipline within the field of knowledge) may be dominant at any one time.

The central argument of this article on which such a paradigm hinges is that the various branches of what is aptly called the “body of knowledge” -and notwithstanding the evolution and development of this organism, if you will- is that each such discipline is both independent and inter-dependent.

Insofar as each such branch is independent, each discipline is marked by its own internal coherence or form. It exists as a seemingly self-sufficient, robust system and can be understood in its own terms. In this sense it constitutes a language. Now, a language has a syntax and semantics and can be learnt, developed and operates as a system of signification. It is based upon rules; its own internal logic (which could be otherwise) and forms a cultural game, that is to say one may apply Wittgenstein’s notion here, namely that it is integral to a “form of life” and that its meaning is in its use.

Insofar as each such branch is inter-dependent, one cannot simply understand the form (of knowledge, of a language...) without reference to something else, whether it is a world; another language; other disciplines or branches of knowledge; other systems of knowing and acting in the context of a certain “form of life”. A game is only a game, insofar as there is that which is not a game. Ideas, definitions and so on are therefore necessarily inter-dependent in order for there to be a system of signification, even in the instance of one dealing with polar, dualistic oppositions.

Let me make both notions of independence and inter-dependence less abstract and provide a few examples to strengthen this point: One can “do” history of art or say, pure mathematics without reference to anything outside the system. In the former case, I might analyze the formal changes and shifts in style over a period of time and discern the development of such styles within a given period. I may attribute a certain meaning to these shifts in technique and thus establish a picture of stylistic innovations over time and place, depending on the focus of such a study. In the latter case, I can multiply an unknown variable with the same variable and add the exponents without any reference to what these equations or sums so refer; it is simply a formal game that follows its own inherent logic or grammar.

One can take any discipline and follow the same reasoning—one simply follows the dictates of its own principles and “does it” accordingly, without any such connecting to other domains. History is history. Politics is politics. Biology is biology. And so on. Its meaning is not simply tautological or redundant or simply a formal game bereft of meaning, for within its own ambit of principles, axioms and analysis, one accrues knowledge within that domain and so progress is made. Indeed, in simpler terms: a cricket game,

say a test match is self-enclosed game over 5 days that may be experienced on its own merit -and perhaps in relating to the history of cricket, certainly its rules- without any care or reference to anything beyond or outside those perhaps glorious five days, if one were so inclined.

Yet, there is another way to see knowledge and experience; one which recognizes the necessary unity and inter-relatedness of knowledge, of things. It would appear perhaps more “messy”; on the other hand, it can also yield knowledge and is necessarily a part of each such game, system, language or branch of knowledge at the same time.

If one piers into the “story of art” (to borrow from Gombrich), then one will notice that the unfolding of such a story is not simply a tour de ‘force of stylistic and formal innovations and developments, an arts-for-arts’ sake formalist account, but the mixture of “other” (Note 2) information, such as the artist’s psychology; the historical period of time in terms of its politics, economics, religious outlook, philosophy and so on and so forth in a “dance” that then confers meaning on the art-object and the personality of the artist. That is to say, aesthetic and extra-aesthetic descriptions apply, neither cancelling the other, yet neither description sufficient in nor of itself. Similarly, mathematics does not simply “stand alone” as pure logic or a formal game but is enmeshed in physics and other sciences; follows a history that in turn is co-joined with a very human world, a social order of sorts from whence the fruits of mathematics were born, and it may be argued is relativized according, within a milieu and certain social and cultural conventions and so on. Such an acknowledgement which I have but briefly outlined can and does factor into to all disciplines within the ambit of knowledge and knowledge claim, now one discipline dominant, now another, yet all inclusive of the “other”, just as one cannot get a foreground without the concomitant background, as it were.

### **3. Visualizing the Structure of the Interdisciplinary New Paradigm—Discussion**

#### *a) Theoretical Formulation*

What I am proposing is not another discipline (that would just beget yet another and so on and so forth), but rather a theoretical framework in which all disciplines form a coherent unity, even as they develop within themselves and in relation or as overlapping with other disciplines, far and wide, deep and superficial. This then is not a “Theory of Everything” (so named T.O.E. in physics) lodged within a particular discipline for such an explanation is still within the formal language or form of that discipline and therefore even though in a reductive manner it may claim supremacy as the basis for all others -in the sense that one might argue that physics leads to chemistry which in turn leads to the life sciences and then at the other end of the spectrum moves towards the humanities- it is expressed and understood within and as physics and therefore cannot contain a world-picture. It is a separate discipline, even as it may act as a back-bone for all the others.

Thus, what I am describing is merely like a set that is not a set. The interdisciplinary New Paradigm -the phrase itself implying a distinct and limited entity- is itself not subject to any other set language/form/discipline. It is rather an idea that supervenes within and above the manifestation of

knowledge under any one or several or connected branches (of knowledge). It is “new” in the sense that it offers the possibility of oneness and unity, rather than divide, separation, and specialization.

It is holistic, rather than analytical; it is applicable to all domains while itself not being a domain. Yet for all its esoteric non-specificity and definition, it has pragmatic value and a contribution to offer. It not so much fills a gap but creates a gap. In metaphorical terms all systems/languages/forms/branches of knowledge are then contained therein, which itself allows the very enmeshing of such forms to take place. Yet it is not just a “messy muck” but has both analytical and specialist attributes. With such a concept, one can do research that is indeed interdisciplinary and allows anything to be matched and compared drawing likenesses and connections between seemingly separate research fields. In this way, both new knowledge emerges as well as a deeper appreciation for unity, rather than, or perhaps amidst apparent fragmentation. I am not simply giving another “Kantian” predisposition, an inherent axiomatic structure of the mind or brain; rather I humbly claim that the Interdisciplinary New Paradigm is even more foundational. It is the need to unify. The need to *see* the big picture. A vision, perhaps of infinity or at least the unity of separate entities, like an abstract device such as a number that enables things to be counted or related. Or like the fusion made by Einstein that links -against the prevailing traditions- both the concept of time and space.

#### *b) Diagrammatic Explanation*

Consider a single discipline. We can represent that as a point. “Within” this point are all the details of that discipline. It is sub-divided in several ways as the discipline grows and evolves and develops.

In order for it to *be*, it has to be defined in relation to something else (another discipline), that is to say A is A and A is not not A, or B. Once there are two such imaginary “points”, then there is the basis for our conceptual line. For there to be a line or extension, there must be the concept of space, two dimensions. In this sense, though the points are initially defined as distinct, they are related. They form a line. A line in space. The line can be considered horizontal, the points are of equal value in plane. Or they can be drawn vertical, in which case one is said to be foundational and the other a result of the first. In this sense, space implicates time, a “before” and “after”, for to speak of change and development and relationships, is to speak of a sequence and process; matter, space, and time are in motion. One might call it the relationship, dialectic, or oscillation between a positive and negative charge, to draw an analogy or metaphor culled from say physics or chemistry. Since there is some notion, the imaginary line itself is not simply either horizontal or vertical but may bend and contort and flow in various ways. One might summon the image of a Pollock “drip painting” to visualize such a dynamic. Such an image follows our simple line of two points that begets enumerable more such points and thence lines and so a complex interaction can assume form within the plane (or canvas surface—to continue the metaphor).

Yet there are many “steps” before a complex web of seeming chaos. A line leads to 3 points, a triangle; four point implicates the square, and this iteration continues so that one gets the basic Platonic—like shapes. Then, a third dimension is added so that there is not simply height and width, but also volume or three dimensions. The form it takes can be visualized as chemical bonding and crystalline structures, yet

this is so only by way of analogy. The exercise of which I am describing refers to a conceptual realm that can be applied across and between and within disciplines, that is to say, the organic body of knowledge, if you will.

Returning to the initial *point*, one might also envisage a particular discipline as a circle in which are contained further details (circles) and that once again, it is, because it is not something else (another discipline). Paradoxically, in that separation, they are connected, that is to say, the circles overlap (*or bond*). In this hypothetical image, a line barely exists for constituted by circles or points, it is but a useful fiction or mode. The image approximates, just as the visual sense of seeing is a partial description of a thing and requires the other senses as well as the assimilation of qualia in terms of rational systems of thought: categorizing; naming; counting and understanding processes and so on.

To render this less abstract, I can draw from exemplar cases in various domains or disciplines: In physics, one might say particles are “pulled together” via the strong force; in cosmological terms masses are attracted via gravity; in chemistry, the charges create bonded structures; in the life sciences, organic bodies “eat”, “replicate”, dispose of waste and so on—and in the humanities one can speak of the *overlap* of say art and history, which one might then call “the history of art” and so on.

The upshot of all this is the inter-relatedness of all such branches of knowledge. The humanities and the sciences as the apparent furthest ends of the spectrum or line or form or body of knowledge, are connected insofar as science is necessarily human science, not so much that reality “in itself”, but our mediation structures (Note 3), namely our means of understanding it (reality), limited by our senses, categories of thought or methods and perhaps, whether the cup of coffee this morning has rendered me alert enough to pen this down.

With these images and abstractions in mind, I will now develop a practical example of how this interdisciplinary nexus can be applied. This will substantiate my argument and convey one way wherein aesthetics; art history; science and sport -apparently disparate and unrelated fields (points or circles)- might be connected. If this is sound, then indeed one can see the explanatory and pragmatic power of the idea that I propose. Admittedly, even if valid, this is but one example and “purists” may dissent and argue for the formal coherence and separation of fields of knowledge; that this isolated example is random, a chance event—and that in the main, one cannot confuse A and B. Fiction is fiction. Nonfiction is non-fiction. My idea (somewhat) equates fiction and non-fiction and that sounds non-sensical. Yet, on close inspection it is not. As the poet is wont to say, reality *is* a dream. And the physicist might quip, some particles appear to not exist and do not even possess mass.

#### 4. One Possible Application: “Mixing” Art, Aesthetics, Science and Sport—Results

One might apply the theoretical lever that I propose by another theoretical structure that underlies the advent of post-modernism and then based on that apply this reading practically in arguing how in fact art, aesthetics, sport, and science overlap or as I have called it—“intertwine”.

*The “language turn”:*

Saussure (1986) defines the sign as being the combination of the signified and the signifier. The former is the concept designated, while the latter is the word or sound-image. The totality of signs constitutes the system of language or so-named langue. Language can thus be described as the structural, differential operation between signs. Therefore, the meaning of a sign is dependent on other signs within the signifying system. This means that “in language there are only differences without positive terms” (Saussure, 1974, p. 120). Whereas correspondence paradigms of language assumes that the word is a substitute for the object, reality “out there”, this structural conception of language means that one is operating within the context of language rather than reflecting on a stable world “out there”. “Reality” is mediated by language or langue, which refers to a “stable, intersubjective language structure. In other words, a pre-existing language structure that is readily available to all users” (Potgieter, 2007, p. 49).

Now, according to Saussure (1986, p. 34), this pre-existent language structure is such that the controlling mechanism of the langue gives stability and order. This is because the langue is like a meta-language, a center-point, so that individual speech-acts (his so-named parole) are regulated within this system. This structural conception of language does away with the distinction and correspondence between linguistic sign and “reality”. Wittgenstein (1958) appears to have foreseen this lack of correspondence in arguing that the meaning of a word is determined by its use and context rather than as in his earlier philosophies as picturing possible facts about the world (Wittgenstein, 1958), that is, as a transparent medium. In this respect, Saussure, like Wittgenstein, defines the meaning of a word in terms of the system to which the sign belongs.

Both Saussure and Wittgenstein highlight the relationship between words within the language system, and it is Derrida that takes this insight a step further. Derrida (1982) agrees that language is an enclosed system, but argues that the relationship between signs is arbitrary, labile and the effect of ongoing “play”. Derrida (1982, p. 26) states: Whether in written or in spoken discourse, no element can function as a sign without relating to another element which in itself is not simply present. This linkage means that each element -phenome or grapheme- is constituted with reference to the trace in it of the other elements of the sequence or system...Nothing, either in the elements or in the system, is anywhere simply present or absent. There is only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces. In this quote Derrida explicates his notion of *differance*, that is the continual “play” of an endless chain of signifiers that refer to each other, in which case the signified falls away. Furthermore, the relationship between these signifiers is not stable. Cilliers (1989, p. 3) states that meaning is potentially excessive and potentially proliferates. The results of this language “play” are the following: 1) Meaning is “decentered”: If the word is part of an infinite web, there is no central axes and “origin” to the word. Another way to say this is that the word is not

ultimately present or absent. There is, in short no fixed reference point or *logos* from which meaning is said to “emanate”. Moreover, since one cannot speak of a “center”, of a finite closure, meaning is perpetually deferred, perhaps even non-existent. More to the point, this infinite “web” is itself finite. Derrida (1973, p. 102) claims: “...language can...no longer be conceived with the oppositions of finiteness and infinity, absence and presence, negation and affirmation”.

My understanding is that Derrida is arguing that language cannot refer to “reality” in as much as one cannot attain absolute knowledge, as language, in trying to mediate this supposive “reality” self-deconstructs, as is evident in the following quote by Derrida (1982, p. 11) where he defines *difference* as the “non-full, non-simple, structured and differentiating origins of difference. Thus, the name ‘origin’ no longer suits it”. In other words, the decentering of the word precludes an ordering lens through which to conceive and perceive an assumed “reality” to which language is said to correspond. There is a certain chaos and complexity in language. 2) “Ideas” do not exist, but texts do: By doing away with “presence”, the “centered” meaning of a word, one could say that only the play of surface signifiers exists so that the “soul within”, the ontological being of the word that houses, so to speak an “idea”, is vacuous. Therefore, we are “presented” merely with “surfaces” or the text, the embodiment not of “idea” but as a “surface” open to interpretation, such that meaning is not in discovering the “idea” in the text but is a form of creation and of making/interpreting, rather than finding. 3) Deconstruction: The acknowledgement of “deferral” of meaning blights the philosophical enterprise that consists in constructing grand claims to an ontological truth and epistemological certainty about the nature of “reality”. For such a system assumes that words refer to definite “things”, and that language is a transparent medium on which theories can be built.

The postmodern “language turn” is therefore instrumental in the deconstruction of such philosophical exegesis. Norris (1982, p. 31) defines deconstruction as: “... not simply a strategic reversal of categories which otherwise remain distinct and unaffected. It seeks to undo both a given order of priorities and the very system of conceptual opposition that makes that order possible”. In other words, the lack of a “center” and *logos* renders language and by implication, knowledge as non-hierarchical so that as Margolis (1997, pp. 7-8) puts it: “that the norms of argumentative validity, evidence, confirmation and disconfirmation, truth and knowledge, legitimization, rationality, and the rest cannot be captured abstractly (‘syntactically’, ‘logically’ and ‘formally’ as said in the modernist idiom) but only in the regularized use of interpreted discourse, which is itself historically formed and transformed”. In this sense, in its most radicalized form, deconstruction is a critique of the *logos* and of a transcendent, discursive enterprise. The post structural “language turn” and its consequences can also be termed the postmodern shift or paradigm.

Essentially, Derrida’s post structural conception of language questions the distinctions one makes between literal and figurative language, and between sign and non-sign. The consequence of this is expressed by Neal (1988, p. 209): “... In *White Mythology*, Derrida demonstrates the futility of trying to expunge the trace and reveal the origin behind it. In principle, of course, concepts ought to be separable from metaphors that express them. In fact, however, not only is such an attempt difficult, the terms and

procedures to separate the two are themselves metaphorical. There is no way for metaphysical discourse for that matter, to free itself from rhetoric. White Mythology reveals even ‘concept’, ‘foundation’, and ‘theory’ as metaphors.” It would appear then that language itself controls the language user, that one is inscribed in a field of language, and that it is not simply a tool used to interrogate “reality” in its pristine actuality. One would then think that Derrida maintains that one cannot escape the net of language or text. But this is not necessarily so. Derrida (1984, pp. 123-124) writes: “I never cease to be surprised by critics who see my work as a declaration that there is nothing beyond language, that we are imprisoned in language; it is, in fact, saying the exact opposite. The critique of logocentrism is above all else the search for the ‘other’ and the ‘other of language’...to distance oneself...from the habitual structure of reference, to challenge or complicate our common assumptions about it, does not amount to saying there is nothing beyond language.”

My contention is that Derrida is thus saying that language both is our “thoughts” and “experiences” and yet, to be consistent, he now argues that there is “something”, an “other”, not constrained by language and its mode of operation. From this, one can make the argument that art practice (and scientific investigation) is specifically engaged in this “other” of language in an ongoing dialectic or at least an oscillation between itself and language, or as it itself -art practice, scientific analysis, that is- becomes codified as art theory, it generates a further “other” and so on.

This instability of discursively pinning down the meaning of an art object can thus be considered its creative ineffability or the ongoing theoretical modeling of reality by scientific means. At the same time, this lack of solid discursive understanding renders theory and practice of art (read: science) without clear parameters and therefore objective aesthetic values, which may lead to a sense of the meaninglessness of art (read: science). This is so in respect of the labile language system in which meaning is uncertain, or meaninglessness as signifiers that could mean anything or nothing. However, in the positing of the ineffable in terms of the “playing” with signifiers without definite concepts, derived from the “fact” that language is itself a limited tool and that there is recourse to an “other” of language, art and science have a significant place in human culture.

I shall argue that an “intertwining” of concepts aids one in meaningfully relating not only science -but even the less discursive game or language of sport- to art in a coherent manner. The “argument from intertwining” extends art theory into the realm of both science and sport theory, while maintaining an open classification as to what counts as aesthetic. Moreover, that this argument is made when the language to describe art, science and sport together is metaphorical and treats instinct, sensuality and abstraction as forming a continuum, a composite whole, without either conflating art with aesthetics, art with some or all sport (read: science) or that art and sport (read: science) are diametrically opposed categories.

To demonstrate the soundness of this argument, I draw key “moments” from several significant theorists who have either argued that sport is art or the reverse; in each case it appears that they all at least agree, in my estimation on a what I call “intertwining” wherein we need not come to a conclusive resolution as



to whether sport is art. This argument will act as a further bridge linking art to science (something not readily researched) and science to sport (as in sports science). A subtler “sharing” of concepts at least allows one to speak of art and sport (read: science) in such a way that they are not simply separate practices, without necessarily equating them either. What we can say is that aesthetic experience may be applied to different contexts if we so desire, which is not a question of equating these contexts. Instead, we can metaphorically talk about these manifestations of aesthetics, or in other words talk of sport (read: science) as being like art, for example. This metaphorical “sharing” can be visualized in a Venn diagram, repeated so as to convey the numerous possible contexts in which this takes place, rather than an ultimate statement about art and sport (read: science), even as they evolve.

*The “argument from intertwining”:*

The “argument from intertwining” sets up an ongoing oscillation between aesthetic experience and extra-aesthetic interpretation that pertains not only to art, but sport (read: science) as well should one accept sport (read: science) as art-like. Should we confer aesthetic valuation to sport (and science) it would be reasonable to “intertwine” art and sport (read: science) somewhat. Art and sport (read: science) share certain characteristics. They are aesthetic. They present some body, something external to be evaluated and experienced. Many languages can be used to describe and understand art, science and sport, aesthetic language being one. I argue for what I have termed the “intertwining argument” whereby there is a co-existence of art talk, science-speak and sport talk and aesthetic meanings.

An example of this conception can be seen in the writings of Kupfer (2001, p. 19) who writes (on sport): “...perfection in negation lies at one pole of aesthetic experience and human life—the pole of austerity. It is minimal, clean and simple with counterparts in sport, in both nature and art. In nature, we delight in the austerity of stark vistas of desert or ocean. The perceptually boundless expanse of sand or water provides an aesthetic intensity that is captivating in its bare repetition. In art, we appreciate the clean lines of Brancusi’s ‘Bird in flight’ or the minimalist painting of Rothko. At the other pole of experience is plenitude and proliferation. We also enjoy the seemingly endless profusion of flowers in a meadow or the starry galaxy that appears to spill forever into inky space. So, too, in sports. The counterpoint to perfection as negation is the aesthetic exuberance of abundance: the quarterback who throws for over 400 yards or completes a handful of touchdown passes; soccer and hockey players who score three, four, even five goals in a game... We can enjoy abundance and proliferation as well as negation and austerity in nature, art and sport.” The aesthetics of abundance and negation are “intertwined” in sport as art-like. If we can thus metaphorically fuse art, sport and the aesthetic, then it seems that they can fulfil similar goals, that their task is somewhat akin. In fact, as Elcombe (2012, p. 71) asserts: “... due to sport’s span of passionate appeal -from the local to the global- as well as its irreducibly embodied, kinesthetic nature, sport is well positioned to perform art’s cultural task better than traditional forms of art”. Here art and sport are “intertwined” not in the sense that sport is simply dubbed “low” art, but in that sport as an aesthetic, cultural phenomenon may continue the work of art, namely as a meaningful human practice with the intent that as Alexander (1993, pp. 205-206) puts it -“a sensed texture of order, possibility,

meaning and anticipation”- is potentially experienced. The same argument can be applied to science in its articulation or explanatory power concerning nature, as it measures such proliferation in austere models and equations and quantitative analysis. And similarly, science evokes an artistic experience in the very analysis and conceptualization of the data in an ordered form or format.

In other words, this “texture” of meaning is presented in sport as it is with art and science, is a “texture” that one can grasp experientially (experimentally) and aesthetically that gives rise to pleasure which, at the same time, gives one a sense of conceptual meaning should we choose to perceive it so. That is, in art we look for meaning, in the sense that should we be presented with X in the context of art, it is the assumed practice of art that X as an aesthetic object at the same time ought to be interpreted. If we take that same practice and say that sport (read: science) too is aesthetic then we are enjoined to interpret what we perceive. Thus, the “texture” of perceptual experience may resonate with meaning. Or more accurately: cultural practices such as art, science and sport are “intertwined” should we choose to apply a similar practice of “right perception”, that is, aesthetic appreciation and aesthetic attention (which may or may not lead to its symbolic, non-visible extra-aesthetic meanings.)

Without conflating art with the aesthetic and eroding clear boundaries between art and sport or science for that matter, I still hold it makes more sense to allow the free play of “art”, “sport”, “science” and “aesthetics” and so develop a language that can apply to art, science and sport. Here is an example from Platchias (2010. p. 14) who writes (on sport): “...What ‘dictates’ that the athlete discern and instantiate a ‘winning pattern’ is the free play of the powers of cognition, which enables him to envisage the perfectly harmonized arrangement of means and ends (the whole) and then to employ the ‘special patterns’, each instantiation of which is the perfect arrangement of means and ends (the particular) and is what arouses the aesthetic contemplation or what gives aesthetic pleasure and, further what enhances the aesthetic pleasure is when the particular is harmonized with the whole ...” What we have here is a description of the athlete clearly in the language of art. It is a description which perhaps also may be used to describe “good science”. While Platchias holds that sport can be equated with art as is clear from the language he uses, my contention is rather that similarity of language simply reveals not a literal equivalence, but a metaphorical allusion from different domains of experience one to the other so that there is an “intertwining” of various cultural expressions and indeed in the very language of trying to understand them. Even in Reid’s early 1970 article where he clearly separates art from sport, he does end off with the observation that some sports, like figure skating, are art as it is almost inseparable from dance. My problem with Reid’s analysis is that he writes as if art and sport or games are neatly parceled into definite categories but subsequent art post-1970 -not only in theory- has shown this not to be the case. For example, Velez’s *The fight* (2008), a performance piece wherein boxing clubs were invited to train inside of the iconic walls of the Tate Modern where elements of boxing were orchestrated with music and dance. The assumption is that art and sport are often in “a Manichaeian struggle in cities like London: corporate built structures and mass mediation versus art’s utopian abolition of different spheres of life” (Velez, 2008, p. 5). By bringing them together, perhaps something that is neither art nor sport is created,

subverting assumed structures in the process. This convergent reading, if you will, may be applied to science in respect of the fact that the very questions that science so engages stems from a) an aesthetic anomaly and b) a highly aesthetic methodology, that is to say, the search for patterns, regularities, and order. This then shows the “intertwining” nature of sport, the aesthetic, science and art, their relational value, a kind of indivisibility between seemingly different and incommensurate games.

If the argument from “intertwining” has some validity, then one can take many examples from the canonized history of Western art and apply this reading. So, for example, *Laocoon* (Note 4) is a powerful image in which we can see struggling, fighting, writhing, moving athleticism, so that it is perhaps an image of profound aesthetic power. It is art cloaked with the veneer of sporting aesthetics or athleticism in the context of art. *Laocoon* is as much an image of art as it is of sport: it is aggressive and violent, yet one of beauty; the combination of Eros and Thanatos, of erotic pleasure and traumatic self-annihilation. The sporting image is not simply one of serenity and stasis, of rationality and purity, but knows itself through confronting the world, at once heroic, his musculature vivid -and disturbing- where self is potentially annihilated, analogous to a knock-out punch in boxing, for example. Is this not itself a metaphor for the scientific quest, namely a wrestling with and through nature? I believe the answer to that is in the affirmative.

My argument is that sport’s (read: science’s) attractiveness and prevalence draws from its artistic source such as in this example. Just as we apply aesthetic and extra-aesthetic readings to art, so we should do so for sport (read: science) considering the sport (read: science) in art (read: science).

Another widely different example is the abstract configuration of Newman’s zip paintings where there is a strong vertical line matched by equally strong color fields and geometries. This can be likened to an emphatic move in a sport, its precision and aesthetic coordination or composition. And consider the diagrams, images of electrons, photons, materials science and so and so forth and the same vertical bands and geometries will be seen. The argument can work the other way around: The referee in soccer makes a line to indicate where the players must stand when a free kick is about to be taken. He is probably not conscious that he has made a kind of artistic Pollock-like mark. The footballer assesses the angles and skillfully spins the ball into the vacant net. He or she is not necessarily conscious that he or she was motivated by the aesthetics of “accuracy”, “formal coherence” and “balance” over and above the functional aim to score, to win and to simply play a game in accordance with rules. So, there is art in sport and there is certainly the same care for accuracy in the cultural game we call science.

Art is the paradigm root of aesthetic experience, but it filters through -with our awareness, our choice to perceive in this way- into other domains such as cooking, cleaning, friendship, sport, scientific exploration and so on ... Aesthetic motivations, that is, what we value and praise, proceed logical determination. They are like axioms without which there is no system, no sense of the direction as well as integration of logical and affective dimensions. We need first to value and praise something before we set to systemize its conditions and parameters. If we reinterpret art (history) in such a way that we celebrate its connection to the everyday and to other branches of knowledge, we do not thereby topple it

from its “pedestal”. Rather, we may in fact invigorate the mundane, not in order simply to thus minimize the value of art. On the contrary to assess, nay experience and judge activities usually not associated with art, as being aesthetic, may enhance those activities. It is simply a matter of choosing this direction.

Nevertheless, there is simultaneously an extra aesthetic component, a politicization of form and thus our value judgements and aesthetic predilection continuously needs to transform, be critiqued or else we run the risk of declaring “beauty!” when all around, there is the desolation of ethical norms in a given society, including the one we may be a part of. So, I believe that we need to recognize the pervasiveness of the aesthetic, drawing from the example of art (and nature) with the intent that aesthetic sensitivity in art and in fact all cultural manifestations, does the job of bettering society, rather than simply being the tool that institutions, including artistic ones, wield to usurp power to the detriment of society at large. True power lies in Laocoon’s struggle as an immediate, perceptual fact, rather than as a political, historical and mythical “fact”, but that power is tempered and often manipulated by these other latter associations. That power means the snakes and the struggling figure (returning to the image of *Laocoon* once more) mean something, have a history and the pain of the “protagonist” is real, not simply a perceptual delight as art, as athletic, as aesthetic. As nature embodied.

It appears that both realities co-exist, that is immediate perceptual fact (presence) and mediated conceptual meaning. Perhaps Duchamp recognized the necessary “impurity” of form (meaning over and above reaction to the present “image”) as he declared a found-object as art, in a sense trying to eradicate the aesthetic/extra-aesthetic narrative of (Western) history, in the elision between art (something supposedly created) and life. In the process, this declaration seemingly destroying art so that life itself could become beautiful (art), not simply forms to be venerated as art while life need not be beautiful. The binary shifts in his act, though history (of art) is such that his “act” became canonized, its effect therefore repelled. By reclaiming everyday life (sport) as being aesthetic and so too other branches of knowledge such as science, one is attempting to present sport (read: science) as a kind of “found-object”. This is perhaps not in a Duchampian sense as he rejected the aesthetic valuation of the object, while I am arguing that aesthetics enhances the appreciation and integration/“intertwining” of life-praxis. Of course, one could retort and say there is an aesthetic dimension to even violence. My response is simply that just as there are rules to sport (read: science) and certain tacit rules in art (we would be outraged by certain things in the context of art), so life and the aesthetics of everyday life would be circumscribed by some rules (hence I could envisage an aesthetic of law...).

It may be more appropriate to speak of an “intertwining” of concepts that resists specification other than metaphorical integration of seemingly separate categories. In this way, I have avoided the “is sport art” question and argued instead for an insoluble unity of experience, an experience that one can potentially find in the everyday. I was not able to fully resolve whether that kind of aesthetic experience is simply an aesthetic one or if it may have a singular or numerous *other* extra-aesthetic meaning/s to what is “present” refers.

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, I explicated the postmodern “language turn” according to Derrida’s development of the Saussurian linguistic structural notion. Derrida’s insight that this structure is not controlled by langue leads to a thesis of infinite differentiation and the non-presence of the sign. Such an argument strengthens my contention that branches of knowledge or the games we play within and as culture, form an interconnected unity or web.

One of the implications is to apply the reading of art as a mode of aesthetic play to another cultural realm, that of sport and science, where the sign “aesthetic” applies, and it was argued that each such dimension are “intertwined” concepts/activities/languages. At the very least, the shift in art aesthetics/extra-aesthetic (in terms of the postmodern paradigm) and the poststructural “language turn”, may contribute to an aestheticization of everyday life-issues with potentially positive results and the unification of specialist disciplines of academic studies. In the struggle between aesthetics and real-life issues, a resolution may be that aesthetics can enhance everyday life and vice versa. In this sense, communication across disciplines and within disciplines may prove beneficial for world-bettering. Through an analysis of the post-modern deconstruction of language as correspondence and its application to art, one moves beyond art as autonomous and instead may regard the aesthetic as all-encompassing, as permeating all aspects of life and culture. By not acknowledging the potential widening of the aesthetic arc -and the penetration of art within daily life- one impoverishes not only such “other” aspects of life, but art itself. Assenting to such an argument, in theory and in practice, we are better placed to eradicate a narrow view of art (which in the past was often based on a supposed deep ontology and teleology) and life. Thus, the institutions through which art is mediated, as it were, may be better placed to express this kind of creative spirit, of which the same may be added to the institutions through which other modalities, such as science and sport are concerned. It is the inherent unity of such disciplines that form the basis for such a perspective.

### A Qualifying Note:

Notwithstanding, my argument regarding a unifying and connecting stratum -a New Paradigm- that suggests the “mixing” and interdisciplinary nature of all things and all modes of comprehension, this is not a totalizing and ultimate system of thought. For the “epistemological unity” is itself and necessarily predicated on difference, singularity, identity, separation, and divide.

Just as each person is an individual; each thing a thing; A is A and not not A or B and so on, so individuals, things, languages, branches of knowledge and words form a separate and not an inter-related dimension of being. Even though such entities are not simple and are composed of parts, nevertheless it is a singular, separate, and individual identity.

In conclusion then, my argument entails a necessary dualism: on the one hand there is separation and divide, each entity being/language/discipline and so on unrelated to the next and a world in itself and each such entity forms part of a larger whole which in academia vacates a space for the so-named inter-disciplinary.

Thus, this note should be considered in conjunction with my project—at once seeking oneness and at the same time, the impossibility of such a task, that each “thing” is one and separate in itself, identical to itself and unlike any other “thing”. In this respect, the vessel, the body is singular -an individual instantiation of the light- while the light itself pervades all things.

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## Notes

Note 1. Metaphor is a useful concept in the context of this article. Rather than our ability to say what *x* is, what reality really is, and pinpoint a discrete particle with definite properties, the very fluid nature of reality, its wave-function precludes exact description (and knowledge). At best, then one can say what something is like or akin to or approximates—and metaphorical description is the very mechanism by which one can do so. It also allows the borrowing on one system/language/discipline and applying that in another domain or branch of knowledge which is “exactly” what I so conjecture and argue for.

Note 2. The idea of the “other” as in the “other” of language or that which is beyond the interdependent terms of the text in the Derridean sense, substantiates my argument, wherein, on the one hand language acts as a closed field, and yet on the other, admits an “other”, an “other of...”, a reference if you like. The “language turn” is the equivalent in philosophy of my contention that all branches of knowledge are inter-dependent while reality itself cannot be accurately known (the old epistemological conundrum). The New Paradigm then, in a sense may be subverted, in that there is no ultimate paradigm (no dominant field of knowledge, language, form...), only a shifting “wave”, an indescribable reality that one might metaphorically allude to or hint at, and pragmatically manipulate, while the source of qualia is unknown. Kant then made a brilliant distinction between the noumena and the phenomena.

Note 3. It is useful at this juncture to make the distinction between “lights” (light) and “vessels” (matter). The light is the “in itself”, the point of origin, while the “vessel” is our mode of apprehending it or categorizing it in some or other way or form or language or discipline. The point is that the New Paradigm of the interdisciplinary suggests that the light is one and infinite, while the vessels are of perhaps finite measure. Since the vessel “houses” the light, each vessel (discipline) still is essentially that light, though as distinct forms, may appear different. *Our lens is limited, while the light is not*. Yet such a distinction is necessary for the purposes of definition. Essentially what my argument points to is the dissolution of the vessel/s and the perception of light. Of course, this is an impossibility and simply a logical and imaginary hypothesis.

Note 4. Hagesandros, Polydoros and Athenodoros, Laocoon and His Two Sons, circa 1st Century. Marble, height 96 inches. Vatican Museums, Rome. 151.