AESTHETICS AS A GAME THEORY
ART AND ANTI-ART -- AESTHETICS AND ANTI-ESTHETICS[1]

Maria Gołaszewska

The methodological weakness of aesthetics, the shortcomings of notions and theories continuing tradition, the destruction of the work of art and the appearance of new artistic phenomena — all these factors, backfeeding one another, have brought about the crisis in aesthetics. The question is being raised, not only whether aesthetics is needed and whether it serves its purpose well, but if it is at all possible.

A particularly important part is played in this situation by the appearance of various forms of the so called anti-art, that is phenomena which are, as it were, the antithesis of the former understanding of art : here belong such forms as conceptual art, all sorts of happenings, minimal art and concrete art, new forms of theatre or para-theatre, as well as the multitude of artistic activities that do not fit in with any of the established categories oí art.

In this situation, several ways out present themselves :

1) The centre of interest of aesthetics may be moved from the work of art to, for instance, aesthetic values ane experiences, or to para-artistic structures inherent in reality, thus avoiding the difficulties connected with the new phenomena in art. Yet, a suggestion like this offers serious doubts : aesthetics has always been linked with art, it is a tradition that cannot be rejected easily. The dependence of aesthetics on art consists — in the most general terms -- in that the notion of para-artistic structures, enabling us to find aesthetic values in the non-artistic reality, has been coined on the basis of art.

In nature, in man's environment, in his behaviours, products of culture etc. we are thus discovering structures that are realized in art in a non-identical, often only analogous, form. Even should we be

able to demonstrate that the dependencies are mutual, that structures occuring in reality have been introduced to art (rhythms, tensions, contrasts etc.) and that their existence was — and still is — the condition of the creation and existence of art, it remains a fact that only art has made us aware of their "artisticality" and of their aesthetic influence on man.

2) An attempt may be made to modernize the problems and notions of aesthetics by referring to the assumptions and the methodology of one of the exact sciences, or of the universal currents wherein the methods are better elaborated, where the precision of research notions and tools is much greater. Yet as soon as we adopt the methodology of an exact science, the object of research will become nothing but whatever lies within the range of efficiency of that methodology. We may, for instance, consider the various empirical methods of psychology or sociology, methodology inspired by structuralism or semiology — but when applying these approaches to aesthetics we shall de facto obtain psychology or sociology of art, semiology of art etc. Aesthetics would therefore have to abandon that which is its important trait — the aspiration to unviersality, the tendency towards a synthetic formulation of the multiplicity of various phenomena, towards the unification of problems scattered and bordering on many other exact disciplines; it would then have to give up the philosophical inquiries into the nature of aesthetic phenomena and its paramount problem — the aesthetic value.

3) Another possibility is to build aesthetics anew, aesthetics that would take for the subject matter of its research not the art as we have so far understood it, but anti-art. It would be adopted to the study of phenomena that are new in man's world, unfit for the old aesthetic patterns — new types of experiences related to art and anti-art — constructed on the principle of contradicting all that was aesthetics to date, all categories that have traditionally functioned so far. It seems that anti-aesthetics radically breaking all ties with tradition would either cease to be a variety of aesthetics (since such problems as aesthetic value, aesthetic experiences etc. would be eliminated, the real issue being not the names themselves, but pheno-mena occuring in reality), or it would lose its universality.

Perhaps, anti-aesthetics might be sensible only if it were possible — which was the programme of the contestants in the late sixties — to destroy the hitherto existing culture along with art and build everything from the scratch.

4) In today's cultural model aesthetics must accomplish a new synthesis of that which was and that which is, making allowances for the fact that what was may be formulated in ways other than traditional, while what is, what becomes and what may come can be explained by the critical application of some modified traditional categories, although it also demands the introduction of brand-new ones.

One of the most capacious categories seems to be "aesthetic situation". Its ingredients may be treated in a manner slightly different from that operating in the case of old art — not only their mutual relationships and dependencies, their interrelations but most of all their mutual modifications, up to reduction; one has to remember here the unique role of chance (just as chance is playing an ever greater role in the creation of art and in experiencing it). This category can be adapted to what art is becoming today, and ultimately — to various forms of anti-art. Far-reaching transformations of artistic processes, aesthetic reactions and the values that are born in this encounter, in their mutual relations, with the inclusion of "the law of chance" — these are the causes for which the final result is unpredictable and the value-making actions and attitudes are exposed to a risk. In this state of things too, can be perceived the suggestion that art, as well as its creation and experience, be treated as a kind of game, and aesthetics — as the theory of art game. Thus interpreted aesthetics can also be applied to older art, putting it in a new light, for older art can too be treated as "art game".

What is art game ?

The fundamental notion to be introduced to the considerations of the new aesthetics is then "game". The word has many meanings and is used both in the colloquial language and in science. In which of its meanings is it to be introduced to aesthetics — asking this question is also asking in what sense can art be described as "art game".

Logical analysis of the meanings of the word "game" in current use would not contribute much to our case because they are very numerous, because it is a vague notion — "with blurred edges" in Wittgenstein's terms — what is more, these meanings are often contradictory and mutually exclusive. Let us initially attempt to produce for our purposes a regulative definition, that is one

comprising the meanings used most often. We shall depart from the interpretation employed in mathematics, namely in its section called "game theory".

The concept of game includes objects (cards, dice), rules of behaviour and behaviours determined by rules. A game assumes conscious behaviours, such as the manipulation of objects (sometimes, of notions or even of people — e.g. war games) according to the adopted rules, directed towards achieving the correct solution of the problem which is the end of the game and which brings profit — satisfaction, the feeling of victory and success, the winnings.

The behaviours in question are such wherein the participant may consciously choose one from amongst the available actions. One has to distinguish between game as the course of the conflict and the actual course of the given game, called match or game. The principle of leading the game by the participating aides is the achievement of maximum expected satisfaction. No conflict of interests need exist between the participants, or it may be a noncontroversial conflict — satisfaction of one of the players does not have to bring about the disappointment of others (J. Neumann, O. Morgenstern, J. S. Wentzel).

The following elements must be taken account of with regard to art :
- the game is happening in an artistic dimension; reality is transposed to aesthetic values (the presented world is rendered unreal, artistic structures and axiological rules are applied);
- the use of rules of transforming game situations in more or less conscious creative processes, that is such which are an activity producing a result in the form of new values;
- a homology occurs between the model of art game and the analogous model of reality, up to the application of real elements as the substance of concrete art, and the reporting nature of "factual art";
- in every art game there occur specific oppositions remaining in a state of tension — e.g. emotional or intellectual, such as : artist — recepient of art, creator — substance.

If the term "game" is in principle applied to interactions, to interhuman behaviours, can one speak of, e.g., a game between the creator and his substance ? The mathematical game theory lists the "statistical game" in which one of the players is Nature; then the set of Nature's strategy is a set of unknown parameters, or a set of unknown probability bets, one of whom characterizes the given

phenomenon. This is no analogy or metaphors Nature really behaves as a man does, it has its own rules and reacts to moves — stimuli, transformations -- by replying with its own reaction-moves; sometimes, this has the character not only of a game like chese, but assumes the structure of drama, theatre (for instance, man's struggle with an element : the extinction of an oil-well fire).

What we have said so far about the theory of art game can be formulated into the fundamental structure of the game process : below the game threshold is a "behaviour silence" (nothing is happening); the zero point of the game (activities) is the readiness to play it (e.g. familiarity with, and acceptance of the rules, declaration of readiness to play, that is assuming a stance favourable of art game); the first move, or change, transformation of the partner's game situation; the taking up of the game, that is the partner's first move in reaction to the transformation of game situation; further moves accumulating the previous ones, that is playing the game as a whole (the creative process, the process of reception, etc.); the final move, ending the game and producing its outcome.

The game theory distinguishes between two types of moves : - a definite move, which is a conscious choice and realization by one of the players of a move possible in the given situation; an example of a definite move may be any move in a game of chess; making the next move the player makes a conscious choice of one of the variants possible with the given configuration of chessmen on the board; the set of possible variants for every given move is given by the rules of the game and depends on the whole series of both players' previous moves;
- a chance move is a choice from among several possibilities made not by the player, but by any mechanism of chance selection (e.g. tossing a coin, throwing dice); if one knows all the rules of the game and the given situation in the match, one can mathematically determine the number of possible variants of the next move (J. Wentzel).

Let us pass on to concrete analyses and aesthetic interpretations based on game theory. First we have to define the limits of aesthetics : just as beyond artistic creation there is only total silence — caused either by the lack of artistic awareness or by its excess (when theoretical doubts make creation impossible) — so the bottom limit of aesthetics ought to be the introduction of value problems (thus, a mathematical-physical-statistical measurement of a work of

art is not aesthetics) while personal impressions on art, expressed in a colloquial or literary language, go beyond the upper limit.

Aesthetics without assumptions

Traces of aesthetics formulated as a system inspired by mathematics can be found already in antiquity — e.g. in the Pythagoreans — yet going so far back would not be of much use to us when we wish to cope with the present day and the future. Of the contemporary thinkers one may mention M. Bense and his statistical methods of studying art, and experimental aesthetics, but these trends differ from the proposals offered by this paper.

Certainly, the mathematics-oriented interpretations may be applied somewhat differently depending on the kind of art. To investigate these possibilities would require extensive detailed analyses; for our purposes, it must suffice to select one kind of art, in this case music, and only with regard to the most fundamental, aesthetic, questions. Then, in what sense and to what degree is music a game ? As we know, music is very often compared to mathematics for the large number of similarities. In fact, J. Xenakis tends to treat music as mathematics. These analogies give rise to the conviction that art game theory can indeed be applied to music. For instance, the process of composing may be seen as a mixed-type pattern of game : definite moves and chance moves. We must not forget, however, that aesthetics cannot be altogether reduced to mathematical game theory — e.g. for a game to be mathematically determined it is necessary that its rules provide the probability distribution of possible results with every chance move, whereas such a possibility exists only in art which uses the rules of normative aesthetics, and in a very rigorous manner — e.g. in schematic novel, or pastiche-type music.

The principal theses of the "theory of art game" proposed here can be formulated as follows :
- reality is treated as a set (system) of possibilities (in contrast to necessity and that which is impossible) — there is a possibility of introducing changes through man's direct intervention. Both the world around and the reality of art (of its works that have been realized so far) as well as the world of imagination (which is an integral particle of the artist's creative personality) are a challenge which is picked up by the artist — every new work is a realization of one possibility (in the case of a representation, it is also one of

the possibilities of shaping real situations). For instance, Schönberg had intended to transform the existing system of major-minor scales into a dodecaphonic one;

- art is a game in which the elements of manipulation are real objects, physical phenomena, notions of images treated as the substance; the players are the artist, his work and the recipient; while the game rules are rules of transformation (of the substance, aesthetic experiences, artist's intentions, work, etc.); in music, e.g., the substance are sounds and silence, the game rules are invariable, consequently applied methods of artistically employing sounds and silence adopted by the composer — Schönberg, for instance, rejected tonality, made dissonance independent, introduced the dodecaphonic technique and serialism;

- aesthetics is the theory of art game, or analysis of the situations in which the "players" are taking part — these are the creators and recipients of art involved in the "match" and "resolving" of ghe game which is the making and experiencing of the work of art, or perhaps the co-making and co-experiencing (when the border-line between the creator and recipient becomes obliterated).

There also exists a possibility of extending thus-understood aesthetics onto the non-artistic reality — when one accomplishes the "aesthetization of reality", that is the formulation of reality by means of para-artistic structures.

In the case of Schönberg's music we are dealing with a game based on a conflict : one of the players is the vanguard artist who experiments and wants to rebuild all music anew, the other player is the audience with their traditionalist habits and stereotype musical tastes. The opening move was the public presentation of dodeca-phonic pieces (also at concerts organized by Schönberg's "Union of Private Musical Performances" in 1918). The audience's move, or aesthetic behaviour, was a negative reaction to the music — the defence mechanism had set in, producing an aesthetic shock. Schön-berg dit not surrender and made a tactic move designed to win the audiences for his vanguard music — he wrote a few traditional compositions. The shock was gradually receding, and as a result of that peculiar game Schönberg had been recognized as a classic of dodecaphony. This has been a very general description of the Schönberg — audience game situation; one could make a detailed analysis and point to the important elements, and describe the particular circumstances in order to explain the structure of this art game.

Aesthetics as theory of art game may have its own version of "pure possibilities", i.e. analysis of the combinations resulting from the conventionally (or a priori) accepted initial data and from the adherence to game rules. Another version is to seek "real possibilities" which have a chance of being realized. In the extreme case the aesthetics of pure possibilities might assume the character of a purely logical, formal game, without expecting realization in the form of works of art whose origin is sometimes deemed impossible — it would therefore be a conceptual aesthetics. One could, e.g., programme a computer to produce a register of combinations resulting from transformations of the dodecaphonic scale according to the specific rules of serial music. Attempts at producing cybernetic music of that kind have already been made. The composing of serial music is similar to the mathematician's cool calculations.

More important seems to be the creating of the aesthetics of possibilities founded on reality — with the knowledge of initial data, game rules and concrete situations determined by the origin of specific works, one can formulate a system of aesthetics including all types of cases of aesthetic situations known from the past and forecast to happen in the future.

The game in art has at stake the aesthetic values — their realisation (the creative process) and actualization — discovery and sensation (aesthetic experience). Aesthetics, on the other hand, wants to create a general, universal system of enunciations concerning the existence and functions of aesthetic values in the world of man — hence the treatment of art in abstract categories derived from game theory, and not, e.g., historical or purely descriptive, belonging to the theory of art.

The structure of aesthetics as an art game theory is as follows :

Functors (participants) of the game. In view of the presence of substance in art games one should rather use the term "functor" (the necessary or significant constitutive factor) than "participant" (which suggests a person). The following functors may be distinguished :
- the artist; of interest here is his creative personality and the subject of the work — both these categories occur in art games, whereas the artist as a real person is not taken account of; often the artist's life story is a very interesting, colourful and meaningful affair, but it would rather be used as the subject matter of a vie romancée than an element of a theoretical construct; whereas all the properties and

activities which are directly connected with the artist's creative processes decided which rules of artistic structuring he would adopt and what subsequent moves he would take in the game with substance and recipients, are included in the creative personality as a game factor, next, the subject of a work of art is all that differentiates the art of one artist from that of all other artists (it is therefore one of the sides of the pseudo-subjectivity of the work : each work of art is treated as if it had its own, unique personality); - the work; of interest here is the artistic scheme of the work and its concretizations in the aspect of realizing aesthetic value; considering methodological difficulties, in the initial stage of research we shall consider as "work of art" (an object presenting aesthetic values) every product of man, for potentially each of them may realize aesthetic values, each of them may be "beautiful"; in the second approximation -- we shall consider the work that has been produced intentionally as a work of art (in the design of the maker of the given object); in the third phase — successful works, i.e. such in which aesthetic analysis uncovers aesthetic and artistic values such as, e.g., categorial values of tragism, sublimity, poeticality, charm, comicality, etc.; finally, one may speak of a normative treatment : work of art as an object that realizes aesthetic values in a high degree (masterpieces, works that are perfect according to the adopted valuation scale); Schönberg e.g. had left "global production" including all that was musical notation — notes to compositions, new ideas, abandoned attempts, relinquished experiments etc. — among others, he had written for profit some 3.000 pages of scores arranging popular tunes and operettas — besides these, there exists a "canon" of compositions that had been published and performed which Schönberg had introduced to social circulation, which confirms their acceptance as works of art; finally one can mention a few exceptional compositions of Schönberg's that have decided about his position, revealing tremendous creative inventiveness : here belong such works as e.g. Five Pieces for Piano (1923), the opera Mozes and Aaron (1932) and the cantata The Survivor From Warsaw (1947);
- the recipient treated as an "aesthetic personality" — a set of personality traits engaged in the artistic experience and as the subject of the aesthetic experience — a stereotype of reactions to the work of art reconstructed on the basis of a description of experiences and the observation of behaviours connected with the reception of art; if we were to refer here to Schönberg's music as a co-partner in the

"aesthetic game" (per analogiam to "art game"), we would have to admit that, whereas the aesthetic shock of the globally treated musical audience has been overcome, the compositions purest in their dodecaphonic innovation have no chance of arousing stronger, more profound aesthetic experiences; Schönberg himself was aware of that, saying that serial music does not allow for the composition of longer pieces, moreover the element of mathematical-musical calculation prevails in them over expression, over direct manifestation of values that may become the contents of aesthetic experiences, realizing specific categories of aesthetic values — one cannot describe them as being e.g. sublime, tragic, lyrical, nice, etc.

Game situations. Thise can be also described as types of matches. Art game is first of all characterized by its functors : - artist-work; here we are mainly interested in the creative process in which the creative personality and substance of the work are engaged; the rules of the game — artistic principles are set up by the artist (adopted, found, designed etc.), while the substance "behaves" on the principle of passive resistance and peculiar responses of the artistic wholes to the actions — individual moves in the game — in the form of new appearances more or less suited to the artistic vision of the work; the artist has no way of knowing or predicting what part is played by the given substance in the particular artistic application; nor can it be unequivocally foreseen in what substance, and how formed, can the vision of the work be adequately realized — the artistic design; hence the artist when "playing" with his substance applies numerous rules basing himself on the principles of artistic structuring, and the end result is always unpredictable; the artist's playing of the game consists here in selecting the possibilities of shaping the substance that come into his view;
- artist-recipient; artistic creation demands the recipient's complementary behaviours — acceptance of the work, understanding it, and constituting the aesthetic object; the artist is sometimes let into the game by the recipient — e.g. by the institution of patronage, art dealers, public tastes; sometimes the artist seeks to get the audience involved in the game — e.g. through works that directly appeal to the recipient for co-creation, or for assuming a particular receptive attitude conditioning the proper perception of the work;
- recipient-work of art; the behaviour of the recipient who is involved in the art game with a work of art consists first of all in valuation, connected with all kinds of experiences — emotional, intellectual, etc.; it may be positive or negative; whereas indifference, lack of

assuming any stance means that the given person is "out of the game"; what is being evaluated is the "furnishings" of the work of art — here belong the values that it represents, the artistic language, the qualities of materials, and all kinds of value-making factors (enhancing or diminishing the global value of the work).

The rules of art game. In the case of art it would be very difficult to establish a finite system of rules, for it is not one game but a multitude of game that cannot be determined. Such a systematic inventory can only be made in regard of particular, already accomplished, historical artistic phenomena. The great number of types and genres of art, the multitude of stylistic coventions, artistic practices, and finally the multiplicity of works and the postulate of originality all make it possible to name but a few such general principles concerning game rules; as far as detailed rules are concerned, only a very inadequate choice is possible by way of illustration.

Here, for example, are several rules of the art game, starting with the general ones and passing on to the more detailed :
- the rule of applying the criterion of essential artistic value; each work of art is met with the question, whether it is really a "work", whether it is a success or a miss — whether the given object is at all a work of art; the following criteria are applied jointly (the syndrome of essential criteria) : realization of categorial aesthetic values, originality, mastery of execution, stylistic unity;
- the rule of artistic and aesthetic maximum; a work of art should be perfect; it is assumed that it will be the most perfect of all possible, whilst a qualification like, e.g., "mediocre" has a pejorative colouring; on the recipient's side the principle is in operation that "justice will be done" to the work; that high-class values of the work will be "interpreted", recognized, accepted;
- the rule of satisfaction from taking part in art game; for the artist, that satisfaction is derived from the feeling of realizing artistic and aesthetic values, and from bringing the work into social circulation when it has been accepted. These satisfactions assume the shape of various benefits — from remuneration to fame, perceiving the sense of life in artistic creation, etc.; for the recipient, the satisfaction gained in art game is in the meeting with values in the aesthetic experience, in the sublimation of the quality of one's own life, increasing one's self-knowledge, self-identification, confirming one's ideals, etc.
- the rule of the creator's artistic supremacy over the recipient; in

view of the fact that the artist has higher creative talents than the recipient, the latter must "subordinate" himself to the former; this rule finds application especially in the vanguard art; a work of art is to be "felt" or "understood" — if the feeling fails (the work is not appreciated at the first contact with it), the recipient of art (or — particularly — anti-art) should resort to understanding : it is then that the artistic premise, principles of structuring etc. are discovered — so that the recipient comes to see the artist's designs, and may manage to penetrate the sense of artistic activity and the result of that activity — the work of art.

- the rule of artistic overdoing; even realistic, extremely mimetic art is not a literal repetition of reality; for the work to gain individual artistic expression it has to depart from reality in a purposeful, artistically significant manner; the least that must happen is an act of artistic creation, that is a transfer of the given object into the domain of art; in the sphere of aesthetic values this overdoing manifests itself extremely in the slogan "art for art's sake", and in the artistic sphere — in the baroque style;

- the rule of diminution of the quality of artistic substance; it is primarily characteristic of anti-art : music has made use of the full tone scale by the introduction of quarter-tones; Schönberg in The Survivor From Warsaw had introduced a part which is half-spoken, half-musical (in respect of pitch); similarly, in N. Sarrault's novel Do You Hear These Laughters, Sir ? we find language which is a border line of inner monologue and traditional narration, whilst M. Bialoszewski employs in concrete poetry phrases that have very little, barely a trace of semantic content.

Examples of rules may be multiplied; to inventory them, and systematize, would require a separate study; it is also a separate problem, which of these rules hold (or used to hold) in the old art, which are specific in the new art, and which should be recognized as universal rules.

The scheme of art game. In this scheme, the over-repeating basic structure, in the structural core occur the principal elements of game : functors, match (the course of game), rules, moves and solutions (result) of the game; there may be more than two functors in a game, usually however in an art game occurs a polarization — namely, possible, various factors are arranged into two opposite types, representing e.g. contrasting attitudes to art, aesthetic likes, creative tendencies etc. We can treat as the scheme of art game the aesthetic situation which assumes various forms depending on

whether we are dealing with art of anti-art : in the latter the artist often stoops down to the role of a designer (provides the idea of the work, one unfinished in the literal sense, possibly only suggesting something from reality that may be a work, or rather an anti-work of art); the recipient becomes involved in the artist's creative process, becomes its participant and not only a spectator, an observer, a contemplator not even one who produces an aesthetic object); the work becomes the point of contact between the actions of artist and recipient, or rather designer and participant; hence also the values are found not in the very work, for it is unidentifiable, but beyond it in the sphere of reality, and the work becomes but a pretext for discovering them (transcendence of values beyond the work, the art's surpassing itself). The schemes of art games, however, ultimately depend on the type of game.

Types of games. The typology of art games may be settled in various ways depending on the aspect assumed, and on the differentiated criteria of division. We are suggesting here the most fundamental typology :
- non-conflict game; it takes place in the case of principal consistence of functors; e.g. the artist's taste is identical with the recipient's; the same ideals, the same world outlook are shared by both the artist and the recipient, etc.;
- conflict game; when the functors are inconsistent, tensions occur, as well as behaviours such as mutual persuasion, discussion, sometimes struggle etc.; e.g. vanguard artists have to overcome the recipients' aesthetic habits, while the latter fight against their art.

Types of art games distinguished with respect to the number and kind of participants (functors);
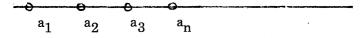- single-handed game; e.g. an artist who takes account primarily of himself; we then deal with creation as the expression of personality; the artist is at the same time the recipient of his work and it is easy for him, e.g. to get the upper hand of his substance (he does as he personally chooses); the recipient, in turn, may treat the work only as a pretext for spinning out his personal experiences; in another case, the recipient creates the work for himself (amateur art);
- two-handed game; artist and recipient are the functors; it may be a conflict or non-conflict game; most often, however, the game between the artist and the recipient abounds in tensions; and it's state is which values, and in what way, are to be realized in the work;
- many-handed game; it takes place when between the artist and recipient appear other functors (e.g. cultural policy, art criticism);

here, too, the game may be conflict or non-conflict, and its structure and course are sometimes very complicated (in an extreme case one of the functors may even postulate that art realize values other than aesthetic);
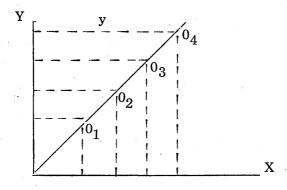
- artist-substance; in the mathematical game theory this type of game is called "statistic"; here particularly important, decisive seems to be the application of artistic rules (formation of substance).

The strategy of art game. The actual course of an art game does not unveil according to a premeditated rule of game (apart from the rare cases of e.g. copying, faithful imitation, duplicating), yet it is possible to reconstruct ex post that course and the game strategy applied by the participants. Here are some such possibilities :

- the linear strategy; linear deciding of game situations consists in multiple repeating the same artistic premises, the same rules, principles (e.g. during the creative process); this strategy is characterized by a uniformity of convention, little density of creative activity or invention; it is a strategy of imitation, pastiche, and in extreme cases -- of plagiarism (this is already a case of the strategy's degeneration); in the language of logical symbols this strategy may be presented as follows : $a_1 + a_2 + a_3 + a_n$; or graphically :
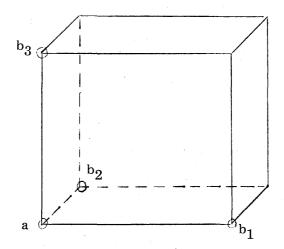

$$a_1 \quad a_2 \quad a_3 \quad a_n$$

- the two-dimensional strategy; it is a strategy of balance between traditional and innovatory elements; some of the rules are based on the "verified" artistic tricks, while other rules are novel, original; its formalized notation would be : $F \subset x.y$; graphic notation :
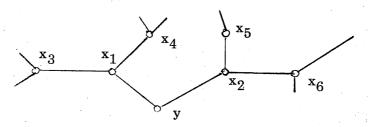
where x = new elements, y = old elements; 1—4 = moves;
- the three-dimensional strategy : it consists in the new elements'
predominance over the old ones (traditional); in formalized
notation : $a.b^2$, where a = old elements, b = new elements; in
graphic notation :

- the strategy of indefinite possibilities; old elements are here but
the point of departure, while the solving of game situations takes
place according to the principle that each new element releases an
indefinite number of subsequent new elements; in notation : $y + \infty \ x$; in graphic notation :

where y = an old element, x = a new element; this last strategy
finds application in vanguard art and in science-fiction literatyre;
here is what science-fiction theoretician V. Graaf has to say on the
subject : "... some of the science-fiction approach — as the original
aim — the demonstration of specific systems of possibilities, but

from a point of view other than has been asumed so far (...) Science-fiction literature is a genre of speculative prose which by means of scientific or pseudo-scientific devices endows that which is impossible from present-day point of view with optimistic or pessimistic appearances of possibilities (...) This is why the future is so willingly foretold, for it is an area of freedom in which the play of thoughts, meaning here much more than within the negatively utopian understanding (concerning the present), may develop without hindrance" (Vera Graaf, Homo Futurus, Warszawa 1975, p. 174).

* * *

Does aesthetics as a theory of art game, proposed here, satisfy the condition of universality that we have assumed ? The question may be worded differently : is every artistic practice a game, does not, e.g., the rejection of all rules exercised by some practitioners of anti-art cause the unapplicability of game theory ? It seems that even in this paradoxical case the principle of applying no principles, the rule of applying no rules, is at least applied. Consequently, is not the theory of art game too capacious — when it embraces absolutely everything, then it does not describe or explain anything. Certainly, a situation is possible that does not fall into the category of art, even in the interpretation of the most extreme conceptualists or adherents of minimal art; when no artistic activity is undertaken, when man excludes himself from the sphere of art : when he does not only keep silent, but does not even think in terms of beauty (accepted with its most perverse varieties).

Values are significant only in the world of man — unrevealed beauty remains nothing but a physical state of things. An activity which is unconnected with artistic and aesthetic values stays outside the sphere of art. Yet already a simple statement like "art is life" denotes stepping over the threshold to artisticality, to artistic actions. In our notional terms we would say that the first move in the art game has been made, with the application of the rule preferred by conceptualists : the question, what is art, has been asked; the second move has also been made : an attempt to answer that question. In this creation it has been decided to choose an un-usual substance : thought, and every subsequent move in the art game leads to the constitution of a complete aesthetic situation with the artist (even though reduced to the role of a "designer" or idea-

giver, as mentioned above), the work (reduced to a draft, idea, plan), the recipient (who becomes a participant, co-creator of the work) and aesthetic value (going beyond the scope of the work, transcending towards other values). Hence game — as man's intervention into reality — may be recognized as a constituting factor of art and anti-art.

FOOTNOTE

[1]When we speak about the relations between Modern Art and cultural conditions and changes produced by the Industrial Revolution, we usually point to the influence of the new substances and techniques on the development of art, on the ways of its creation and reception (e.g. an influence of electronic devices on the mergence of the new aesthetically significant qualities in the artworks and of the new kinds of arts, which entails the new varieties of aesthetic experience.) I have considered these problems in my paper "Crisis of Aesthetics?" as the discussion topics for the International Conference on Aesthetics, Kraków 1979.

Here I would like to pay attention to another aspect of this problem, namely to the necessity of the new way of conceiving aesthetics itself, in face of new tendencies in art and science. Nowadays, when old art and newest kinds of avant-garde art encounter, we must try to encompass the old art and the new one in the same theory. The concept that I present here is inspired by the mathematical theory of games. Refering to the role of programming which makes allowance for the part of stochastic chance (entailed by drowing lots), this attempt points to the possibility of providing the universal set of notions, which would be independent of the metaphysical assumptions and of the functioning of the classical aesthetical values. How both art and aesthetics can function in the human world which is becoming a world of computers — this is the main problem of my paper.