

# Artistic Attitudes

Dr. Wagih Fawzi Youssef

## Abstract

Criticism can replace creativity as the final product of the artistic creation. This attitude can be called academic attitude, because the academic critic can explain the process of creativity, describing the techniques and process of artistic production. With the rationalization of educational methods, the critical attitude is used to inspire the artistic attitude or lead it. As a result, the methodological, technical and procedural basis of the art form begin to overwhelm the art product as a means of the presentation of the work of art as a holistic world. Thus, the work of art begins to transcend itself and becomes an exercise in criticism.

Keywords: artlessness, detachment, temporary forms, reductionism, values, neutrality

## Introduction

What is characteristic of the artistic attitude is the attempt to create a world according to a rational conscious by the methodological application of developed self-conscious procedures. This does not preclude the fact that the artist may include improvisatory, unconscious, and other self-projecting material in his art. It has been argued that all great art, that which makes it art, is the presence of style of artificial models. Art is not experience, but consists of the rearrangement of elements that are possible in experience to create new forms. The artlessness of art consists of art that can be experienced without recourse to knowledge of methodology, techniques, or procedures on the part of art consumer. If the artificiality of art is its predominant characteristic, then the work is usually judged as dead or academic. Concealment of technique is antithetical to scientific attitude, resembling in its effects natural attitude. Some artistic epochs have exhibited an emphasis on the effects produced by self-conscious stylistic experiments resulting from deliberate manipulations of materials. These tendencies are called mannerism by art historians.

What the critic does is to tell the onlookers what the artist did to achieve an effect and what he was unaware of doing when he attempted to conceal the means of creation of his art world. That is why there is a tension between the artist as creator and the critic as explicator. For the artist concealment of technique is essential to his art. By exposing the techniques to the audience, the critic invites the audience to approach the art work from an attitude of scientific detachment; a detachment of a pseudoscientific attitude into the act of experiencing the world embodied in an art object. This makes the viewer a critic, a

matter that destroys the effect of the art product as being a natural world in itself, and upsets the suspension of disbelief and destroys the involvement of the audience. By this, the critic detached the art world in the same way as scientists do by the process of analysis, which helps to disenchant the natural world. The critics of course can destroy the success of an artist by negative reviews which can delay acceptance of a valuable work. When this happens the artist responds in terms of natural attitude rather than an artistic attitude. But this response is evoked by the content of criticism not by the nature of criticism itself. In this respect criticism falsifies the relationship between the artist and audience.

### The Academic Attitude

Criticism can replace creativity as the final product of the artistic creation. This attitude can be called academic attitude, because the academic critic can explain the process of creativity, describing the techniques and process of artistic production as if knowledge of the artistic creativity which constitute the solution to the problem, since the technique is the most objective and discernible part of the process of artistic production. Somewhere beneath these objective procedures lie the hidden sources of creativity, ideas, and feelings, experiences which guide and direct the techniques.

The academic critic, if he lacks these qualities can only reveal them through his critical work, for in art as in science, the work itself is a higher form of communication than explanation. Art as a wide variety of forms of reductionism, sociological, psychological, historical and textual constitutes a world autonomous from the world of art but one cannot dismiss them. Their relevance to the world of art is determined not by their autonomous nature, but the extent that they contribute to heightening the common sense appreciation of art. All forms of art deal with images available to the imagination.

The art critic translates the imagery of art into prose by this he would be destroying that which is unique to art, the images themselves. In fact, it may depend on the value of the analysis, be of great use to the artist who expresses himself through the imagery of his art. Perception of the work of art is clouded by critical images of it whether favorable or unfavorable. Particular works of art, by the depth of their perception, continuously call into question any temporary forms of such of everyday life. The work of art is forced to become an object of analysis. The knowledge so gained causes a deeper understanding of the work itself, of the medium of which it is an exemplification. Any work of art produces its own criticism and this is what great art always is.

With the rationalization of educational methods, the critical attitude is used to inspire the artistic attitude or lead it. As a result, the methodological, technical and procedural basis of the art form begin to overwhelm the art product as means of the presentation of the work of art as a holistic world, thus the work of art begins to transcend itself and becomes an exercise in criticism. Only when criticism transcends art that it places itself in tension with it. This does not imply that criticism does not have positive functions.

The critic at his best can serve as press agent for new techniques, styles, and forms of art. Since it is the terms that he provides, he makes art objects accessible to the act of experiencing. If he can provide more than a new rhetoric for talking about art, he is of value in enlarging the sensibility of the beholders. In this case he provides an act of judgment which compares the art work as technique with the conventional laws of the style. This is necessary for serving the function of maintaining standards. Besides the critic may succeed in enlightening the artist as to what he is doing in codifying the rules of art that artists may perfect techniques which they have. It is only when criticism transcends art that it places itself in tension with it. For the mass audience the critic provides the judgments which enable that audience to know whether they have enjoyed the work of art and symbols to express enjoyment which elevates the taste of the audience. But if the critic is a journalist, these functions remain rhetoric for the critical profession for he is forced to tailor his criticism to meet the needs of his readers.

The world of art is an artificial construction of aesthetics different from the natural attitude though parallel to it. Ceremonial art has all the elements of art except that it is highly stylized in forms that limit the choices of the artist in selecting his technique and is used to create effects that are different from the art experience, such the art work may not be considered as having intrinsic interest.

### Theoretical Contemplation

Academic criticism takes the form of matrices in which the critic suggests that if one followed the logical procedure, one can discover the secret of creativity. Such work results only in the criticism and a scholarly commentary on work that has been done, interpreted by others as an organized world. The interpretation of this world is based upon previous experiences of it, our own experiences and those handed down to us by our professors; which in the form knowledge at hand as a scheme of reference, valid in their own right for everyone, at any place, and at any time. Theoretical thought involves the resolution of the individual to suspend his subjective point of view. The theoretician acts within the province of scientific thought, lacking all essentially actual experiences.

But within this modified sphere the life world of all of us continues to subset as reality, the reality of theoretical contemplation. With the shift of the system of relevance from the practical to the theoretical field of all terms referring to action and performance within the world of working, such as plan motive projects change their meaning and receive quotation marks. For this reason, persons reject the scientific attitude as academic for the time wasted in making decisions is greater than the gain to be derived from assessing the efficiency of a host of alternatives, and has to take it for granted, which means in this context as scientifically ascertained, unless he makes explicit why he cannot do so. To this belongs also the rules of procedure, which have stood the test namely, the methods of his science, including the methods of forming constructs in a scientifically sound way. This stock of knowledge is of quite another structure than that is at hand.

In the creative arts, the painting and sculpture is presented to the audience as a final finished product in one moment of time, in which all of the time spent in the creation of the work of art is encapsulate and assumed by the work itself. In certain types of painting, however, such as watercolors, the quality of the medium limits reworking, and therefore requires the painter to complete a finished product on the first try. The creative artist can make as many as he wants, as long as those mistakes do not enter into the final version.

### Systematic Logic

Advanced systematic logic can be used as a technique of criticism to provide a commentary on scientific work to criticize scientific work and to specify rules by which such work in the future is to be done. At this level the commentary and criticism concerning programmatic science would replace the specific logic involved in the detailed work itself. While debate and discussion about the nature of science and scientific enterprise continues unabated, scientists, unaware of these higher levels of debate, continue to make scientific discoveries and solutions despite deficient logic, unsystematic procedures, and even ignorance of the rules by which they are said to operate. Thus, a series of substantives refer to the fact that they may address themselves descriptively to statements about the world, about experiences or about events in the world. In this sense, the empirical world loses its relevance, such analysis is a form of criticism. Thus there is a fundamental tension between philosophies as a science of logical reductions and philosophy as a means of interpreting experience of the world.

Philosophers were aware that the attempt of the individual to know the world altered the world that was to be known, that the observer of the world was himself determined by the world that he attempted to know, and that the concept that he used to know the world were themselves particularistic concepts which were products of the unique location of the individuals who in a given time and place were attempting to observe the world. Men make assertion about the external world, and attempt to validate their assertion by observing events and experiences presumed as conditions of their assertions. That is, the world could not be known except in terms of the attempt of men to describe it. Thus the logic and methods of science are science itself.

On intuitive grounds, most men not specializing in philosophy or in methodological criticism are not trained to follow its conclusions regardless of where they lead. In this sense it is possible to prove that the world does not exist, that is only an illusion manufactured by subjective men who cannot prove that they exist. If the world could not be known directly and immediately because of the limitations of those who could know the world, then the extent to which the world was knowable could only be defined not as it existed in any essential form, but only to the extent that the methods used to define the world became by their use, the only available definitions of the world.

### Value-Neutrality

In the artistic and scientific attitudes, the effect of the work is to create images of the world. The critical attitude explains how the artist created the works whose methodology is embodied in the work itself without adding any substantive elaboration of the world images that are the inputs to criticism. Criticism is a form of reduction from the work itself into a world of criticism and academicism, which substitutes itself for the work from which it derives its subject matter and its reason for being. At any rate the academic attitude is narrow, technical and geared to teaching students how work is done. In addition, the preoccupation with the methodology and technique leads to attitude of scientific neutrality or detachment from values other than the value of the science itself. In order to analyze scientifically and objectively the work under discussion, it is necessary to suspend consideration of the values of the creation, and to consider the work as logic, technique or method.

Whether academicians, scientists and critics are always able to maintain such objectivity is open to question. Whether they should be open to debate ideologically committed intellectuals within the academic community deplore the value-neutrality of scientists who in their value neutrality do scientific and technical work for immoral

business men and immoral governments because the value neutral scientists do not enquire into the values of their sponsors. At the same time, the moral ideologues take the supremacy of their own values for granted, and the morally superior ideologue may in some circumstances employ esthetically neutral or morally committed scientists to implement his values.

Neither commitment to science nor commitment to higher values by themselves guarantee moral superiority. It is rather the personal values of individual men in their own historical circumstances which allow for the achievement of a moral life. Some will view the arts as an escape from the analysis of reality. Others will discover literary values in the arts, and thus translate these art forms into literary forms. Some will view the arts as an escape from the analysis of reality. Others will discover literary values in the arts, and thus translate this art forms into literary forms. Some will use literary techniques to attack literary values in the defense of nonliterary media.

But the high validation of culture and ideas is more than an ideology used to defend a self-selected way of life. For within the world of ideas and the arts there is an affirmation of ultimate values, ultimate ways of life, and ultimate human potentialities that are achievable by some part of humanity in an ideal society. The definition of what part of humanity is capable of realizing and enjoying these ultimate values as decisive. Value does not mean being free of values, but only means being able to separate the means from the ends in order to analyze the relationship between them. The intellectual creates, presents and disseminates an image of the world that denies or affirms ultimate values. He does so in terms of media that being not technical are immediately perceptible to reasonable intelligent laymen, and include a wide variety of literary, cultural and artistic forms. He not only creates images of values, but disseminates them throughout society.

The current generation is not likely to have favorable images of the past since the past does not convey a favorable image themselves. They consider themselves as ancestors rather than descendants. They construct ideologies which define their new function. Such ideologies define the rewards they hope to achieve by making these contributions which we see around us.