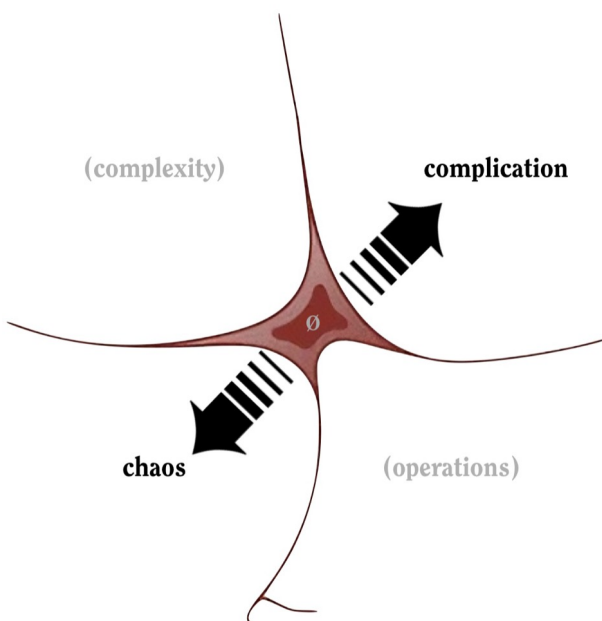


If we think of possibility in terms that are *not* purely virtual—that is governed by the stochastic processes that we can know through probability and statistics—how can we work with possibility in time and space? Obviously, possibility—as a modality—cannot be a category of the present, and we may accordingly lack verbal categories for it. An alternative way of thinking about possibility (the modality of the *meantime*) is that it is a temporal *multiple*. What is meant by a temporal multiple is this: a number of *works-in-progress* (the likes of which we often find in notebooks) that exist in each their own time, without being fully contained by it: and accordingly can be more/less in proximity with each other. A number of them can also be in the past—but incomplete and not brought to conclusion—in which case the adequate verbal tense for them is the *future anterior*. Much of what we understand as order, chaos, complexity, complication and simplicity is in this time zone: the contact zone, or what has been called the meantime (in the sense of asking *what do you do in the meantime?*).

If we compared the *experiment* in artistic- and scientific research, how can we avoid that they evolve into retreat-positions where the difference between them articulates in the form of maximum distance and opposition? Can we imagine a more proximate relationship that still articulates difference? Could we imagine that if they are *not* the same, they are still *similar*. And that, as similar, the difference between them would be *specific*. And that from this difference there could hatch a (unique) way out, that would allow us to move onwards with *other* experiments?

A variety of experiment, according to some, is to know what you want, take what you can and see where the chips fall down. Though relatively common, it could be characterised as ruthless, opportunistic and violent. Follows the question of whether this approach—whenever it is ventured—can be called an experiment, when it is also emptied of all ethics. That is, the sort of ethics that takes stock of where the experiment comes from, with care for establishing its premises, and how it can be called an experiment unless it is followed up, and concluded (i.e., there is a price to pay).

As an example: can we claim that the use of AI is experimental when it is used to establish the premises and draw the conclusion? What is the difference with an experimental setup where AI is a midfield—or, meantime—player, where the premises and conclusions are drawn by whoever is conducting the experiment? Again, here we move from ethics to logic, can we call something an experiment if there are no premises nor conclusions? Without the *ordering* operations the experiment—which is usually complex and stuffy—there are few/no ways to *navigate*.



The reason why the question that we have asked is relevant in design, particularly, is that it constitutes a practice where artistic practices are used for non-artistic purposes. Which means that we define artistic research in *design*—rather than considering artistic research as hedged in a different realm than design—it is bound to move along the border between artistic- and scientific research: scientific research being driven by non-artistic purposes. This is not to blur the distinction but to articulate it in the relation same/similar.

In this specific capacity, design could be in a privileged position, of not having to ask really what opposes it to scientific research and experiment, but to articulate the differences between the two in areas where they are close but not the same. It

could save design from the dialectics of administrative complication that comes with artistic research, and the chaos it correspondingly can bring to the waywardness of experimental process.

That is, the waywardness that experiments—worthy of that name—have in their structural premises, and chaos in what it is surrounded by and comes to be secretly part of its contents. Subscribing to the sense that there are underground connections between top-heavy administrations and anarchy (which can be good if ethical, but from failure of being ethical becomes destructive and undermines the artistic process): a North Prussian bureaucracy of research administration meets the Paris Commune of artists/creators. People I talk to know exactly what this is about.

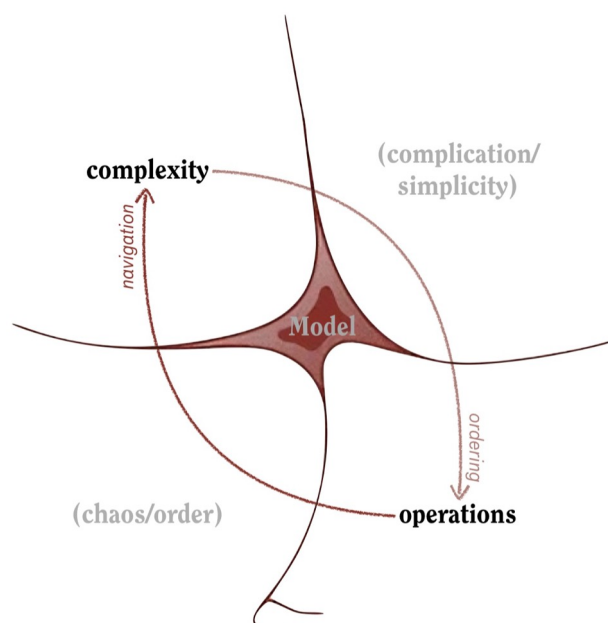
An alternative to this is to develop a better understanding of complexity—patterns that come and go, slip the mind, come back again, though a little bit different this time, etc.—and how certain protocols of learning habits have an *ordering* impact on complexity, up to the point to which it becomes *navigable*. And being content to stop at the point (beyond which Paris and Prussia are conjured anew). It means that efforts of this kind should never be developed to the point where they are defended against intruders/invasers: but instead learn to ride the wave/secure a catch.

In the relation between artistic- and scientific-research this is an imaginable [modus vivendi](#). Which means that it instantiates the possibility of a *deutero experiment*—a secondary level of experiment which devoted to the trail and tracery of artistic- and scientific-research moving and getting along somehow. A level of learning about experimentation which would benefit the artist and the scientist differently. And also providing the materials two work up to a point where a difference that makes a difference emerges from deutero-experimentation: a harvest from a relationship.

Arguably, the scientist is getting less and less of this, the more it is managed as an industrial, rather than educational, effort. Publish and perish can erode the patience with empirical detail. While the half-baked theoretical effort that often comes in its trail—where the premises can be unclear, and instead well referenced, and the conclusions are not that important—in other words a wealth of mediocre research. On the other hand, the artist is left to its ways but discarded because it is not really useful in any way: it stays locked in name, fame and large figures.

So, if we turn to operations in which ordering and navigating complexity, can we hope to see this alternative approach reflected in the alternatives to chaos and complication: that is order and simplicity. Here, *order* and *simplicity* are not sought in and for themselves, but are counterpoints to *chaos* and *complication* with comparative advantage *up to a point*. That is, the point of criticality which—when crossed—hatches new repertoires that prompt new knowledges. So, when we are talking about ‘up to a point’ there are two instances of it in the chart below.

The first instance: the ordering procedures are limited to those that afford navigation. In this



David Snowden's cynefin diagram repurposed for the present usage.

second case, the benefits from simplicity before complication and order before chaos, are more like *bulwarks* than absolute criteria in the premises, nor for the conclusion. Rather, when reaching for simplicity in the conclusion, this because it allows us to prepare for the *next step*, and turn the page. Outside of this simplicity, in the present usage, has no interests. In other words, order amongst the premises and simplicity in the conclusion, is the condition for moving onwards from assumption (on the intrinsic value of order and simplicity) to the *assignment*.

The assignment is here understood what leaves a trail of *signs*: that when intercepted become coded for new assignments. Or, other stages in the proliferation of assignments, that might be what we are calling a *school*. Outside of school there are also assignments, but they originate from people with the required education of moving with models: that is, series without repetition (such as logbooks etc.).