

# THE PARADIGM OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: CULTURAL POLICY IN THE NEOLIBERAL WELFARE STATE

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## ABSTRACT

In this article, Strandberg analyses the development of Swedish cultural policy during the last decades. In contradistinction to the first policy proposition from 1974, which emphasised the importance of counteracting the negative impact of the market, the cultural policies that have been in place for the last twenty to thirty years consider the forces of the market to be conducive to the freedom of culture and the arts. This has entailed a paradigm shift in Swedish culture that has opened up the field of cultural policy for the so-called creative industries, equated culture with creativity, and collapsed the distinction between culture and creative forms of entrepreneurship. When analysing this, Strandberg relates the modern history of Swedish cultural policy to the wider international development that has given rise to the paradigm of the creative industries and discusses how the equation of culture with creativity has made the autonomy of culture and the arts more and more difficult to uphold.

## KEYWORDS

Swedish Cultural Policy, Creativity, Creative Industries, Autonomy, Neoliberalism

The first proposition for a national cultural policy in Sweden was passed by parliament in 1974. One of the main objectives for cultural policy introduced in the proposal reads as follows: “society has an overarching responsibility to promote the versatility and distribution of culture and to lessen or restrain the negative impact that a market economy can entail”.<sup>1</sup> In the proposition this was presented as the “objective of responsibility” and as such it was also present in the official governmental inquiry *New Cultural Policy (Ny kulturpolitik)* by the Swedish Arts Council, which served as the basis for the proposition. The authors of the inquiry write that profitability should not be allowed to influence the creation and distribution of culture, since society simply cannot “rely on the forces of the market in order to create a diverse cultural production and activity that is distributed evenly throughout the country”.<sup>2</sup> In this respect, the “objective of responsibility” is also connected to a number of other objectives that have been central to Swedish cultural policy: the forces of the market must be counteracted so that all Swedish citizens, including those who live in the countryside, can take part in cultural activities, as well as to ensure that the forms of culture actually produced are diverse, of a high quality, and not limited to commercial viability. But the objective also serves the important purpose of upholding and defending the freedom and autonomy of culture and the arts. If the logic of the market is not counteracted the field of culture will no longer be free, but curtailed by demands for profit and market adjustment. For these reasons, the “objective of responsibility” remained central to Swedish cultural policy throughout the twentieth century and can therefore be found in other inquiries, reports, and propositions as well.<sup>3</sup>

However, in the cultural proposition *Time for Culture (Tid för kultur)*, which was introduced in 2009 by the then presiding neo-liberal and conservative coalition, the objective was crossed out on the grounds that there is no “given opposition between commercial strength and artistic quality or freedom”<sup>4</sup>. As a result of this, it was no longer deemed relevant to counteract the negative impact of commercialism. The decision to remove the so called “objective of responsibility” thereby marked a clear shift in the history of Swedish cultural policy and a shift that has led to a number of important changes in Swedish cultural life. Instead of viewing the market as a potential threat to a free and autonomous culture, the supposedly “free” forces of the market are now widely considered to be conducive to the freedom of art. This redefinition of the relation between the market and culture has given rise to a paradigm

shift in cultural policy, which has opened up the field of cultural policy for the so called creative industries, that is, for businesses that are said to have cultural creation or creative processes as their business idea and primary product (marketing, software development, design, etc.).

In the official governmental inquiry that served as the basis for the new proposition, the authors state that “cultural competence and creativity should be used in order to contribute to a social, environmental, and economic development that is sustainable in nature”.<sup>5</sup> This formulation was not accepted as an outright objective in the proposition—probably because of the explicit instrumentalisation of culture that it called for—but is, nonetheless, symptomatic of the linguistic confusion between culture and creativity that permeates large parts of the proposition and which has also been important for its implementation. At first sight, this can appear to be but a minor change since all cultural activity seems to rest on our creative potential as human beings, but if and when culture and creativity merge with each other it is possible to claim that the creative industries are an essential part of culture, and that culture (as it has traditionally been understood) should be conceived as a creative industry among others. The importance of the creative industries for the economic growth and development of society is also stressed throughout the proposition, in which one finds statements such as the following:

Cultural creators are important for the development of the cultural and creative industries. When the conditions for these industries are good they help to broaden the labour market and thereby to increase the possibilities for cultural creators to make a living of their enterprise. At the same time, the cultural and creative industries contribute to the economic growth, the degree of employment, and the competitiveness of the regions and hence to Swedish prosperity at large. Culture contributes to the attraction, development, and economic growth of the regions.<sup>6</sup>

When culture and creativity collapse into one another it is, as the quote above makes manifest, possible to stress that culture, just as the creative industries as a whole, contributes to the economic growth, general development, and attraction of a given region, and that it is important for entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and rate of employment. What is at stake here is clearly not an attempt to counteract “the negative consequences of the market”, but rather

an attempt to *strengthen* the commercial viability of culture. Against this background, it becomes perfectly clear why one would want to stress that there is no “given opposition between commercial strength and artistic quality or freedom”.

The report’s proposal to use cultural competence and creativity as a means for strengthening the social, environmental, and economic development of Sweden was never made into an explicit policy objective by the government, but the formulation would nonetheless live on in Swedish cultural policy. This becomes apparent when one turns to how the national objectives for cultural policy have been reinterpreted and implemented on a regional and municipal level.<sup>7</sup> In the so called “position paper” on cultural policy, which the Association of Local Authorities and Regions (ALAR) passed in 2008, and later revised in 2014, the future direction of cultural policy on a regional and municipal level is mapped out and presented. Already on the first page of the document, the authors make clear that “culture is an important dimension of society’s long-term sustainability—socially, economically, and environmentally”; a formulation that only seems to be a slightly amended version of the rejected proposal in the inquiry.<sup>8</sup> What is more, they also stress that the field of culture is important economically since “culture and the creative industries facilitate local and regional employment, development, and growth”.<sup>9</sup> Thereafter, they repeatedly emphasise how important culture is for the growth and attraction of municipalities and regions: “Cultural life and cultural milieu play important roles in making municipalities and regions into places that one longs for, wants to live in, work in and visit”; “Culture and creativity contribute to potential innovations within other lines of business”; “Businesses within the fields of culture and creativity also contribute to making places attractive for other businesses to establish themselves in”, etc.<sup>10</sup> Finally, they note that the distinction between “cultural policy in its own right” and “an instrumentalised cultural policy” in which culture serves external purposes (“often”, they add, “it concerns the promotion of economic growth”) is in part “a constructed opposition since all cultural policy is instrumental in one way or another”.<sup>11</sup> The fact that the very idea of cultural policy, with its delimited objectives and aspirations, implies that publicly funded culture is never completely free from political influence, is thus reinterpreted as an implicit sanction for an economic instrumentalisation of culture and the arts.<sup>12</sup>

This “positional paper” by ALAR presents the ways in which national policy initiatives should be implemented on a municipal

and regional level. The economic instrumentalisation of culture, which is both called for and justified in the document, has also been implemented to a large degree. At least, this is what the latest report from the Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis (ACPA), entitled *This Is How Free Art Is: The Effects of Cultural Policy Governance on the Freedom of Art* (*Så fri är konsten: Den kulturpolitiska styrningens påverkan på den konstnärliga friheten*), shows in great detail. In the report, published in June 2021, the agency analyses the freedom of culture and art in Sweden on both a national and a municipal/regional level. To begin with, they observe instances on a national level that seem to have deviated from the so called arm's length principle.<sup>13</sup> In this context, the critique from the ACPA is levelled at certain formulations in application forms, in which the applicants are asked if, and if so how, questions concerning gender, LGBTQ-rights, and diversity will be actualised in their project. Formulations such as these might be considered problematical in nature since they could be interpreted as a politicisation of the application process. However, the evidence that the report provides to support the claim that this constitutes an illicit politicisation of culture is unconvincing.<sup>14</sup> In fact, it becomes patently clear from the report itself that the problems are much greater on a municipal and regional level—even though this has not received sufficient attention in the ensuing debates after the report had been published.

To begin with, the authors note that the arm's length principle is difficult to uphold on a municipal and regional level since the political structure is different than on the national level and because the economic means necessary for the use of independent experts and committees are often missing. They also note that the cultural policies on a regional level in part issue “from an instrumental approach in which culture is made use of as a catalyst for the region's aspirations within other policy fields”.<sup>15</sup> The examples to which they draw attention confirm this view. The city of Östersund in the north-western parts of Sweden state that their grants for cultural events “should strengthen the attraction of Östersund, possibly contribute to economic effects connected to tourism, such as commercial hotel nights, increased commerce, and restaurant visits”. In Östra Göinge, a small city in the south of Sweden, a basic criterion for grants is “that the event includes a good exposure of Östra Göinge as a brand”.<sup>16</sup> The same kind of formulations recur on a regional level. The region of Jönköping declares that a criterium for funding is “how the project contributes to regional growth, to strengthening the attraction of the

county and to a varied selection of culture with a high quality” and in the region of Skåne initiatives in cultural policy should “pay attention to the brand of ‘Skåne’ so that the overarching aim of strengthening the marketing of Skåne is met”.<sup>17</sup> The image that emerges when reading the “position paper”, which was quoted earlier, is thus confirmed by the report from the ACPA. In the report, the authors also add that many of the formulations and criteria that recur on a municipal and regional level are problematical in nature, since they amount to a political steering of culture that is in direct conflict with the arm’s length principle. In the form of a rhetorical question, they therefore conclude by writing: “Are we certain that cultural practitioners will be able to freely depict the development, political rule or local industry of a region in a play or a movie production at the same time as they are expected to meet these demands of attractivity?”<sup>18</sup>

In Sweden, this development has in part been made possible by the decentralisation of cultural policy that came into effect with the so called Model for Cultural Collaboration (*Kultursamverkansmodellen*) that was launched in 2011 and which has meant that municipalities and regions distribute large parts of the public budget for culture. Since municipalities and regions often lack the resources needed for independent experts and committees, the interests of the specific city or region (and then, more often than not, their economic interests) have been prioritised over the national policy objectives and the artistic quality of the proposed projects. In this respect, Swedish cultural policy differs from that in other, comparable, countries, but these differences should not be over-exaggerated. In fact, with its focus on growth, the power of attraction, and creativity, Swedish cultural policy is clearly in keeping with the prevailing notion that the field of culture should ultimately be understood as a source of revenue, i.e., as a “creative industry” among others. When attempting to come to terms with the development of cultural policy in Sweden it is therefore necessary to relate it to the wider international development that has given rise to the paradigm of the creative industries.

#### THE PARADIGM OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Even if the prehistory of the creative industries stretches back to the beginning of the 1970s when the economic potential of culture was first being recognised on a political level, it is only towards the end of the 1990s that the concept is coined. The concept emerges in Britain and is introduced by Tony Blair’s government as an attempt to breathe fresh life into the British economy with

the help of an extensive PR-campaign, in which the Labour Party and Great Britain as a whole is portrayed as something new, modern, and forward-looking. By emphasising the success of British popular culture and creativity, a reborn Labour Party, the so-called New Labour Party, would transform the country into “Cool Britannia”.<sup>19</sup> In pursuing this initiative, the British government was inspired by Australia’s cultural policy *Creative Nation* from 1994, in which the economic potential of art and culture had been charted in great detail.<sup>20</sup> Blair’s government was impressed by the Australian proposition and in 1998 it published the *Creative Industries—Mapping Document*, which listed the economic contribution of the British cultural sector. In both the Australian and the British context, the concept of culture is understood quite broadly and encompasses what we normally identify as culture in the aesthetic sense of the term (music, theatre, movies, literature, the visual arts, architecture, etc.), but also activities such as marketing, design, and software development.

What unites such seemingly disparate things as literature and software development is that they are all supposed to rest upon man’s inherent creativity, regardless of how this creativity is expressed.<sup>21</sup> As such, literature and music, as well as software development and marketing, are considered to be creative industries: they rest upon the creativity of man and make use of this creativity in order to generate revenue. Since the term “creative industries” is thereby used as an umbrella term that encompasses a number of different, and seemingly incompatible, sectors of society, some have pointed out that it seems to function as an “empty signifier”, i.e., as a concept that lacks a clear reference or meaning and which can therefore be used to designate almost anything.<sup>22</sup> This lack of meaning is only aggravated when the term is associated—as has been the case in Britain—with terms such as “modernity” or “future”, which are just as vague. But if we for the moment disregard the inherent vagueness of the term and instead turn our attention to how the concept functions, it becomes clear that it serves the purpose of instrumentalising culture in economic terms: an instrumentalisation that takes place by and through a gradual redefinition of culture as a form of creativity. Once this step has been taken, there is simply nothing that differentiates art and culture from the creative industries at large. The concept of culture has, in other words, become extended to such a degree that culture and the arts cease to be different from other creative fields. When no clear difference can be registered any longer, there is simply nothing that precludes us from reducing culture to crude economic potential.

All of this is evident in *Creative Industries—Mapping Document* where the creative industries are defined as “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property” and that have “close economic relationships with sectors such as tourism, hospitality, museums and galleries, heritage and sport”.<sup>23</sup>

While the British Labour government coined the notion, and also used the rhetoric and discourse of creativity in order to transform British cultural policy, the theoretical foundation for the continued discussion about the creative industries is to be found in the work of Richard Florida—even if Florida has a somewhat different focus. What interests Florida is not the development of cultural policies *per se*, but the emergence of what he calls the “creative class”. In *The Rise of the Creative Class* from 2002, Florida analyses the appearance of this new social class in western society by drawing attention to the fact that it has brought with it a new form of work, which revolves around what Florida calls the creation of “meaningful new forms”. As many critics have noted, this creative class includes a very heterogeneous array of professions: artists, academics, and intellectuals (which, according to Florida, make up the “*Super Creative Core*” of the creative class), as well as journalists, scientists, jurists, PR-consultants, librarians, engineers and programmers. What these professions have in common is precisely that they are all considered to be creative and that they create “meaningful new forms”, and even though we normally tend to differentiate between the aesthetic creativity of the artist and, say, the economic creativity of the entrepreneur, they are, according to Florida, ultimately interrelated, if not identical with one another:

The varied forms of creativity that we typically regard as different from one another—technological creativity (or invention), economic creativity (entrepreneurship), and artistic and cultural creativity, among others—are in fact deeply interrelated. Not only do they share a common thought process, they reinforce each other through cross-fertilization and mutual stimulation.<sup>24</sup>

Hence, the creative class differs from the working class and from professions within the service sector. These groups can certainly be creative at their workplaces as well, but, in contradistinction to the creative class, their work does not primarily rest upon their creative capacities.



Today, creativity is the propelling force of the economy according to Florida and not production. It is, to use another highly contested term, immaterial, rather than material, labour which is the wellspring of value and material wealth.<sup>25</sup> But the creative class also carries with it specific cultural and moral values: it is characterised by values such as individualism, meritocracy, diversity and openness and because of these values the members of the creative class will seek out one another and form creative clusters. However, Florida's argument is not only descriptive in nature, but also carries with it prescriptive claims. Since the creative class is characterised by almost all of the progressive values that Florida can imagine—it is tolerant, open-minded, well-educated, etc.—it also harbors the utopian promise of another, more creative and progressive society. Hence, “the essential task before us” is, Florida writes, “to unleash the creative energies, talent, and potential of everyone—to build a society that acknowledges and nurtures the creativity of each and every human being”.<sup>26</sup>

Since the book was published it has been met with severe criticism.<sup>27</sup> Since the creative class encompasses so many distinct professions critics have argued that it is an empty concept. The same critique can also be levelled at Florida's understanding of creativity. Since it is used to designate so many different forms it becomes more or less vacuous in nature. Just as the creative industries, the concept of creativity itself seems to function as an empty signifier.<sup>28</sup> What is more, the emergence of the creative class is, to a large extent, predicated on the relocation of industrial production to the global south. In this sense, industrial production has not disappeared, and in contradistinction to what Florida claims, it is still important for the global (including the western) economy. Industrial production has not disappeared. Rather, it has only been displaced from the west, and given that industrial production is the basis for large parts of the material prosperity that the creative class revels in, it is difficult to imagine how the “creative economy”, and the utopian aspects that it promises, could be anything but a tiresome continuation of the dystopian exploitation that characterises the global economy (slave labour in the global south and precarious forms of employment in the north). It is therefore possible to claim that Florida is *de facto* describing a development that has taken place in the west, namely that ever larger segments of the population are working in post-industrial professions, but that he uncritically accepts and conceals the horrific consequences to which this development has given rise globally. Instead of a concrete analysis of the effects of globalisation,

what we get is, as one reviewer laconically noted, an “engaging account of the lifestyle preferences of yuppies”.<sup>29</sup>

To be clear, Florida is not interested in issues concerning cultural policy, but in economic tendencies. This notwithstanding, his theories have had a significant impact in the field of cultural policy as well.<sup>30</sup> In part, this is due to Florida’s prescriptive claims. The main aim of his theory is not to provide a descriptive account of a specific social and economic development, but to help create creative clusters that can strengthen the power of attraction of a city or a region so that its economic growth and potential can be increased. This is formulated as an explicit objective in his book, but in parallel with his research Florida also runs a consulting firm that provides services that can help a specific place to further its creative potential. In this respect, Florida’s theory has served as an important theoretical and practical foundation for the discourse of the creative industries and has also affected the field of cultural policy, in which formulations concerning the economic gains of creativity have become legion.

#### CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

If, for the moment, we disregard the apparent instrumentalisation of culture that the paradigm of the creative industries has engendered—a form of instrumentalisation that, to speak plainly, ultimately serves the purpose of gentrifying specific places—we need to ask ourselves: why is the confusion of culture and creativity so problematic? In order to address this issue, one needs to be conscious of the rhetorical strategy adopted that has given rise to the confusion. The advocates of the creative industries will of course never come out and say that they call for a gentrification of different places and an economic instrumentalisation of culture in the service of this gentrification. Instead, they emphasise the positive and progressive connotations of creativity. For who would want to be opposed to creativity? At the end of the day, it is an inherently positive term; it is, as New Labour phrased it, something progressive, modern, and desirable. What is more, people often insist on the process of democratisation that the extension of the field of culture would imply. If and when the field of culture is expanded so that it includes other creative expressions, it is possible to claim that the narrow, and traditionally elitist, framework of culture is opened up for all people—after all, creativity is a universal faculty. In all of this, one can recognise a linguistic strategy that is present in other spheres of society as well, and which is characteristic of the hegemonic order of neoliberalism: precarious

working conditions are praised as a form of flexibility, while the privatisation of welfare services contributes to the efficiency of the public sector, and where the freedom of choice of the consumer is conflated with freedom as such.

In the important writings of Stuart Hall on the afterlife of Thatcherism within the Labour party, Hall called this process a form of “linguistic slippage”: by gradually redefining central words and concepts so that they were given a completely different meaning, New-Labour could appeal to broader parts of the electorate than before.<sup>31</sup> A similar tendency is also at play in cultural policy today since everyone, regardless of political colour, are expected to sign off on the universal potential and democratising nature of the concept of creativity. As Hall himself does, we could also draw on Gramscian categories in order to address this, and speak of it in terms of a construction of a new “common sense”, i.e., as the construction of a naturalised understanding of culture *as* creativity that make people forget the arbitrary, contested, and constructed nature of the concept—with the result that it becomes precisely an understanding held in common.

This naturalised form of “slippage” from culture to creativity has made culture inseparable from “other” creative industries, but it has also meant that the specificity of art, i.e. its autonomy, has become increasingly untenable to uphold. As Justin O’Connor has noted, the autonomy of art has today been transformed into a part “of the symbolic meaning making capacity of all individuals”.<sup>32</sup> When art is understood to be equivalent to creativity, it becomes something universally human and hence it is possible to advance the claim that creativity is part and parcel of a process of democratisation.

At first sight, it is easy to concur with the idea that all people are creative. In fact, one could make the argument that human beings are creative by their very nature and that it is our creativity that sets us apart from other animals. Other species build, create, and produce as well, but it is only man that uses his imagination and fantasy, in short his creativity, to realise what he has planned. If we start out from this anthropological model, we also have to recognise that human creativity manifests itself in far more professions than the ones that have traditionally been associated with the cultural sphere. In this sense, Florida’s enumeration of all the professions that make up the creative class is justified. The problem arises when this anthropological model is used in order to equate all forms of creativity with each other. This problem becomes especially apparent when artistic creativity is equated

with other forms. In order to address this issue, one can, as Jim McGuigan has suggested, stress that artistic or cultural creativity is a specific form of creativity “in that it is first and foremost about communicating meaning”.<sup>33</sup> Other forms of creativity can certainly communicate meaning as well, but in these instances meaning is often subordinated to other purposes, such as the creation of profit. To take just one example: a PR-consultant creates meaningful forms and communicates them to the public, but then in order to market a commodity or service in the most profitable way. Inversely, it is of course clear that art can be profitable as well. In such cases, one must therefore stress that the creation of meaning is the primary purpose of artistic creation—at least when we are talking about art in the strict sense and not about entertainment.

However, it is precisely at this point that the explanatory model that McGuigan advances proves to be insufficient. Since all forms of creativity arguably give rise to and communicate meaning, and since all forms of creativity (art included) arguably can give rise to profitable forms of meaning, the difference between cultural creations and other forms of creativity would only be a matter of degree and culture and creativity would therefore still be confused with one another. The concept of meaning will simply not suffice in this context since it is too vague. Instead, what is needed is an understanding of how the *aesthetic meaning* of the artwork differs from meaning in general, and in order to understand this form of meaning we need to start out from an analysis of the autonomy of art, that is, from that which the discourse on creativity obfuscates and covers over.

#### THE AUTONOMY OF ART

Throughout its modern history, Swedish cultural policy has been defined in relation to the ideal of freedom. The main objective of policy initiatives has been to safeguard the freedom of art and culture from external influences and from meddling politicians. It is also for this reason that the arm’s length principle between politics and culture was originally introduced. This conception of the freedom of art can, in turn, be traced to the aesthetical and philosophical understanding of the autonomy of art. Art should, in keeping with the etymology of the term autonomy, be self-legislating; its laws and principles should ideally be legislated by art itself and not by external (which is to say, heteronomous) forces.<sup>34</sup> Traditionally, this form of autonomy has often been understood in relation to the conception of genius we find in German romanticism, and to the liberal conception of individual freedom on

which the idea of geniality is predicated. In this respect, the autonomy of art has often been understood in relation to the freedom of the artist: the artist is considered to be a free individual who, on the basis of his or her inherent freedom, can create great art, on account that his or her freedom is not curtailed or limited by external forces. Even though this conception of autonomy abides, and even though in many cases it still functions as the intuitive model for our understanding of the freedom of art, it is ultimately nothing but an ideological myth. The artist is never completely free, but is always already determined by his or her time and by the aesthetic, social, economic and political conditions of a given age. There is in other words no such thing as an absolutely autonomous art, but art is always interspersed by heteronomous elements, which, to varying degrees, affect both the form and the content of a given artwork. This does not mean, however, that the autonomy of art must be rejected or abandoned, but only that the relationship between autonomy and heteronomy must be considered anew and in other terms.

As is well known, this is precisely what Theodor Adorno sets out to do in his aesthetic theory. When analysing the relationship between autonomy and heteronomy, Adorno starts out from what he calls the “dual nature” of the artwork, i.e., from the fact that art is both autonomous and heteronomous.<sup>35</sup> For Adorno, this dual character implies that the artwork cannot escape its heteronomous determinations. If the artist attempts to achieve absolute autonomy, the artwork will simply shut itself off from society and thereby appear to be reactionary in nature. Any such attempt is, moreover, futile in nature. When an artist attempts to shield him- or herself from heteronomous determinations, they will simply reappear in an unmediated and unreflected form in the artwork. In this respect, the aspiration for absolute autonomy will, paradoxically, result in an even more intensified manifestation of heteronomy. If the artist on the contrary abandons the aspiration for autonomy altogether—on the grounds that art is an indelible part of society and as such cannot be abstracted from it—for example by taking an explicit stance in a political issue by and through his or her art, the resulting work of art runs the risk of being reduced to propaganda and its artistic qualities will disappear.<sup>36</sup> The dichotomy between autonomy and heteronomy is, however, false according to Adorno, “because it presents the two dynamically related elements as simple alternatives”, whereas they must in fact be understood to be in a dialectical, and hence constitutive, relation to each other.<sup>37</sup>

According to Adorno, there is one heteronomous determination that has proven to be more constitutive for the autonomy of art than others, namely the commodity form. For a long period of time, art was determined by its constitutive relationship to the church and the royal court. When art, from the late renaissance and onwards, gradually started to liberate itself from this state of dependence it became autonomous in the modern sense of the word. However, art was not set free in an absolute sense. Instead, its newfound autonomy was played out on the market and in relation to the emergent public sphere. In this sense, the autonomy of art came at a price: it was only by becoming a commodity that it was set free from its earlier dependencies.<sup>38</sup> This certainly does not mean that all art is completely commodified during modernity (broadly construed), but it does mean that art throughout this period has been forced to continuously wrestle with this constitutive form of heteronomy in order not to be reduced to a mere commodity bereft of artistic quality.

Against this background, it becomes clear that the artist simply cannot escape the heteronomous determinations of art, just as he or she cannot recant on the autonomy of art, but must instead seek to include the social, economic, and political determinations into the artwork so that the tension between autonomy and heteronomy is preserved. For this to be possible the heteronomous elements must be incorporated into the artwork, however, not only in order to make them visible, but with the purpose of criticising and, finally, negating them. If an individual artwork manages to restrain these contradictions; if it gives the impression of having negated the heteronomous elements, it will appear to be autonomous. The work of art can thereby give rise to the semblance of self-determination, that is, to the illusion that it is possible to understand and interpret on its own terms without recourse to external purposes. But this also means that the autonomy of the artwork is only illusory in nature: despite being the result of heteronomous determinations it gives rise to the semblance of autonomy and self-determination since it manages to incorporate its own heteronomous outside in a way which simultaneously undermines it. The autonomy of art, then, is merely illusory. One way of understanding this illusory nature would be to say, following Nicholas Brown, that the autonomy of art only exists if and when it is asserted, if and when the observer, through his or her interpretation of the artwork, reaches the conclusion that it can be judged on its own terms and thereby asserts that it is autonomous.<sup>39</sup>

The autonomy of art thus follows a specific aesthetic logic, which, at least if we accept Adorno's way of reasoning, must be understood from out of this dialectical contradiction between autonomy and heteronomy. This logic produces a specific form of meaning; the artwork communicates, to speak with McGuigan, meaning to the observer, listener or reader. However, it gives rise to a form of meaning ultimately different from other forms. Art follows its own logic and a logic that not only calls for interpretation, but one in need of an interpretation in order to be meaningful. In contradistinction to other forms of meaning, such as the "meaning" manifested in marketing, an authentic work of art is never unambiguous or transparent, but requires an active interpretation—precisely the kind of interpretation that can give rise to an assertion of autonomy. If art is confused with creativity in general, if it, as O'Connor puts it, "becomes part of the symbolic meaning making capacity of all individuals" the autonomy of art disappears, and art becomes just as one-dimensional and vacuous as all the advertisement with which we are confronted wherever we turn.

Regardless of what Florida and his acolytes claim, art is not a form of creativity among others. It is different from the creativity of the engineer, entrepreneur, and librarian. However, not because it constitutes a "higher" or more important form of creativity, but because it follows its own peculiar logic. This aesthetic logic is also fundamental when it comes to art's capacity to criticise, problematise, and question naturalised norms and truths in a given society—the importance of which is often highlighted in propositions and statements within cultural policy. Since art has the capacity to incorporate social and economic determinations in order to transform, criticise, and negate them, art is also a form of resistance, even a negation of society as such—a form of critical negation that Herbert Marcuse once called the "Great Refusal" of art.<sup>40</sup> Art criticises society, as Adorno puts it, "by its very existence" since, by way of its negating force and the "otherness" to which this negativity gives rise, it prefigures the freedom, autonomy, and self-determination we are denied in our lived experience.<sup>41</sup> But the artwork can only do this on the basis of its own logic, which means that the critical potential of art does not reside in its content, but in the way in which the content is transformed and mediated by the formal structures of the artwork. In order to explain what is at stake here, we can turn to an example that Adorno deploys, namely Kafka's novels. Kafka, Adorno writes, "in whose work monopoly capitalism appears only distantly, codifies in the dregs of the administered world what becomes of people

under the total social spell more faithfully and powerfully than do any novels about corrupt industrial trusts".<sup>42</sup> Despite the fact that Kafka never addresses the issue of capitalism directly in his work, his critique is unmistakable. However, his critique does not manifest itself in the plot or content of his novels, but in their language and style (their form), which in a sober and factual way reproduce the reification that characterises the administered world of capitalist society.

This then brings us to another difference between the meaning of art and other forms of meaning. Whereas dry academic texts (such as this one) can certainly be critical and constitute a form of resistance, they rarely, if ever, give rise to the feeling of radical otherness that we encounter in art—a sense of otherness that relativises the predominant state of affairs at the same time as it, albeit only for brief moments of time, lets us catch sight of the barely perceptible contours of another future.

#### ART AND CAPITAL

Since art can never separate itself from society, autonomy is never something simply given. Instead, the autonomy of art must always be asserted in relation to its heteronomous determinations. Given that these determinations constantly change, the very field in which the autonomy of art is played out changes as well. The autonomy of art is, Adorno writes, not “a sphere that has been secured once and for all”, but “its closure is achieved only in an intermittent and fragile balance”; the autonomy of art is not a static pole, but a dynamic field that is historically mediated.<sup>43</sup> When attempting to come to terms with the autonomy of art one must therefore understand it in relation to the present political conjunction and the contradictions and antagonisms that have shaped, and continue to shape, our time.

Many of these conflicts can be traced back to the beginning of the 1970s when the neoliberal counter-offensive to the rebellions and emancipatory struggles of the 1960s first emerged. As Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello have shown in *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, this counter-offensive took the form of a successful appropriation and transformation of the critique that was being directed against the capitalist system during the 1960s. This critique took two different forms. First of all, the worker’s movement and the unions formulated a “social critique” that targeted the poverty and exploitation to which a capitalist economy gives rise. Secondly, various forms of “artistic critique” were being voiced, which were centred around demands for greater freedom, autonomy, and



authenticity in the workplace and in society at large.<sup>44</sup> Towards the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, these two forms of critique gained ground and were considered to be such a threat to the capitalist economy that it was forced to incorporate parts of the critique in order to survive. The social critique could not be appropriated, at least not as such, since this would entail a transformation of the capitalist mode of production, but the artistic critique could be incorporated and neutralised by the “new spirit” of capitalism. To be clear, the artistic critique was not incorporated as such. Rather, what took place was a reinterpretation of the concepts that the critique had raised (e.g. freedom, autonomy, authenticity); a reinterpretation that made it possible to understand them in a way that covered over the conflicts and contradictions, which the critique had initially targeted. The autonomy and freedom that people were demanding was reinterpreted into supposedly free forms of work (first and foremost short-term contracts) and to higher degrees of self-determination and creativity in the workplace. In this way, parts of the ‘68-movement could seamlessly go from protesting in the streets to working in the newly designed offices of Silicon Valley.<sup>45</sup>

However, neoliberalism did not only bring with it new and more “flexible” forms of employment, but also changes in the valourising processes of capital. This can be indexed in a number of different ways, but one of the clearest changes has concerned the commodity form. Since the autonomous artwork is indelibly tied to the commodity form, the autonomy of art must be understood in relation to the ways in which commodity production has been transformed during late modernity. One of the most important of these transformations concerns the cultural and aesthetic content of a commodity; a content that has become increasingly more important during recent decades. Today, a commodity is not only produced to meet a certain material need, but should also appeal to and reinforce the identity, life-style, and social status of the consumer. In order to analyse this development, the German philosopher Gernot Böhme has coined the term “aesthetic capitalism”. According to Böhme, we no longer buy products in order to satisfy basic, or more advanced, needs, but in order to satisfy aesthetic needs and to stage ourselves (*Selbstinszenierung*) through aestheticising and identity creating processes.<sup>46</sup>

Thus, consumer goods are not meant to meet and satisfy “natural” needs, but are culturally mediated; their purpose is not to preserve our lives, but to market them. In his early writings, Jean Baudrillard therefore noted that consumption has been transformed

into an economy of signs. Consumption no longer revolves around the appropriation of commodities, but around the appropriation of signs, which in various ways reflect and consolidate our social standing. Today, Baudrillard writes, “consumption—if this term has a meaning other than that given it by vulgar economics—defines precisely *the stage where the commodity is immediately produced as a sign, as a sign value, and where signs (culture) are produced as commodities*”.<sup>47</sup> Hence, the value of a commodity is not only determined by the cost of production, but also by the sign value that it contains—by all of the cultural codes and markers that the commodity communicates to us, but which it first and foremost communicates to others. A washing machine serves, Baudrillard notes, “as an appliance and *acts* as an element of prestige, comfort, etc” and, strictly speaking, it is “this latter field which is the field of consumption”.<sup>48</sup> In this respect, the desire for a specific object is only the transposed desire to produce a social code of value that is ascribed to the object in question. Since consumption no longer responds to real needs, but to a social logic of desire, the washing machine is replaceable with all of the objects that have the same sign value and which communicate the same kind of content. Consumer goods thereby function as a mass medium or language, even as the most important “language” in the social logic of contemporary society: by way of their sign value they express abstract social relations and their hierarchical ordering, which they also help to cement and uphold (to own a washing machine in the beginning of the 1970s when Baudrillard wrote these texts would for example have been an expression of high social standing). Even if these signs do not satisfy any natural need, and even if they thereby are unnecessary for our biological existence, they are necessary for our social life. If we fail to meet the lowest level of acceptable consumption we are deprived of our social status and relegated to a form of social non-existence: he who owns no property in the modern world is dispossessed of properties as well.

The signs in this economy are aesthetical in nature, and what was previously designated with concepts such as beauty and aesthetics have today been reduced to nothing but communication and an exchange of signs. Thus, the cultural and aesthetic value of a product is indispensable for this sign economy to function since it is the design of a product, and the cultural values with which it is associated, that make possible the social stratification we look for in our consumption—a stratification and diversification that is lauded as freedom of choice and individualism, but which in the end is nothing but a differentiated homogenisation (we are all

unique individuals and identify with distinct subcultures, but are in essence only standardised consumers).<sup>49</sup> According to Baudrillard, consumption has thereby become a new form a magic. We keep telling ourselves that consumer goods carry with them a magical value of sorts (a modern form of the Polynesian conception of *mana*) that will immediately transform our identity as soon as they have become ours, something which is also confirmed by the social logic that determines our daily life. Instead of accumulating material wealth, we therefore accumulate “signs of happiness” and instead of consuming objects, we consume advertisement and marketing—what we consume is, one might say, consumption as such.<sup>50</sup>

Art and culture are thus nothing that exist on the fringes of the valorisation processes of capital, but are both inscribed in the very heart of capitalism, that is, in the commodity form. The cultural values with which a certain commodity is associated is not an accidental property that merely attaches itself to its use and exchange value, but something which affects both our use of the object and its exchange. In short, culture is profitable. Not only because cultural creations can be sold just like any other commodity, but because they actively contribute to the value of other commodities as well. The cultural substance is consumed, Baudrillard writes, “in so far as its content does not sustain an autonomous practice, but a rhetoric of social mobility, and in so far as it meets a demand which has *something other than culture* as its object or, rather, seeks culture only as a *coded element of social status*”.<sup>51</sup>

The result of this development is that the cultural field—the borders of which are upheld by the asserted autonomy of art and culture—is being broken up and fragmented. Baudrillard understands this in relation to the logic of the sign that determines the development of consumer society, but it is also something that has been analysed in relation to how the status of art has changed during late modernity. This is something that Fredric Jameson focuses on when he writes:

the sphere of culture has expanded, becoming coterminous with market society in such a way that the cultural is no longer limited to its earlier, traditional or experimental forms, but is consumed throughout daily life itself, in shopping, in professional activities, in the various often televisual forms of leisure, in production for the market and in the consumption of those market products, indeed in the most secret folds and corners of the quotidian. Social space is now completely saturated with the culture of the image.<sup>52</sup>

When everything has been aestheticised, when the borders between culture, art, aesthetics and capital have all been dissolved, it is also possible for someone like Florida to claim that all forms of creativity are identical. In this respect, the paradigm of the creative industries has been made possible by the neoliberal restructuring of society during the last decades.

For Jameson, this development is symptomatic of postmodernism. In our postmodern times everything has been aestheticised to such a degree that the aesthetic logic of art is no longer valid. While it is true that we are confronted with art, culture, and aesthetic phenomena wherever we turn, these experiences no longer affect us; we no longer *experience* beauty, but merely register it passively as a given part of our surroundings. On a more conceptual level this means that we still encounter aesthetic beauty in our daily lives, but that the sublime dimension of art escapes us.<sup>53</sup> We are no longer shaken by aesthetic phenomena; they do not contain any feelings of otherness any more, if anything they only serve as a reinforcement of the status quo.

At the same time, it is clear that this form of critique runs the risk of becoming too totalising and sweeping. Jameson will, for instance, go so far as to say that the autonomy of art has disappeared completely with the onset of postmodernism and that it was only valid for modernist art, which also implies that no authentic art has been created since the first half of the 1970s. Such a position is ultimately defeatist in nature and is neither acceptable *de jure* nor valid *de facto*. Despite the fact that neoliberal policies have colonised ever larger sections of the cultural sphere, people still create art that can uphold the semblance of autonomy and that constitute distinct worlds of otherness and resistance. The diagnosis that we find in Jameson's work must therefore be inverted. The autonomy of art has not disappeared, on the contrary it has never been more important to assert it than today when the freedom and self-determination of art and culture is constantly being colonised by the forces of the market.

However, this does not mean that the critique of the aestheticisation of the commodity form is misguided. On the contrary, this kind of aestheticisation has been intensified during the last decades in a way which suggests that this critique has perhaps never been as crucial as it is today. In this sense, both the analyses of Böhme and Baudrillard surrounding the aesthetic desire at play in consumption speak to our daily experience: we do not buy products in order to satisfy "natural needs", but in order to strengthen our social identity and our personal brand. If we want to understand

the equation of culture with creativity upon which large parts of contemporary cultural policy rest, the critical analyses of the cultural values of the commodity form therefore remain necessary. When this “commodity aesthetic” extends throughout society the distinction between a work of art and other commodities certainly becomes increasingly more untenable, to the point that many consider it to be impossible and therefore opt for a more defeatist stance. Therefore, it is important to stress that what is difficult is not by necessity impossible, and to continue to insist that there are essential differences between an aestheticised commodity and an artwork, just as there are essential differences between culture and creativity. That being said, it is obvious that it has become more difficult for art to sustain the illusion of autonomy in a market economy that is saturated by aesthetics. Unfortunately, the current cultural policies in Sweden tend in the opposite direction: instead of counteracting the heteronomies of the market, they facilitate them.



It is against the background of this development that it is important to defend the progressive values of cultural policies. When cultural politics uncritically embrace neoliberalism and actively support the creative industries at the expense of culture and art, it undermines the autonomy of art in a time when it is beset by market forces in a way which has no historical precedent. With its praise of the economically beneficial effects of the creative industries, cultural policy is no longer a support for, but a limitation of, the freedom of culture and art: in the name of freedom and autonomy cultural policies support the heteronomous determination, which more than any other curtails the field of culture today.

All of this stands to be found in the report *This Is How Free Art Is*, even if the ensuing debate about the report has almost exclusively focused on minor formulations in application forms.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps, this is because the paradigm of the creative industries and its discourse on creativity has become such a commonsensical and naturalised part of our society that no one takes note of it any longer.

- 1 Proposition 1974: 28. *Den statliga kulturpolitiken*, p. 28.
- 2 SOU 1972: 67. *Ny kulturpolitik – sammanfattning*, p. 29.
- 3 It is, for instance, still present in the second cultural proposition from 1996 that consolidates, rather than changes, the policy objectives that were first formulated in the 1970s. Though, it should be noted that the proposition from 1996 reformulates the objective slightly so that it is understood, not in relation to “the negative effects of the market”, but in relation to “the negative consequences of commercialism”. Needless to say, this reformulation did not affect the essence of the objective that remained in place. See: Proposition, *Kulturpolitik*, Stockholm, 1996/97:3, p. 27.
- 4 Proposition, *Tid för kultur*, 2009/10:3, p. 28.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid., p. 72–73.
- 7 This has also been noted by others, see: Jenny Johansson, “Kulturpolitisk styrning och kulturpolitiska reformer i Sverige”, *Kulturanalys Norden, Kulturpolitisk styrning i Norden*, Stockholm, 2018, p. 73.
- 8 Sveriges kommuner och landsting, *Kulturpolitiskt positionspapper*, Stockholm, 2015, p. 3.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid., p. 13–14.
- 11 Ibid., p. 31.
- 12 Here it is important to note that Association of Local Authorities and Regions (Sveriges kommuner och regioner) is an organisation whose interests align with employers in the municipalities and regions of Sweden. In other words, it is not a democratic organisation and does not have to comply with the requirements of transparency, by which public institutions and organisations are bound. A number of critics have therefore called attention to the fact that the organisation is an anomaly in Swedish democracy. In a recently published article, Louise Bringelius and Bo Rothstein write: “Today, the organisation functions as a hidden power structure in Swedish democracy. As an association that is regulated by civil law and which is not under democratic control, it is an anomaly in our public administration. This is not sustainable, but ultimately runs the risk of affecting the citizens. What is more, the organisation is an obstacle when it comes to a direct dialogue between different levels of the administration. Representatives of the organisation often take part in dialogue meetings and panel discussions, while municipal and regional politicians are excluded”. Despite this devastating critique, the organisation still functions as an essential mediator between the national and the municipal/regional level in Swedish politics and administration, which also means that their interpretations, and reinterpretations, of the objectives for cultural policy have a direct effect on how municipalities and regions operate. See: Louise Bringelius & Bo Rothstein, “En dold maktstruktur i den svenska demokratin”, *Dagens nyheter*, 2022-03-25. <https://www.dn.se/debatt/en-dold-maktstruktur-i-den-svenska-demokratin/> (Downloaded 2022-09-12).
- 13 The arm’s length principle is meant to regulate the distance between politicians and the field of culture. Whereas politicians are supposed to create the framework for cultural policy, they are not supposed to interfere with the content of cultural production, but should, metaphorically speaking, be at “arm’s length” from the cultural practitioners.
- 14 First of all, this is not a mandatory question in the application form, and, second of all, the entire claim that the formulations in question are problematic in nature stem from a small number of applicants, whose applications had been rejected for various reasons. Lastly, the reviewers of the applications state that they only focus on the artistic quality of the projects. In other words, what we are left with is a non-mandatory field in an application form and a number of disgruntled applicants who feel curtailed and limited by the application process (a limitation, which, at the end of the day, is present in all application procedures) despite the fact that the reviewers are adamant that they only judge applications based on their artistic merits.
- 15 Myndigheten för kulturanalys, *Så fri är konsten*, p. 232.
- 16 Ibid., p. 220.
- 17 Ibid., p. 190; p. 185.
- 18 Ibid., p. 233.
- 19 For a critical analysis of the cultural policies of New Labour, see: Robert Hewison, *Cultural Capital: The Rise and Fall of Creative Britain* (London: Verso, 2014).
- 20 Ibid., p. 82.
- 21 In this context, it is important to draw attention to the people who created the framework for the new cultural policies of Britain. In 1998, a so called “Creative Industries Task Force” was created, which in the beginning was made up of ten ministers, twenty civil servants and advisors, as well as nine volunteers, who all came from what was informally called “BBC – Blair’s Business Circle of Party Donors”. Among these “volunteers” we find, among others, Richard Branson, CEO of Virgin, Waheed Ali, Chief Executive of Silvergate Media, as well as Alan McGee, the manager of Oasis, and the fashion designer Paul Smith. That this influential group of businessmen would sign off on an extended, and instrumentalised, understanding of creativity is not exactly surprising. Ibid., p. 103–104.
- 22 See: Justin O’Connor, “The Cultural and Creative Industries: A Critical History”, *Ekonomiaz*, N. 78, 2011, p. 38f.
- 23 Quoted in: Jim McGuigan, *Neoliberal Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 145. The *Creative Industries – Mapping Document* is also available online, and then in an updated version from 2011: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creative-industries-mapping-documents-2001> (downloaded 2022-02-07).
- 24 Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class, Revisited* (New York: Basic Books, 2012), p. 20.
- 25 The discussion surrounding the concept of “immaterial labour” has, to a large extent, centered around Maurizio Lazzarato’s analyses. What Lazzarato hones in on is the transformation of labour in late capitalist society. Large segments of the population in western societies no longer work in material production, but with the production of “communicative” and immaterial content. According to Lazzarato, this form of immaterial labour “gives form to and materializes needs, the imaginary,

- consumer tastes, and so forth". For Lazzarato, but even more so for Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, this form of labor also harbors an emancipatory potential since it, purportedly at least, would be more difficult to control by the capitalist class and includes forms of work that can more easily give rise to a renewed sense of solidarity among workers. In recent years these analyses have been subjected to severe criticism since they seem to rest on the same kind of simplifications and generalisations that we find in Florida's work. For Lazzarato's analysis, see: Maurizio Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor", Paulo Virno & Michael Hardt (eds.), *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996). For a critique of the concept, see: Steve Wright, "Reality Check: Are We Living In An Immaterial World?", *Mute – Underneath the Knowledge Commons*, N. 1, Vol. 2, 2005.
- 26 Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, p. xi.
- 27 See, for instance: Gerald Raunig, Gene Ray & Ulf Wuggenig (eds.), *Critique of Creativity: Precarity, Subjectivity and Resistance in the 'Creative Industries'* (London: MayFly Books, 2011); Jim McGuigan, *Neoliberal Culture*; Geert Lovink & Ned Rossiter (eds.), *MyCreativity Reader: Critique of Creative Industries* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2007); Jamie Peck, "Struggling with the Creative Class", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, N. 29, 2005.
- 28 Justin O'Connor, "The Cultural and Creative Industries: A Critical History", p. 39.
- 29 Peter Marcuse, "Review of *The Rise of the Creative Class*", *Urban Land*, N. 6, 2003, p. 40f.
- 30 Although Florida's work has made the biggest impact on cultural policies in an Anglophone context, it has also affected Swedish cultural policy. David Karlsson has, for instance, portrayed how reverential the audience (consisting mainly of cultural workers as well as civil servants and administrators within the field of cultural policy) was when Florida presented his work in Stockholm. See: David Karlsson, *En kulturutredning: pengar, konst och politik* (Göteborg: Glänta, 2010), p. 78–79.
- 31 For Hall, the "linguistic slippage" that the Labour Party made use of was part of their strategy of "triangulation", i.e., the attempt to position themselves between the respective ideological positions of their opponents in order to attract voters from the centre of the political spectrum. In order to do this, they constantly had to define their political slogans and ideas as diffusely as possible since the purpose was to appeal to large, and heterogeneous, segments of the electorate. Others have pointed to similar issues in neoliberal ideology as a whole. Philip Mirowski has, for example, pointed to the "Double Truth Doctrine" of neoliberalism, which is characterised by an esoteric doctrine (that is communicated internally) and an exoteric doctrine (that is communicated to the public), but which also manifests itself as explicit contradictions. For instance, the advocates of neoliberal policies insist that the forces of the market have to be left unregulated at the same time as they call for state interventions to facilitate this purported "freedom" of the market. See: Stuart Hall, "New Labour's Double-Shuffle", Sally Davison et. al. (eds.), *Selected Political Writings – The Great Moving Right Show and Other Essays* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), p. 313f; Philip Mirowski, *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste: How Neoliberalism Survived the Financial Meltdown* (London: Verso, 2013), p. 68–79.
- 32 Justin O'Connor, "The Cultural and Creative Industries: A Critical History", p. 39.
- 33 Jim McGuigan, *Neoliberal Culture*, p. 153.
- 34 Etymologically, the word "autonomy" stems from the Greek notion *autonomia*, which in turn consists of two words: *autos* (self) and *nomos* (law). A literal translation would therefore be "self-legislating" since what is at stake is the capacity of the self (or, traditionally, a city state) to legislate its own laws. It is also in this sense that Immanuel Kant uses the concept in his moral philosophy in order to designate how our reason legislate the laws that govern moral action.
- 35 Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997), p. 229.
- 36 Adorno himself formulates this as follows: "If art cedes its autonomy, it delivers itself over to the machinations of the status quo; if art remains strictly for-itself, it nonetheless submits to integration as one harmless domain among others". *Ibid.*, p. 237.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 256.
- 38 For a good account of this historical development, see: Michael Müller, "Künstlerische und materielle Produktion. Zur Autonomie der Kunst in der italienischen Renaissance", *Autonomie der Kunst* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974).
- 39 Nicholas Brown, *Autonomy – The Social Ontology of Art under Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), p. 22. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478002673>
- 40 Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 66.
- 41 Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 143.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 230.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- 44 Luc Boltanski & Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2018), p. 346.
- 45 For an analysis of the connection between the student movement in the 1960s and 70s and Silicon Valley, see: Fred Turner, *From Counterculture to Cyberculture – Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
- 46 Gernot Böhme, *Ästhetischer Kapitalismus* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016). For an analysis of Böhme's theory, see: Sebastian Olma, *Art and Autonomy: Past, Present, Future* (Rotterdam: V2\_Publishing, 2018), p. 79ff.
- 47 Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. Charles Levin (London: Verso, 2019), p. 150f.
- 48 Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*, trans. Chris Turner (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p. 77. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526401502>

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- 49 Baudrillard writes that consumer society gives rise an “industrial production of differences”: “Differences of the ‘personalising’ type no longer set individuals one against another; these differences are all arrayed hierarchically on an indefinite scale and converge in *models*, on the basis of which they are subtly produced and reproduced. As a result, to differentiate oneself is precisely to affiliate to a model, to label oneself by reference to an abstract model, to a combinatorial pattern of fashion, and therefore to relinquish any real difference, any *singularity*, since these can only arise in concrete, conflictual relations with others and the world. This is the miracle and the tragedy of differentiation. In this way, the whole process of consumption is governed by the production of artificially diversified models (like brands of soap powder), where the trend to monopoly is the same as in the other sectors of production. There is *monopoly concentration of the production of differences*”. *Ibid.*, p. 88f.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 108.
- 52 Fredric Jameson, “Transformations of the Image in Postmodernity”, *Selected Writings on the Postmodern 1983–1998* (London: Verso, 1998), p. 111.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 123ff.
- 54 This has, of course, been most pronounced among right-wing writers and critics, see for instance: P.J. Anders Linder, “Vem bryr sig om konstnärlig frihet?”, *Axess*, N. 6 (2021): <https://www.axess.se/artiklar/vem-bryr-sig-om-konstnarlig-frihet/> (downloaded 2022-09-26); Bo Broman, “Så vill partierna förändra kulturpolitiken”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 2022-09-08: <https://www.dn.se/kultur/sa-vill-partierna-forandra-kulturpolitiken/> (downloaded 2022-09-26). However, this one-sided focus on the first part of the report can also be observed among liberal and left-wing debaters. To be clear, many of these do mention the report’s critique of how the regions and municipalities operate, but the onus is still placed on the critique of funding bodies on a national level (such as the Swedish Film Institute and the Swedish Arts Council), see for instance: Karin Pettersson, “Kulturpolitiken ska inte lägga saker till rätta”, *Aftonbladet*, 2021-06-20, <https://www.aftonbladet.se/kultur/a/pA72RV/kulturpolitiken-ska-inte-lagga-saker-till-ratta> (downloaded 2022-09-26); Hynek Pallas, “Vem tar samtalet om svensk film vidare?”, *Point of View*, N. 85, <https://triart.se/pov/artikel/hynek-pallas-om-oviljan-att-ta-samtalet-om-den-fri> (downloaded 2022-09-26); Nina Solomin, “Kläfingri-ga politiker vill gärna styra konsten”, <https://www.fokus.se/kultur/klafingri-ga-politiker-vill-garna-styra-konsten/> (downloaded 2022-09-26).
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